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PRODUKTIONSLÄMPLIGHET

FÖRETAGSANPASSNING

HANTERBARHET

KONKURRENSFÖRMÅGA



Redaktionsfilosofi

Designjournalen strävar efter att publicera artiklar och fallstudier som visar att design är en viktig resurs, en del i undervisning av tekniker och ekonomer likväl som designer, men också en viktig del av företags verksamhet. Genom en medveten och effektiv hantering kan design bidra till att skapa konkurrenskraft och framgång.

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Omslagsbild: Olika perspektiv på design av Rune Monö



Torsten Dahlin
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Med frågan, "Hur kan svensk design/ formgivning stärkas?" och följdfrågan, "Var finns behovet av den framtida statliga satsningen på design?", mötte häromdagen regeringskansliets interdepartementala grupp dryga hundratalet designaktörer för utfrågning som underlag för hur en svensk designpolicy skall formuleras.

Frågans formulering visar på ett grundläggande och vanligt synsätt på begreppet design. Design ses som något självständigt och fristående som kan påverkas direkt. Verkligheten är ju att design utgör en delmängd i en mer eller mindre industriell process. En process där designerns kärnkompetens, gestaltning och visualisering, utgör det kommunikativa elementet i skilda skeden av utveckling fram till färdig produkt.

Ulf Hård af Segerstad skrev i våras att begreppet Scandinavian Design egentligen inte utgör en enhetlig stil, utan var resultatet av ett förhållningssätt. Det är förhållningssättet bland företagsledare som utgör grunden för industrins hanterare av mängder av mikrobeklut. Där alla beslut fattas inom ramen för en helhetssyn av vad företaget står för. Alla inom företaget måste känna vad det står för och själva ta till sig och skapa ett eget förhållningssätt. Det var det som bar fram begreppet Scandinavian Design så brett. Men det var en mycket enklare industriell struktur än den vi har idag. Det är mycket mera komplext inom Ericson, Volvo och andra storföretag, att vidmakthålla och få in en helhetssyn i organisationen.

Statlig design-policy - nu också i Sverige

Vad kan då staten göra? Till att börja med bör frågan omformuleras. Hur kan staten nyttiggöra sig av designkompetens som resurs i samhällsutvecklingen.

Det är politikerna och centrala beslutfattares förhållningssätt till övergripande frågor som utgör grunden för gestaltningen av samhället. Övergripande frågor som sysselsättning och goda arbetsförhållanden, miljö och kretsloppskunskande, kunskap och kompetensutveckling, samlande information och sverigebilden, etc.

Det grundläggande är statsapparaten förhållningssätt till kvalitet och hur det omsätts i ett handlingsprogram för åtgärder på kort, medellång och lång sikt. Det gäller att ta tillvara den kunskap som genereras via hela utbildningssystemet, att utan skygglappar bredda förståelsen för att tekniker och ekonomer i ökande grad har intresse för designområdet. Du som läser Designjournalen har nu ett unikt tillfälle att aktivt påverka statens förhållningssätt. Bidra med ditt.

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Redaktörsanteckningar

Design och forskning

När man är på en spännande och givande konferens önskar man att ens kollegor också var där och fick uppleva samma sak. I den andan lovar man därför att själv arrangera nästa konferens.... Denna spännande konferensen var the European Academy of Design Conference som ägde rum i Manchester 1995. Gott om tid att planera fram till våren 97 fanns det också för den andra EAD-konferensen. Men det var tack vare att så många ställde upp i organisationskommittén som vi lyckades genomföra denna designforskarkonferens i Sverige. I organisationskommittén ingick personer som representerade många olika institutioner med beröring till design på både praktiska och teoretiska plan.

Konferensen, som ägde rum i KTHs fina, nyrenoverade lokaler, lockade över 160 deltagare från 18 länder. Över 100 forskarartiklar skickades in för granskning och 75 av dessa antogs för presentation. Ett stort problem för den här typen av konferenser är att avgöra kvaliteten på forskarartiklarna trots att varje artikel granskas av minst två andra forskare. En del håller en mycket hög kvalitet, men forskaren själv har inte alltid förmågan att vid konferensen presentera sitt verk på ett intressant sätt – och tvärtom. Dessutom, när det gäller designområdet är forskning fortfarande i sin linda. Det har inte etablerats några forskningstraditioner eller -paradigm och därmed är begreppsapparaten tämligen spretig.

Vi beslöt dels att acceptera så många som möjligt, dels att minimera tiden för muntlig presentation och istället uppmuntra diskussionerna - det är oftast de som avgör hur konferensen upplevs. Tack vare moderatorerna hölls tiderna någotsånär, men visst blev det för lite tid över till diskussioner, som alltid. För många presentationer? 75 papers fördelade på fyra sessioner under två dagar. Det är klart att det blev tätt och vi hade

behövt mer tid, som alltid.

Ett problem med forskarkonferenser är att de flesta forskare kan enbart komma om de har fått sin artikel accepterad, eftersom de då får resan finansierad av sin institution. Man kan därför se artikeln som en slags inträdesbiljett och sedan är personen på konferensen en person som bidrar, inte bara med sin artikel utan framförallt till alla de diskussioner som försigår vid presentationerna, vid kaffet, i korridorerna, på kvällen i baren, etc.

Jag tycker att detta är en bra policy för en konferens. För att bli publicerad i en akademisk journal måste kvalitetskraven dock helt baseras på den skriftliga presentationen och där ska man ställa höga krav. Jag är mycket glad över att EAD-konferensen blev en mycket positiv upplevelse för alla deltagarna, även om inte alla presentationer och papers var av den kvalitet man skulle önska. Men jag vill också betona vikten av att det utvecklas bra tidskrifter och journaler för designforskningsområdet så att forskningsområdet också utvecklas i sin dokumenterade form. Det är viktigt för den kollektiva kunskapen och för områdets status.

I detta nummer av Designjournalen har vi valt att publicera några artiklar som vi tyckte var spännande på olika sätt. De är dock inte granskade i någon vetenskaplig mening. Detta kommer dock att ske i den engelska Design Journal som The European Academy of Design ska börja ge ut. Ett brittisk förlag, Gower Publishing Ltd, har tecknat ett avtal med EAD om att publicera The Design Journal fyra gånger om året. Jag vill därför passa på att här uppmana alla läsare att prenumerera på denna men också till att forska, skriva och skicka in för publicering! Det bidrar till att etablera forskningsområdet.

För att bli medlem i EAD, för frågor kring The Design Journal: kontakta The European Academy of Design, The Research Unit, Research Institute for Design Manufacture & Marketing, University of Salford, The Centenary Building, Peru Street, Salford M6 6PU, UK (e-mail: joanne.charlton@ucsalf.ac.uk) Fax: 44-161-2956174.

Design och forskning i Sverige

Det har arrangerats designkonferenser tidigare i Sverige på temat teorier och metoder, t ex i Göteborg med KTH och Chalmers som värdar. Föreläsare vid konferensen var bland andra Donald A. Schön, Nigel Cross och Colin Clipson, välkända inom designforskning. Artiklar från den konferensen finns samlade i en bok med A. Reza Kazemian som redaktör (1993, ISSN: 0280-1663).

Så visst forskas det i design i Sverige. På sektionen för Arkitektur vid KTH, vid Maskinkonstruktion vid KTH, på Konsumentteknik vid Chalmers, på Informatik vid Lunds universitet och Umeå universitet, m fl. Men det finns ingen forskning vid designhögskolorna. Kunskapsutveckling på designskolorna är idag i Sverige en mycket adhoc-artad verksamhet som kallas "konstnärligt utvecklingsarbete". Den har sitt berättigande för den individuella kunskapsutvecklingen men har inget att

göra med forskning i någon vetenskaplig tradition, dvs den är inte dokumenterad för att öka den kollektiva kunskapen.

Bara för att vi saknar traditioner att forska i design är det ingen anledning att säga att det inte är möjligt. Vi vet från andra länder, t ex Storbritannien och Finland, att det kan utvecklas. För att få fram designer som är kompetenta nog att hantera de framtida utmaningarna måste vi också utveckla nya metoder inte minst datorstödda sådana, utveckla kunskap om användaren och miljön. För detta krävs det att det avsätts forskningsresurser även till designområdet. Enbart Design Council i Storbritannien anslår 1 miljon pund till forskning. I Finland har designhögskolan UIAH, en forskningsbudget på ca 3,7 miljoner FMK. I år har man från utbildningsministeriet fått ytterligare 1,7 miljoner FMK nästa år ska man få 2 miljoner. Mellan 1991-97 har fem personer doktorerat i design, i år ytterligare tre. 124 doktorander finns vid UIAH, av dessa är 35 heltidsfinansierad. Vi har en lång väg att gå.



Bild 1
Lisbeth Svengren från Svensk Industriedesign tillsammans med Kerstin Wickman från tidskriften Form och Konstfack.

Design for quality of life

Text: Tore Kristensen

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Good design does and should focus on the quality of life (QoL). The reasons, which I will explain in the following is concerned with a deeper understanding of the human side of the user, the creative scope of the design process and, finally, it is what the history can tell us about good design.

The structure of the article is as follows: I explain the concept quality of life as compared to the more frequently applied concept need. The concept is explained in some detail and examples are shown. Then I explain the implications for the design process and discuss the interpretation of design.

Why quality of life concerns design

Design is never alone as a pure form, it is endemic. Design serves a connecting link between; e.g. materials and form, user and product, between business functions, or as an integral part of corporate communication. In the recent years design theorists and practitioners have focused on the environmental concerns of our society. So far solutions have been dealing with aesthetic life styles or simply extensions of product life-cycle.

One may ask what does quality of life add to the discussion of design. Is it not just an unnecessary complication? Take the simplest aim of a designer, which may be to design an object according to needs expressed by the user. The information is given in the requirements submitted by the user and work as directions for the design-

ner. Much engineering is like this and I suspect this is also the view held by Christopher Alexander. He writes, "The ultimate object of design is form" (1). The measure is 'goodness of fit'. Alexander provides an excellent treatise on the diagrammatic method to designing, but takes the purpose/function as given. The discussion is about how a design-program should be executed to design a form, that fits function, whatever the function may be. Such an implicit concept of need or quality of life is too formalistic and static. It does not leave the designer room for finding challenges outside the assignment given and it leaves questions about further improvements and the learning and passions resulting from the process.

Peter Lloyd Jones (2) challenges the relativity of taste design is concerned with. Taste is an acquired competence of quality judgement. Designers are "taste-makers" and their responsibility is a commitment towards good quality broadly speaking including the use of signs. A particular reason is that modern production alienates the majority from the intrinsic rewards of (crafts-) production. Designers, as a profession, are better able to guard themselves from this "...designers have an obligation to create products and settings which promote the satisfactions that they themselves enjoyed in designing them to the maximum" (2). I believe many practising designers have for a long time acknowledged this responsibility and done their best. Dieter Rams sees the process from the practising designer and has extracted the idea of quality in the form of rules for good design (3). Such rules, as in this case focusing on design in general,

may form a basis for a special emphasis on QoL.

The concept of 'need' is widely used, but not the most useful one. Much writing on need is based upon the utility concepts developed in economics and marketing(4). Within these theories need can be represented by a linear curve. As the concept is rather abstract and application technical the application in design is limited. Other important definitions are provided by psychology. Prominent is the contribution of Abraham Maslow(5), who ordered needs in a hierarchical way. This is the critical dimension; can all needs really be accounted for in such a comprehensive and hierarchical way. The theory attempts to account for too much, and although it is dynamic in the sense of sequencing the levels of needs, it fails to account for different configurations like outstanding artistic work undertaken by artist lacking in basic needs. Needs are defined as gaps. There is a lack of something problems, difficulty, obstacles etc. Clearly much design work has been based on such conceptions of need. It is too narrow and leaves too little room for the creative power (6). Instead of dealing with what people seem to miss here and now, a different view would be to focus on their potential, intentions, aspirations, challenges etc. To do that we might consider quality of life.

QoL is a dynamic concept. It is comprehensive, as it focuses on the user's experiences with design within a context. It is objective in the sense that experience should be measurable and communicable. A considerable part of the QoL literature is concerned with measurement issues(7), which are outside the scope of this article. There is also the matter of measuring the subjective factors(8). This problem deals with asking people about their experiences but in a way that reduces biases as much as possible(9). Quality of life must be a contextual matter for the reason that experiences have both an absolute and a relative dimension. It is absolute in the sense that simple short term absence of pain of suffering may be felt as the greatest relief in a particular situation (e.g. war, catastrophe, torture, illness), but

hardly qualifies as an objectively "good situation". Relativity comes from the problems of inter-personal comparisons. There is a vast debate and literature on this issue, but the general view is not in favour of such comparisons(10). QoL is positive rather than focusing on gaps, lack of something, problems, difficulty, obstacles etc. It underlines issues and experiences where the enjoyments of the moment count for the measure. As we will return to below, the concept is multi-dimensional and accounts for a profile of satisfactions.

Where design meets quality of life

Basic welfare is a requirement without which design has little relevance. Design may serve the consumption of basic welfare, as it can take many forms. To find these connections, we will look into the concept QoL. Some attempts have been made to provide a measure of QoL based on issues rather than hierarchical levels, as in Maslow's theory. Erik Allardt(11) has three such issues of QoL, "having", "loving" and "being". Design affects all these in various ways. While products serve functional needs, they also create meaning and identity. People chose products, not only for what they can do, but for what they mean(12). Possession of goods serve both decorative needs in the sense that beauty of the surrounding pleases us and people tend to create their surroundings according to the standards of style that they like and feel at home with. Likewise, the bundle of products serve communicative needs. People invest in goods to be admired and to signal memberships of particular "clubs" or social groups(13). Taste is not just a personal, subjective preference, but a skill acquired through forms of economic, cultural and social capital. Its use is to distinguish the person judging designed products, art etc. because the skill is social. As Mary Douglas underlines in her most recent book, disapproving is more important than approving(14).

Design is about function and also expression which is a matter of giving an object an identification. It can be an identification and distinction of either the product itself or/and its user. This can be seen

even as ornaments of stone-age axes. If the owner is allowed to keep it (whether he or somebody else actually produced it) it can be identified as his property and the qualities of expression indicates something about the user. The expressive qualities of dress and the associations with esteem hardly needs further documentation(15). Bonding or networking may serve as a three element of QoL. Objects are used for communication, e.g. gifts and communication-technologies. The three elements are analysed in greater depth in next paragraph.

While the quality of life concerns us here and now, the concern for the future may also be a part of the overall valuation of the good life. The knowledge that there is something that our children and future generations can inherit is a concern for most people. It is also a question of inter-generation justice.

Design involves both objective and subjective elements of life quality. Clearly a handicapped person can derive objective satisfaction from a means of transportation that permits longer action radius in lesser time etc. which are measurable in quite objective terms. Ownership of a beautiful and funny fountain-pen may not objectively enhance the owners writing ability, but the feeling of using it, touching its surface and balance with the hand, smelling the material etc. may give considerable subjective satisfaction and possibly, as a by-product, enhance the owner's joy and improve the communicative abilities.

Possession of wealth is commonly linked to material goods. While it must be so, the non-material goods, like services, cultural experiences, personal care, self-esteem and recognition, the pursuit of metaphysical and religious interests, also account for quality of life. In a modern western society even more so, rather than additional material gains.

The enjoyment of having and using

The having dimension is concerned with material possessions. Design is important,

both concerning the overall form of a product, its core benefits (16) and its associated qualities e.g. image and the user interface. People acquire objects for enjoyment, both for their use and for their meaning. Distinguishing one from the other may be very difficult. A sports car may be bought for both its ego-enhancing ability, but certainly also because it is fun driving it.

A number of objects are intended for enhancing the human body and mind. According to Donald Norman(17) technologies are things that are extensions of the human attributes including the mind. The design problem, which is Norman's real concern is to fit the technologies so they can make us smarter. Supported by considerable personal studies of products, artefacts, signs etc., Norman argues his case on cognitive psychological ground. Metaphorically speaking, any artefact that is supposed to serve the user must be designed as a natural extension of the body as well as the brain. This means that an artefact must be coherent with the way the human mind works. A general perspective on this has been developed by Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi (18) in the theory of "flow" or "optimal experience". Flow experience occur when: there are clear goals for every step of the way, which is found in professional activities, artistic work, sports, etc. Here there are criteria which can be judged by the active person as well as other people. There is an immediate feedback that informs the active person. This feedback can take many forms from a distorted piece of a painting to a fall in alpine climbing. A wide range of products can account for the role of design in this process. Tools may be used in performing or even in the feedback process, e.g. as safety devices allowing feedback but without putting the agents life into jeopardy.

A balance between challenges and skills is necessary for flow processes to take place. If the challenge surpasses the skills, the process creates anxiety and cannot lead into a flow situation. If the challenge is too small compared to the skills, it becomes boring. Only by finding the right

balance, the process becomes a flow experience. In a time perspective, it is important that the complexity and challenges are increased in order to satisfy the learning that takes place. This issue addresses design e.g. of user-interfaces, tools, instructions etc.

Action and awareness are merged in a flow experience. This means that noise and other disturbances are excluded from interfering in the process. Particularly the design of interior and work place must

There is no worry of failure; self-consciousness disappears and the sense of time becomes distorted when the process goes on as intended. If one worry about possible failures, the likelihood of failure increases very much. This is a psychological matter and a little design can build quality, durability and safety into the process.

The activity becomes autotelic when all these requirements are satisfied. Some of them are dependant on design and some are not. The relation between design and



Bild 2
Middag på Konstfackskolan för alla EAD-konferensdeltagare. Arrangerad av skolans studenter.

take this into consideration.

Distractions are excluded from consciousness when flow is experienced. Making the distractions disappear from consciousness is a matter of the concentration of the person in question. To facilitate this design can make only the bare necessities visible. We all know from daily work how irrelevant papers, phone-calls and private conversation can destroy our concentration. Design of workspace, personal organisers, desks and computer-screens can make it possible to delimit the workspace (19) so that only the necessary information is visible.

flow is only conditional and often indirect and objects may serve the user in her pursuit for optimal experiences. They are often extreme experiences, where people are extending their abilities to new limits like in art, research, sport etc. In such activities tools may be necessary. There is a limited but in some cases important connection between the quality of a clear goal in the process and the objects used. Some activity may involve tools for survival e.g. in rock climbing, sports activities etc. If the goal simply can be characterized by survival, which is the case in some sports, then the reliability of the tools is a must. The feedback is life or death. The tools used for rock-climbing perform many

times what can be expected. Looking at such equipment, it looks like nicely crafted reliable tools - tools people can trust their lives with.

Personal identity: World making

The economist James Buchanan(20) has an important point in his essay on Natural and Artificial Man; "It is useful to think of man as an imagining being, which sees himself or herself apart from other species. A person sees himself in many roles, capacities, and natures, in many settings, in many times, in many places. As one contemplates moving from imagination to potential behaviour, however, constraints emerge to bound or limit the set of prospects severely. One might, for example, imagine himself living in any age of history, past or imagined future...Once all of the possible constraints are accounted for (historical, geographical, physical, genetic, sexual), there still remains a large set of possible persons that one might imagine oneself to be, or might imagine himself capable of becoming. There is room for "improvement", for the construction of what might be. Further, in thinking about realizable prospects, a person is able to rank these in some fashion, to classify members of the set as "better" or "worse".

The key to this is the "narrative character of selfhood and agency"(21). Mark Johnson explains, "the self, then, develops its identity by inhabiting characters embedded within socially shared roles and by creatively appropriating those roles, even to the point of co-authoring new ones. I stress co-authoring, because all of this imaginative exploration of possibilities is carried on in and through complex social interactions in which practices and forms of relationships are continually constructed. As a result, I can only come to know who I am, and discover who I might become, by seeing how I play out various roles and inhabit various characters, or create new characters by an ongoing process that is never completed during my lifetime or beyond". Or as he later expresses; "Human beings are imaginative synthesizing animals ...Prototypical narratives are

linguistic stories we tell to others and sometimes write down in words". We may add, we first assert ourselves (even that may happen simultaneously or after the telling) and we do not just use words, but stage underlining and reinforcing the story.

Design is about "worldmaking"(22). It is a 'construction', where image of one-self as well as the image one may hope that others perceive is central. People create their habitat and environments. The process is an ongoing one. Repetition of, say, an event with all its scenery is a repetition only in the sense that the same constitutive objects, moods and ceremonies/rituals are repeated. But a repetition is seen in a context where the accumulated experiences from earlier occasions form a bottom line. Each occasion may therefore create a situation where the interpretation is evolving and in constant change. The creative powers released by this in addition to the meaningfulness of the activity and the meaning of the environments itself are important vehicles of QoL. Finally, design is engaged in the community between people. Economists sometime refer to "external effects" as these can be both positive and negative. The latter is concerned with all kinds of waste and pollution, including symbolic pollution and noise. On the positive side there are bonding and networking between people. People use all kinds of objects to communicate their identity. In addition there are networking or communication technologies, transportation, phone, etc. Possession of wealth is commonly linked to material goods. While it must be so, the non-material goods, like services, cultural experiences, personal care, self-esteem and recognition, the pursuit of metaphysical and religious interests, also account for quality of life. In a modern western society even more so, rather than additional material gains. Prototypical narratives correspond to the conform use of goods(23). It is both a matter of conforming to group norms and giving the stage a personal touch. That can be in an orthogonal sense, it can be irony, purity, or other. The means are designed objects and other artefacts in a variety of combinations. The following strategies are

all in principle possible to create the portfolio or stage setting: World making(24) is concerned with creation of meaning and narrative the following ways.

Composition and decomposition is about cross domain connections of affective and cognitive categories in the mind with expressive/visible/physical categories of design. The person in question identifies herself with a portfolio of e.g. dress, accessories, home, furniture, interior, means of transportation, etc. Imaginative synthesizing animals create the scenery with such props and items into a context that he can mirror his identity within. The cement binding the synthesis together is the perception of some kind of sameness or similarity within the objects. The choice is a matter of judgement of taste as well as the decision of acquiring and using. The 'paradigm' may be conform to 'good taste' or it may be an individual choice of 'good' and 'bad' taste in any mixture that the particular individual creates as a support to the narrative of his. It is a failure though to assume complete freedom of choice in these matters. To a large degree the individual acquires the norms from the socialisation process. That is what Pierre Bourdieu call "habitus" or some kind of pre-understanding, as it is not necessarily a matter of consciousness, but an unconscious cultural bias. The matter at issue is embarrassment. Mary Douglas writes; "But consider the idea of not being seen dead in a certain garment, not accepting a certain kind of object in the house, even if I am paid to have it, and the embarrassment of receiving presents that cannot be displayed because they give the wrong signals. Embarrassment is fear of being wrongly judged, for trying to ape a position one is not entitled to, or resenting someone else for just doing that"(25). Although Douglas here talks about the individual mirroring himself in the face of others, one's own mirror image is just as important. The situation is not a 'straitjacket', as the interpretation of things matter. An object of taboo may very well be displayed as long as the owner is able to 'frame' the object, e.g. by irony or 'professional interest'. Children may even parrot their parent's furniture as

long as they signal the staging dimension of 'cosiness' or irony.

Weighting of design is a matter of sorting and judging particular impressions of relevance. The purpose of this is matching the persons existential project with the external, visible and expressive means. As Goodman writes, "A line drawing of softly draped cloth may exemplify rhythmic linear patterns; and a poem with no words for sadness and no mention of a sad person may in the quality of its language be sad and poignantly express sadness(26). The interpretation of a certain set of objects cannot be judged in a way that the person in question belong to a stereotyped lifestyle without understanding the relevance put to the categories of objects and their weights. Distinctions can be irony, avant-gard, nostalgia or symbolising a personal experience.

Ordering of artefacts is referring to a process that can take place even though no part (object) is in motion, but simply because the frame of reference or context is changing. Ordering may mean placement (or proximity) between objects, their position relative to lightning, behaviour pattern and frequency of use. The same living quarters with precisely the same interiors and furniture changes during the time of the year and when the people inhabiting move, die, retire, change career, have children etc.(27). In principle all kinds of measurements is dependent on ordering; e.g. the measurement of time is not found in the world but built into the world in the form of an organisation of time which then can be measures by watches etc.

Deletion and supplementation has to do with the way we see things and not see things. People have a natural tendency to fill out an image. Kanizsa(28) drawings are examples where we fill in and out parts of an image that "is not there". We also purify and simplify images where a vast number of details vanish from our image as they are deemed superfluous for our purpose. This is what counts in the scientific process where a set of causal relations is extracted from complex patt-

erns of interacting systems. A scientific process is necessarily reductionistic. But the human memory in general is excellent editing our perception of past experiences. These mechanisms are used by designers in their work. The challenges of developing a widely understood language, e.g. pictograms for public information is an example. The process of designing is reducing detailed images to its bare bones, to the essence of things people understand them as common sense. Whether there is such a common sense across the world's cultures is debatable. The many examples of pictograms difficult to understand may hint that it is to say the least a difficult task.

Deformation is concerned with distorted images, caricatures etc. Imitations of major artistic works, ornaments, copycats are all such examples. The concept authenticity is important to people who are able to determine this. That is a matter of skill and may be very difficult to learn. Unfortunate for many critics etc. many people cannot make such judgements and even if they could, they do not care. A copy of a chair by Juel, Wegner, Kærholm, etc. or a suit by Armani, Cerruti, Dior. is "just as good" and much cheaper(29).

Bonding or networking?

The social dimension of design is a matter of kinds of co-ordering behaviour. I use this term, as it may be both a matter of co-ordinating and what economist call collusive behaviour, only tacitly correlated behaviour as in competitive markets. Directly co-ordinated behaviour if e.g. gift-giving. It is a fundamental way of organising the economy(30). Giftgiving is the obligation of reciprocity, the obligation both to receive and to reciprocate. The literature on gifts is large and goes far beyond the scope of this article. Gifts are integrated in the web of social cohesion and spiritual relations of any society and is at the core of the society's values. For this reason the design of these gifts is important. The design may express the economic ability of the giver, the value of a particular personal relation and the significance of the occasion. Some or all of

these may be present. How a particular gift should be valued depends on convention and codes. In general attributes like precious materials, authenticity, high quality skills for craft work and ornament all hint at higher value. A higher value is not necessarily a good thing. If the value exceeds expectation it may embarrass the receiver just as when the value is less than expected. In some cultures, e.g. Japanese, a gift must always be wrapped and is not opened until the receiver is alone. In some cultures the receiver immediately reciprocate, although the returned gift may have only a symbolic value. There is a large industry involved in the design and production of gifts, both of high artistic quality and more ordinary objects. The value of design to the receiver depends partly on the name of the designer and the ingenuity of the product, which may be functional but not reflect bare necessities.

A growing area where design is significant is concerned with networks in a more general sense. While gifts serve as value statements and transfer of resources, the networks are characterised by a need to transport physical persons, material and information. Most among the network technologies are the transportation technologies; ships, railroads and automobiles. All of these, but in particular the automobile is the prime example of quality of life where design is the major agent. An automobile is attributed by functionality, the owner's esteem, indeed it has created worlds and experiences for 20th century. Its functionality and flexibility is the symbol of freedom in most of the Western world.

Information technology may have started by bonfire placed on a mountaintop, used to signal war and illness. Later networking technology was exemplified by the telegraph and telephone. Today it is Internet, e-mail and video-conferencing. All of these share the quality where the benefits are dependant on the number of users. This quality is referred to as band wagon(31) effects or simply network externalities(32). There are considerable problems with these, mainly due to differences in standards. Apart from technolo-

gical (compatibility) standards, the problems are concerned with user-interfaces. The competition between computer systems, video, cd's etc is well known. Incompatibility between, say user-interfaces give considerable problems for the users. The switching costs are huge and considerable resources are used in order to solve these problems. Most users have experiences with inconveniences and other switching problems.

Examples of design solutions are Microsoft's use of MacIntosh's visual user-interface. There is much debate about the relative qualities of the systems, but not whether the visual system so far is the best. In the long run, cheap and overwhelming computer capacity will make the problem disappear and we can still use any computer-interface we prefer, e.g. we can talk to the computer and make the computer fit our needs and not technical constraints (33).

Discussion

We have developed the argument, that QoL provides a broader and more dynamic focus for design than conventional utility based need theory.

While the ulterior purpose is to develop a method of assessment we have so far presented some general categories and examples. The problems of balancing positive effects in one issue vs. negative effects in another and even the problem of inter-personal comparisons are not given a solution.

Some trade-offs can be identified by e.g. providing an agenda. Improved user interfaces may have negative effects on networking abilities.

These are obvious shortcomings, but so far they have not been solved in other studies to my knowledge it will take a long

time before one is found.

Then what can this categorization be used for? I see three practical purposes. One is the practical use by designers in broadening the context for a design problem or challenge. Secondly, the application for understanding consumers in general. Then the application extends the conventional consumer behavior models in some directions. In particular if such studies are extended by experience sampling methods for measuring the usage experiences, the method may be very useful, both for design and business considerations. The last application is historical. Looking into object categories, historical periods, technologies etc, the framework can provide a descriptive language for understanding evolution during some time span. Experience sampling as such is not possible in historical research, but some adaptations could be possible, e.g. as a way of understanding verbal accounts and possibly be simulating the original situation but in modern times.

Further research may lead to more operational concepts where measurements of the QoL issues can be developed. The QoL research itself seems to follow its own ups and downs, but presently the issue is focused from a vast variety of approaches. Comparing them may itself provide new insights.

Enjoyment	Flow stimuli, user-interface, customised tools
Identification/self-esteem	Markers, fashion, "personal" products
Bonding/networking	Gifts, networking technologies

Figure 1
Some categories of QoL and design.

Figur 1

Footnotes

1. Christopher Alexander "Notes on the Synthesis of Form" Cambridge Mass 1964 p. 15

2. Lloyd Jones (1991 p. 269. *A completely different matter is whether the industrial organisation as such leaves sufficient degrees of freedom to the designers to meet such obligations.* Ezio Manzini believes it goes a long way, Ezio Manzini "Prometheus of the Everyday: The Ecology of the Artificial and the Designer's Responsibility in Design Issues: Vol. IX, Number 1 Fall 1992. See also Bernard Denvir: The Late Victorians Art : Design and Society 1852-1910 Longman London 1986

3. Dieter Rams Weniger Aber Besser *Smaller but Better Hamburg 1995* Jo Klatt Design+Design. The rules are the following; Good design is: Innovative; makes a product useful; aesthetic; helps understand the product; unobtrusive; honest; durable; consequent to the last detail; concerned with the environment; as little design as possible;...Back to purity, back to simplicity! Pp. 6-7.

4. E.g. Glen Urban & John Hauser, "Design and Marketing of New Products" 2. Ed. Englewood-Cliffs NJ Prentice-Hall for a widely used textbook for education and the industry.

5. Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* Cambridge Mass Harvard University Press 1954

6. A different approach is the "Flow" theory where the focus is the "optimal experience related to particular situations. I will deal with that theory in more detail below.

7. Martha Nussbaum & Amartya Sen (eds.) "The Quality of Life" Oxford University Press Cambridge 1993 is an example of such objective measurements and its problems.

8. This is a very big philosophical issue, presently discussed under the heading of qualia by philosophers like the Daniel C. Dennett, Consciousness explained Penguin in London 1991pp. 383 - 389 and neurologists like Francis Crick, The Astonishing Hypothesis The scientific Search for the Soul Simon & Schuster London 1994 (various pages) and Antonio R. Damasio Descartes' Error Emotion, Reason and the

Human Brain Papermac New York 1994 pp. 127 ff. The discussion is concerned with qualia which is the subjective qualities of mental experiences such as the redness of red and painfulness of pain.

9. To my knowledge, the best results have been generated by the Experience Sampling Method (ESM), a method combining interviews from background with reports on experiences just after their completion, Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi & Kevin Rathunde The Measurement of Flow in Everyday Life: Toward a Theory of Emergent Motivation in Nebraska Symposium on Motivation Nebraska University Press 1992

10. See Jon Elster & John Roemer (eds.) "Interpersonal Comparisons of Well-being" Cambridge University Press Cambridge 1991 provides both overviews and the arguments.

1.1 Erik Allardt, *Att Ha, alska, att Vara. Om velfärd i Norden* Argos Borgholm 1975, - Having, Loving, Being: An Alternative to the Swedish Model of Welfare Research in Martha Nussbaum & Amartya Sen (eds.) 1993 is concerned with the development of combining objective and subjective indicators of living condition. p. 93

12. Susann Vihma *Products as Representations A Semiotic and Aesthetic Study of Design Products* University of Art and Design Helsinki 1995 gives a comprehensive review of the literature and explores this in great depths problems of product semantics.

13. Bourdieu 1984

14. Douglas 1996, p. 50ff.

15. Nonetheless, James Laver *Costume and Fashion A Concise History* Thames & Hudson delivers plentiful examples of respectable citizens in their beautiful clothes.

16. Urban et Hauser 1993

17. Donald Norman "Things That Make Us Smart" Addison Wesley 1993

18. Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi, *Creativity* 1996 PP. 111 FF. Csikszentmihalyi, Mihalyi (1996) *Creativity Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* HarperCollins Publishers New York Denvir, Bernard 1986: The Late Victorians Art : Design and Society 1852-1910 Longman London

19. Norman (1993) provide many examples of this.

20. James Buchanan "What Should Economists Do?" Liberty Press Indianapolis, Indiana 1976, p. 99

21. Mark Johnson, "Moral Imagination Implications of Cognitive Science for Ethics" The University of Chicago Press Chicago 1993. pp. 151ff.

22. Nelson Goodman "Ways of World-making" Hackett Publishing Company Indianapolis, Indiana I should add, that my interpretation of Goodmans's work is a simple example.

23. Conform does not mean, that everybody is doing exactly the same. Conformity is defined by a particular lifestyle segment or regime. I regard these as "ideal types". Douglas 1996 pp. 63 provides a good example of such definitions.

24. Goodman pp. 7 - 14

25. Douglas 1996, p. 67

26. Goodman p. 12

27. A most poetic expression of this is given by Franz Schubert (poetry by Wilhelm Müller) in the 16 ("Die Liebe Farbe"). And 17 ("Die Böse Farbe") verses of Die Schöne Müllerin. In the first verse green is the favorite color and that of the miller's daughter, but after the fact that the miller's daughter is visited by the huntsman, the jealous miller's journeyman come to hate green as the most hurting and threatening thing.

28. Gaetano Kanizsa, *Organization in Vision: Essays on Gestalt Perception* Praeger NY 1979

29. I do not want to underrate the problems of imitation, but they are outside the scope of this article.

30. Michael Polanyi *The Great Transformation* (1944) Beacon Press Boston Mass 1957. The other fundamental ways of resource allocation according to Polanyi is the market and redistribution by a central power. A central anthropological work on gift-giving is Marcel Mauss *Essay on the Gift* here quoted from Marshall Sahlins *Stone Age Economics* Tavistock London 1972 pp. 149 ff.

31. Related phenomena are 'snob' effects which refer to the opposite quality, i.e. the fewer the other number of users the better because of exclusivity. Also the concept 'conspicuous consumption' is

related and concerns the showing off of wealth, e.g. giving expensive gifts, large spending etc. The original source is Thorstein Bunde Veblen *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Macmillan Cambridge 1899) Mentor Books/New American Library 1953

32. Morton. Katz & Carl Shapiro *Network Technologies, Competition And Compatibility in American Economic Review* June 1985, Jo Farrell & Garth Saloner *Installed Base and Compatibility: Innovation, product preannouncement, and predation American Economic Review* December 1986 are but 2 examples of this large economic literature.

33. Says Nicholas Negroponte *Being Digital* Free Press NY 1995

Where do meanings come from? The social semiotic of design

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Text: Howard Riley

This paper sets out a systematic approach to making sense of how industrially-produced designed goods acquire social meanings; how products are used to communicate social values. It is proposed that such understanding will illuminate the practice of design as well as clarify the slippery concept of style.

The paper demonstrates a systemic-functional model for analysing designed forms which is based on MAK Halliday's (1978, 1985) work in linguistic analysis as developed by the emerging Australian school of social semiotics. See Hodge and Kress (1988), O'Toole (1994), Kress and van Leeuwen (1996).

Introduction: Nature and Culture

The nature of being human is to have evolved biologically so as to enable us to sense the world in which we live and to adapt, as that world changes: we are able

to act within the environment, we are able to react in response to our environment, and we are able to act upon our environment. This system of ecology is the balancing act we call survival.

The culture of human beings grows not from any organic need to sense or monitor the constant changes within the environment - all living organisms do that in some way or another - but from the uniquely-human desire to communicate that sense to each other. In other words, our apparent need to make and exchange meanings.

The business of being human is to make sense of the world. We thrive through sensing our world and making and communicating meanings from our relationship with it. The more layers of meaning we are able to construct from what we sense, the richer and more enjoyable our experience of living becomes. If necessity really is the mother of invention, then our need

to communicate meaning is the mother of the invention of all spoken and written languages and all other, non-verbal codes of communication.

Design as cultural communication

It has often been asserted that design is a human-problem-solving activity. The implication is that design activity addresses the requirements necessary for our continued existence in physical and psychological security - protection from the weather (shelter and clothing); repelling aggressors (weaponry); attracting mates (body adornment); cultivating, gathering, distributing, preparing and consuming food (agricultural equipment, storage equipment, transport facilities, kitchen equipment and utensils); getting from one place to another safely; maintaining and repairing our bodies (medical equipment); aids to the efficient dissemination of information; and so on. (The list may be finite). But we should recognise that designers, whilst fulfilling this admirable role, are at the same time producing visual messages that are functioning on two levels - letting us know how to use products, and allowing us to make some social meaning through them. In their social context, designed artefacts communicate on both these levels simultaneously whether designers and users are fully aware of that fact or not! For the sake of clarity, let's separate these two levels and study them in turn.

On the 'how to use' level, good design could be defined as a product which fulfils a physical human need without requiring accompanying written or diagrammatic instructions telling us how to use it. The product's function - what it does, how it is operated and controlled - can be expressed directly through its material form: For example, a knurled knob that says 'turn me'; a button so designed to say 'press me'; a form that invites a particular hand-grip, like a jack-plane; a teapot or kettle that says 'hold me here and I'll pour for you'; a chair that softly welcomes your relaxed posture; a shape or form that indicates 'I move in this direction'; or 'I fit that part of your body'; a package that says 'my contents are fresh'. Reinhart But-

ter (1984 p4), the man who first coined the phrase product semantics claims that designers with an awareness of the 'how to use', (what I shall be calling the Experiential function of design can):
'demystify complex technology, improve the interaction between artefacts and their users and enhance opportunities for self-expression'

On the level of cultural communication, a textual analysis allows us to reveal how social meanings are made from our relationships with all material objects. For example, consider Ken Hannan's bronze bust of T L Robertson set on a polished hardwood plinth against a marble panel background in the foyer of the library at Curtin University, Western Australia. The sculpture denotes the head and shoulders of a mature male in academic dress.

The sculptor's choices (conscious or unconscious) of materials, pose, and the curator's choice of placement combine to make available a range of meanings. (Where there is choice, there is meaning).

The selection of head and shoulders from the available choices of full figure, or head and torso including arms and hands is significant. Within our dominant social semiotic (this concept elaborated later) the head stands for Reason and Logic (as opposed to the heart and hands standing for Emotion and Hands-on Experience). Academic dress is symbolic of the educated man (imagine him in frayed T-shirt). The choice of bronze combined with marble and hardwood signifies qualities of endurance and dependability, as well as connotations of Western Classicism. (Imagine these materials substituted by pink plastic). The sculpture's location within the university library associates it with accumulated knowledge and scholarship; a celebration of writing and reading.

Other meanings may be produced of course, but within the dominant social semiotic space, this sculpture lauds a man for his upholding the values of Reason (over intuition), learning from books (rather than through practical experimentation). The product is an icon of the late T

L. Robertson, but also a symbol of administrative power put to use for the perpetuation of values cherished by Western culture.

Ironically, Sculpture functions here to celebrate the dominance of verbal/written modes of representation. In cultures such as our own that have evolved alphabetic writing (in which the arbitrary sign is unrelated to the visual appearance of its referent), visual modes of representation have been marginalised. Visual communication has not been regarded as systematic, not having a grammar or syntax capable of encoding a social reality. Rather, visual representations are seen more as a means of subjective expression, subordinated by verbal/written language. In the specific case of manufactured products, material form is commonly understood to be the result of the designer's 'creative flair' operating within the constraints of market forces and technological limits. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996 pp20-21) succinctly explain the difficulties faced by those attempting to theorise visual modes of representation: *'The problem we face is that literate cultures have systematically suppressed means of analysis of visual forms of representation so that there is not, at the moment, an established theoretical framework within which visual forms of representation can be discussed'*

Functions of Design in cultural communication

Of course humans have always employed many ways of representing individual identities, status, and networks of social relationships. Some of these different modes of representation are usually at work simultaneously: speech, body language, dress, and the objects with which we surround ourselves.

Thanks to the insights of Saussure and the development of his ideas by the Russian, Prague and Paris schools of semiotics, these modes have been theorised as codes of cultural communication which interact synchronically. Now, with the insights afforded by Michael Halliday's systemic-functional grammar, an emerging Australian

school of semiotics is able to systematise the functions of such codes. The design process has three primary functions:

1. to enable us to operate, read, use the product
2. to enable us to relate, inviting us to adopt an attitude to the product
3. to structure these first two into a coherent material form I shall label these three functions:

1. the Experiential function
2. the Interpersonal function
3. the Compositional function

(Note: These terms are adopted from Michael Halliday's original terms for the three functions of language Ideational, Interpersonal, Textual, and Michael O'Toole's adaptations Experiential, Modal, Compositional).

The Experiential function

Designed products, intended to be of practical use, have the marks of their production process and indicators of their use built into their material form. A product semantics approach to design, typically illustrated (slides) by the work of the Cranbrook Academy (McCoy & McCoy, 1990) recognises this, and advocates design strategies based on visual simile and metaphor to enable users to relate experience of new products and forms to previous experiences of physically interacting with the material environment. The Experiential function of design is to enable such relationships to be made. The Interpersonal function enables us to identify with the product, to adopt an attitude to the commodity, the brand, and to the manufacturers. These associations perceived by others, effect, affect and modify our relationships with those others: other individuals, other family members, other gender, other age-groups, other cultural groupings. Of course, such interpersonal associations can also help define the individual's position in the network of relationships between producers and consumers: whether we passively adopt the manufacturers recommendations as to the use of the product, or whether we actively

customise the product and subvert manufacturers' intentions, indicates our attitude to the Production/Distribution/ Consumption/Waste model of the political economy.

The processes that transform products into commodities with which we associate and communicate interpersonally are revealed and analysed thoroughly by Wolfgang Haug (1986). Simply put, a product becomes a commodity when it is made available for consumption.

Certainly within free-market economies, a majority of design practitioners are involved in the various stages of commodification: the layers of product packaging, the design, of distribution systems, point of sale display, the retail outlet ambience and the high visibility of mass-media publicity imagery. These design activities serve to realise the Interpersonal function of products by positioning them within the consciousness of potential consumers. The Compositional function of the design process is to structure the Experiential and Interpersonal functions into a coherent material form.

How are these functions realised in material form?

Any semiotic system relies upon conventions - culturally agreed meanings - to form messages that are coherent within the cultural context for which they were produced.

Recent work by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) indicates that conventions in two-dimensional visual communication are underpinned by a grammar of visual design which describes the way selected visual elements (line, tone, shape, texture, colour) combine to produce meaningful compositions.

Michael O'Toole (1994 p85) clearly demonstrates how "systems of semiotic options" are realised in three dimensions by analysing sculptural and architectural forms.

The accompanying chart (adapted from Michael O'Toole's) is an attempt to codify the systems of semiotic options that visually realise the three primary functions of the 3-D design

Chart of Functions and Systems in Product Design, see page 20.

The Social Semiotic

Michael Halliday's (1978 pp 122-5) concept of a social semiotic allows a theorisation of the dynamic interplay between systemic codes of cultural communication and the social context in which they are used:

"A text is embedded in a context of situation...a semiotic structure...which is formed out of the three socio semantic variables of field, tenor and mode. These represent in systematic form the type of activity in which the text has significant function (Field), the status and rôle relations involved (Tenor) and the symbolic mode and rhetorical channels that are adopted (Mode). (This) presupposes an interpretation of the social system as a social semiotic : a system of meanings that constitutes the 'reality' of the culture"

This insight provides a way to relate textual meanings (derived from a closed analysis of particular designed artefacts) to the broader social, economic and technological contexts.

With reference to the chart, product becomes commodity when it is placed within the realm of the social semiotic; the realm of psychological social and commodity-aesthetic concerns.

Ultimately, this approach may help designers understand how social attitudes towards products, their perceived social meanings - their degree of stylishness - are constantly restructured.

Where do meanings come from...

Figure 2
Chart of
functions and
systems in
product design

Functions			
Level	Experiential Function	Interpersonal function	Compositional Function
Commodity	Needs/desires Social status	(Commodity aesthetics) Packaging: Bare/Decorated Retail ambience: Light, sound	(Commodity aesthetics) Relation to context: Factory/shop Placement: Window/shelf/stack
Product	(Product semantics) Use value: Clear/Obscure Use context: Domestic/Industrial Private/Public Large/small: Light/heavy	Branded/unnamed Relationship to similar products: conventional/shocking Anthropometrics Customisation: Easy/difficult	(Products semantics) Gestalt: Horizontals, verticals, diagonals Proportion: symmetry, scale, pattern Colour & texture Harmony/Discord Opacity/reflectivity Form: Geometric/organic/metaphoric
Sum-assemblies	Fabrication: Mechanical Electrical Electronic Functions: Display/control Interplay of components: Dynamic/static	Ergonomics : safe/unsafe Accessibility Amenability to senses - hard/soft , hot/cold Interchangability	Fixing between components Position within product Realtion between mass/void Visual balance, rhythm
Components	Basic physical elements Production process: visible/disguised Material properties: Human Made/natural Flexible/rigid Malleable/brittle Heat conduction	Replaceability Ecologically: sound/unsound Durability	Cohesion of visual elements Contrast of : Texture Tone Colour Shape

(As an illustration of how the chart aids in analysis, selected products are discussed with audience participation at this point).

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The Madness in my Method

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Text: Paul Coyle

This paper examines the use of method in the contemporary context of Design research within Higher Education in the United Kingdom, and argues that Design researchers should resist any call to legitimise their activities through the adoption of pseudo-scientific mechanistic descriptions. Using simple examples taken from outside the discipline of Design, the paper examines the probable limits of success for any method and concludes that a new class of method is needed for Design research - Wicked Methods - representing a potentially creative, realistic and practical approach to the use of method in Design research.

Issues Beneath the Surface - An important theme in this paper will be 'that which is hidden' or 'beneath the surface'. By examining 'what people say they do' and 'what people really do' the gap between theory and practice, between methods as stated and methods as used, will be explored.

I would like to establish this theme by looking at the conference No Guru, No Method held at the Helsinki University of Art and Design in September 1996.

At the No Guru, No Method conference, the official agenda concerned research in Art and Design schools. The conference opened with a key note speech and the presentations began with a paper entitled "Can Design Ever Become A Science?" by Alain Findeli, Professor of the School of Industrial Design at the University of Montreal.

One of the themes in his paper was "the choice of the right research questions and of adequate methodologies" which he cited as "very critical aspects for the advancement of design theory and practice" (1).

At any conference there is the 'published' agenda, the programme of presentations and seminars. Then there is the 'parallel' agenda, 'below the surface', the one vigorously debated over coffee, over dinner and in the bar. The parallel agenda at the No Guru, No Method conference, began to emerge over afternoon coffee, and concerned the conflict between theory and practice, or more correctly the conflict between theorists and practitioners, a debate which continued at dinner and on into the early hours of the morning.

Typically, the concerns of a 'below the surface' agenda rarely cross over into the associated formal conference. However, when they do, I have observed that they are likely to be passed over by a speaker or Chair anxious to return to timetabled events, and more often that not the true significance of such 'interruptions' is either not realised or ignored.

This might be because the issues are difficult to deal with. They may represent a conflict which is uncomfortable to handle or they may be such 'big' issues that they can not be usefully addressed within the time available. For example, a 'big issue' which seems to come up at some point in the parallel agenda of every conference on design is the question of the professional recognition sought by the discipline.

At Helsinki, the conflict between theory and practice was not explicitly addressed in the main conference until the second day, in a session ostensibly dealing with systems thinking in Design, a theorist had the audacity to speak in an authoritative manner about practice. As the issue had already been hotly debated in the 'subterranean' conference, the arguments between the speaker and members of the audience quickly began, and feelings ran high.

On one level, like the Chair of this session we could simply move on. The row between theory and practice has after all been going on a long time and it seems intractable. On the other hand we could look beneath the surface, consider why this topic arouses such heated feelings and surmise that there is a deeper issue worthy of further attention, namely the ownership of Design.

Richard Buchannan, Professor Emeritus of the Psychology of Art at Harvard University, has identified that "design as it exists today is pulled simultaneously in three directions by jealous guardians"(2) namely art, engineering and the human sciences. However, an exploration of the complex issue of the ownership of Design is beyond the scope of this paper.

My point here is that we sometimes take things at face value and thus can overlook potentially rich sources of information. We see an argument and try to avoid it, whereas reflection on the underlying issues and peoples' feelings can reveal the important questions and significant areas of investigation.

Science: A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing

The argument between theorists and practitioners at Helsinki in September 1996 extended to the question of the role of methods in Design. The theorists proposed what they considered to be detailed and rigorous methods that the designers perceived as foreign and disconnected from practice. This paper is in direct response to this polarised debate between those for and those against method.

The Helsinki conference was in fact a very productive forum for the debates of research and method, very current issues in the United Kingdom where the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is being conducted by the British Government. In the RAE, every University is required to declare its research strategies and output. Its declaration is then rated by a peer group and ultimately money is awarded to each institution according to the rating achieved.

Design educators, with a responsibility for contributing to this research exercise, have been occupied with considerations of how best to respond to the explicit, and perceived implicit, requirements of the RAE. Compared to other 'established' disciplines, Design has found itself subject to implied criticisms of, and self doubts about, a lack of tradition in "acceptable" methods and research outputs.

Design researchers have responded to these challenges in different ways. Some have yielded to a perceived pressure to adopt a more 'scientific', equated with a more rigorous, way of working. Others have opted for a total rejection of methodology and refuse to justify Design practice and research by what they consider to be other disciplines' criteria.

Norma Starszakowna, Professor and Chair in Design at Duncan and Jordanstone College in Scotland, is one of the first people to acknowledge publicly that, although the competing Higher Education institutions have talked confidently and grandly about their research plans and policies, in reality people have felt something quite different. Professor Starszakowna has identified that "There has been confusion and anxiety"(3).

My own observation is that despite endless debate, at endless conferences, Design researchers are still left wondering about basic questions: "What is Design research?" and "Which research method?". Why do designers remain unconvinced by the answers they have repeatedly given to these questions? Why do they lack confidence in their own methods?

Perhaps it is due to a plurality of approaches and, therefore, a bewildering choice of possible correct approaches. Perhaps, other assumptions are at play. For example, the demotivating assumption that other disciplines' methods are rigorous and that by adopting them Design itself might be judged to be 'professional', or that there are currently no well-defined methods in use by Design researchers.

These assumptions are worthy of further scrutiny. Can credibility really be bought by simply putting on scientific clothing? If so, what are the implications for the quality of Design research and the credibility of the discipline of Design as a whole?

To explore these assumptions and find some possible answers to the researcher's question "Which method?" I propose to identify the value and limitations of methods in general.

What People Say They Do is Straightforward

To identify some of the issues pertaining to methods, I would like to use two examples from my own teaching. The first relates to the teaching of simple project management techniques to students.

Having identified the main features of project management for students, such as definition and scheduling of tasks, estimation of completion times etc. I usually ask them to devise their own project management method.

This they do diligently over a period of time and when they have finally taken all factors into account and devised their method, I ask them to consider why they would never, ever use such a method. The reasons they give for not using a method are very straightforward and typically are a) they have completed tasks to date without the need to use a method and b) they think that a method would be too constraining and difficult to follow.

However, with some help most students are able to agree, on reflection, that they

already use a simple and effective method which can be written down as: "*if project deadline is near then work else rest*"

They dismiss this statement of their approach as a 'project management method', indeed they are anxious at first to disguise the fact that this is how they really work. And yet their simple statement addresses many of the issues of project management in a very succinct way, encapsulating important factors such as scheduling of tasks (deadline near), identification of priorities (rest) and decision-making processes (if, then, else).

We can conclude that:

- people sometimes use methods without realising that they are
- in a given context (in this case education) people will sometimes undervalue their practice
- people may disguise, even lie about, what they really do

What People Really Do is Complex

My second example relates to about seven years ago when I used to teach systems analysis to computer scientists, mainly the study of eliciting clear requirements from clients but also some computer programming.

An exercise I conducted with final year undergraduates examined whether they actually used the method they had been taught for computer programming. This short case study illustrates some key issues in the real use of method.

The students had been shown a simple so-called "waterfall" method which can be summarised as four discrete tasks:

1. examine requirements
2. *then* design and document design on paper
3. *then* code at a computer
4. *then* document working programme.

Simple exercises asked students to follow this method and when their programme was complete, to hand in the documentation of their design, together with testing and explanatory notes for the working

program.

However, I suspected that what students were actually doing was writing the design documentation retrospectively, so as to ensure a good fit between what they had done and what they said they had planned to do. The method required them to design on paper and then to sit down and code at a computer. I guessed that what they were actually doing was coding at the computer, deducing a possible design from working program and then documenting a design as though it had been done before the code.

To test out my theory, I asked them to write down the method they had been taught, and then to try and document what they actually did.

This proved to be difficult for the students. In general, finding out what people really do as opposed to what they say they do can be something of a problem. For students, in a system of education which teaches people to do and say what is expected of them, there were issues of feeling threatened by revealing what they actually did, and it was necessary to build up a high level of trust with them.

What was finally revealed was that they used individual methods adapted from the one they had been taught. Their programming method, like the one other students had devised for project management, can be summarised in a simple statement: analyse and design in your head as you code at a computer then repeat until it works.

They applied this method to very small parts of the problem and then worked on 'knitting' small solutions together to form one big solution.

Although their adapted method was similar to the original, most interestingly the students, method talked about a number of very useful practical things which the standard taught method didn't cover.

We can see, for example, in the statement summarising their method that it is possible to do two things at once, "analy-

se and design in your head as you code", that there is iteration "repeat" and there need to be rules about when to stop "until it works".

In their own descriptions of their working practice, it was also clear that they had also addressed a broad range of other issues :

- the importance of clarifying and checking the brief
- the necessity of comparing possible solutions against the brief
- the usefulness of reviews of ideas, with colleagues and clients
- the problems of taking on board suggestions received
- project management

They also had things to say about creativity including how to deal with creative blocks (by taking a break or by deciding to abandon avenues of thought and start again).

In summary, there were elements of the original method in their own but they had taken the text book method, assimilated it and adapted it from a theoretical model into a working practice. And if the Department of Computing had learned from this experience, the students' method would have been documented and taught to the next group of students who would then have had a useful method which eliminated the need to pretend that they used a theoretical model of very limited practical application.

And yet if asked, the students were adamantly against the use of method. They guessed that a standard method would be stifling, rigid and inflexible and that it would remove what they termed the "joy" and "fun" of programming. They claimed that they worked best when they worked intuitively. Most of all they emphasised the creative, indefinable essence of programming. They put any success down to a combination of intuition, experience and luck.

It is possible to conclude from this examples that:

- although most activities can be modelled to some degree by a method, people may not accept a method as an accurate or even desirable way of describing what they do
- people find it difficult to articulate exactly what it is that they are doing
- a seemingly mechanistic method will be adapted and actually used in a rich and complex way
- richness and complexity can make it difficult to reflect on and understand what you are doing.

These bullet points are relevant not just to this example but to the use of methods in many other disciplines, including design. However, I would now like to get to the heart of the question about whether we should be for or against the use of methods by exploring some fundamental problems with all methods.

Madness or Method? Good Research, Bad Design?

One of the first problems raised by a decision to have a method, or use one, is the question of the correct level of detail. Too little detail and its application will be limited; too much detail and you end up with an encyclopaedia of rules and regulations which are difficult to remember and probably impossible to implement in any practical way.

Another danger lies in wait for those exploring the correct level of detail - a dangerous and almost inevitable trap to fall into. Some people become obsessed by defining the next level of detail, to a point where they are so preoccupied with whether that is possible that they lose track of whether they should be bothering. If you believe that problems with your method can be fixed by refining the level of detail in the method, then there are potentially infinite levels of detail to keep you fully occupied for many years to come.

Another issue which is thrown up by all methods is the question of the range of

application. Should your method help you out with one problem, a group of related problems, or any problem?

This is why people who work with methods have to consider the issues of adapted methods, adopted methods, how methods connect with each other, and ultimately the idea of unifying theory i.e. a single method.

Finally, there is the problem of the choice, or construction of, a suitable language in which to express the steps of a method; will it be text, picture or mathematics, or some combination? And then, there is the problem of the time consumed by producing and maintaining the documentation that describes the method.

These three issues (level of detail, range of application and a suitable language to describe a method) contribute to the polarity in the debates for and against the use of method. Theorists are readily absorbed by the level of detail. Practitioner's think it is all madness.

Methods as Models

Despite these polarised views I would argue that there is value in the proposal, discussion and review of methods, in that they present a basis for discussion and a language in which to debate and share experience, even the experiences of other disciplines.

We can see a method as a way of modelling the world and our interaction with it. Viewed as possible models, methods become very useful because they give us a framework in which to talk to others, to review how we work, why we work and how successfully we work. They can be the dialogue between theory and practice.

Where methods are not helpful is when they are considered not as a model but as a set of rules laid down in tablets of stone. These commandments are then used to police and censor what people may legitimately think, do and say.

Because it was expected of them, the

computing students had taken their highly creative process and dressed it to look as though a standard method was being followed. That was after all what got marks.

Because they believe it is expected of them, some Design researchers are taking their highly creative process and dressing it up in scientific terms. That is after all what might safeguard research funds.

Methods as the Dialogue between Theory and Practice

The most obvious advantage of a defined method is that it can be communicated, taught and used for reference purposes. With improved reflection on practice, designers might be able to better articulate their individual approaches and in turn this may offer new insights into ways of working or new areas for enquiry.

Like the students in the case studies, there are designers who claim that they don't use a method but work in an indefinable, intuitive way. Yet as soon as they begin to speak about how they work and their motivations, it is possible to see something of the method they are employing. In this sense we can say that designers do use methods without realising that they are.

It is not surprising that they take this view. It is hard to take what you consider to be an intuitive process, and model it in your head in a methodological way so that it can be written down. You can be discouraged from even attempting this if the cultural or political context strongly signals negative assumptions, that you have no methods worthy of attention. It is a common mistake for non-Designers to downgrade the creative acts of thinking, doing, and making, and to overlook the immensely complex and rich underlying processes.

Practitioners are correct to be cautious about the fitness for purpose of methods. It is right to question the reality of a useful connection to practice. It is right to question whether it is worthwhile to have pre-

scriptive techniques. Yet methods do not need to be written in an overly detailed, rigid way. They can be expressed as guidelines which, as the word suggests, give guidance and structure to any approach. Indeed, some methods may be no more than a checklist of useful questions and prompts.

The case studies in this paper attempt to show that even the seemingly rigorous method may not be all it first seems. Indeed, the next section argues that all methods offer false hopes and promises.

As an immediate example, how many of the people who have tried time management techniques are still looking for that one missing technique which will suddenly help them to manage their (unmanageable) workload?

False Promises

Having argued for the benefits of methods in Design research I would now like to set the limits of their success. Ultimately, I am convinced that currently all methods must fail.

They are built on the premise that the research problem itself is well defined. Whereas in reality, there aren't clear starting points, and the very act of researching or designing alters the possible solutions and maybe even the problem itself. How many times do we solve one problem only to find that it creates a whole new set of problems?

An analogy I find useful is that of an active jigsaw, the shape of individual pieces changing as you fit them together. Problems are wicked. Richard Buchannan, writing in *Design Issues*, cites "the wicked problems approach was formulated by Horst Rittel in the 1960s when design methodology was the subject of intense interest."⁽⁴⁾

He quotes Rittel's definition of a wicked problem as "problems which are ill-formulated, where the information is confusing, where there are many clients and

decision-makers with conflicting values, and where the ramifications in the whole system are thoroughly confusing”.

Bruce Archer, Director of Research at the Royal College of Art in London from 1985 - 1988, and who has written varied publications on the theory and practice of Design research, identifies that not only are Design problems ill-defined but the solutions themselves may be rather elusive.

“The design act is one of discovering and elaborating and adapting requirements and provisions to match one another...it must usually be possible, of course, to establish whether or not the design is a ‘proper’ or ‘acceptable’ answer to the requirements. It may not always be possible to judge whether or not one ‘proper’ answer to the requirements is better or worse than some other ‘proper’ answer” (5).

However, beyond the difficulty of ill-defined problems or solutions, where methods particularly fail is in their total ignorance of people. The creative process does not work in a linear fashion, now do this, then do that. In reality, very few people slavishly follow methods in any discipline. What they really do is adapt, adopt, synthesise or ignore methods completely.

Supporters of methods may argue that this is just a problem of the level of detail in the method, but this would be to ignore the fact that people are wicked. The great thing about people is that they introduce a level of complexity and uncertainty that is impossible to model within a method. And I question why anyone would want to construct such a model? Apart from the fact that the level of detail would make the method useless straight away, it is highly questionable whether we would want to live in a world of mechanised thought and action.

Richard Stivers in his book *The Culture of Cynicism*, warns us that “Never before has any civilisation been subject to such a maze of bureaucratic rules, laws and human techniques” (6).

Methods run a risk of being sterile, devoid of life, of being machine oriented. What is needed is a humanistic and holistic approach.

Summary

I have attempted to construct an argument that there is information below the surface of the seemingly straightforward questions “What is Design research?” and “Which method?”.

I have identified some of the difficult factors to be considered when adequately and appropriately defining a method, and the complexity with which a method may be used.

I have argued, through the choice of case studies, that these issues are not unique to the discipline of Design and have identified some of the general advantages and disadvantages which may well apply to many methods. I chose the case studies not because the approach in the other discipline is better, but to show that the problems are the same. Design research is as worthy of professional recognition and credibility as any that of any other discipline.

Other disciplines’ methods benefit from a cultural bias which promotes technique. It should not surprise us that Design is under pressure to define some mechanistic methods. Western culture, dominated by technology, is mechanistic in its approach to virtually every aspect of life. Richard Stivers traces this motivation back to “The growing prestige of science from the 17th to the 19th centuries (which) elevated the status of the fact. The mission of mechanistic science was to break objects down to their even smaller constituent parts. This atomistic approach produced a plethora of facts...objectivity lay in the laws of science” (7). And yet promisingly, the latest theories of science acknowledge uncertainty, complexity, unpredictability, inter-relatedness and chaos.

I have argued for method as a way of modelling the world which allows debate,

communication and reference, for the definition and use of method which is flexible and that pays due regard to people. I do not endorse either the mechanisation of thought or worship at the altar of the computer. The great strength of art and Design, as opposed to technology, is its holistic approach and its emphasis on people.

The challenge for Design is therefore not a mundane question of "Which method?". It would be a mistake to get stuck in a sterile debate of the correct method or to go down a path leading to some attempt to mechanise art and Design practice. There will not be a single or small group of methods. There will always be a question of the difference between a method as stated and the method as used.

The issue of methods can be the catalyst for lively and rewarding debate on the goals, subject matter, contribution and future directions of Design, as long as the debate does not degenerate into a squabble between theorists and practitioners.

Conclusion: Let's Have Wicked Methods

Design should resist any call to legitimise its research activities through a pseudo-scientific mechanistic description. However, equally it would be a mistake to assume that there is no role for method in Design research.

The challenge is to avoid the madness of mechanistic procedures, and instead to make Design methods broad both in their description and application based on accurate descriptions of what designers are actually doing.

We need to enrich Design research methods by building in an explicit recognition of the wicked problems in the domain of Design and the wicked needs and motivations of people - the designers who will use any such methods and the clients who use their products. What we need is Wicked Methods.

Footnotes

1. *Can Design Ever Become A Science* by Alan Findeli. A paper presented to the conference No Guru, No Method 4th - 6th September 1996, Helsinki.
2. *Myth and Maturity: Toward a New Order in the Decade of Design* by Richard Buchannan. A paper published in *Design Issues*, volume 5, number 2, 1990, pages 70 -80.
3. *Visual Research - the "Coming of Age"* by Georgina Follett and Norma Starszakowna. A paper presented to the conference No Guru, No Method 4th -6th September 1996, Helsinki.
4. *Wicked problems in Design Thinking* by Richard Buchannan. A paper published in *Design Issues*, volume 8, number 2, 1992, pages 5 -21.
5. *Design and Technological Awareness in Education* by Bruce Archer and Phil Roberts. . A paper published in *Modelling: The Language of Design*, occasional paper no 1, 1992, pages 3 -4.
6. *The Culture of Cynicism* by Richard Stivers, 1994, chapter 4, *From the Moral to the Technical: Necessity*, page 75.
7. *The Madness in My Method* by Paul Coyle, University of Central Lancashire, UK

Contextual Designer - The inner Voice and the Passion in the Moment of Creation

Text: Virpi Leikola

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By education she is M.Sc (Tech.) in a area of graphic arts technology from Helsinki University of Technology where she has also studied industrial psychology and management parallel with her graphic design studies of at University of Art and Design Helsinki.

In this paper I would like to guide the discussion about the 'design thinking' to the level of 'design feeling' as an essential area of exploration for practitioners and academics in the design field.

My underlying argument is that the driving force in any designer's work are her/his inner feelings, the burn inside - the passion.

Design has been widely defined as 'the idea and the execution'. The act of design as such, not the process of design but the act itself, has not been much, nor deeply, explored. The discussion about the sources of designers' inspiration and new ideas, has been circulating around the management of the design process in terms of organizing and building design teams. These are important issues and can be seen as necessary facilities for designing. However, on their own, as mechanistic apparatus, they do not reach the event of designing itself. Similarly as dancing is dancing, designing is designing. While

taking a step backwards and trying to define the issue - designing - it slips away

from the definer. The flow of creation, the passion, the intuition - the feelings inside - are the essence of creation and inspiration. The essence is there in the being, in the event, in inging.

This paper focuses on unfolding the basic concepts around the feeling in the try to touch the ever existing, thou never outside enterable context of designing - the moment of creation. The long and ability for being in presence, solitudeness, silence, intimacy, love, flow and the resonance of mind and body, as essential issues around the act of designing, will be studied via the stories of practitioners and the theoretizing. The creation of meaning, in the sense of externalizing the inner in the event - in designing, the world of inner voices, and the impressionistic way of expressing, are the other central themes of the paper. The stories around the moment of creation and the feeling of flow referred here, are besides designers, gathered also

among other creative workers, such as architects, artists, craftsmen, writers, actors, and research scientists. A designer in creation is always in a context with her/himself, with her/his inner voices. Regardless of the time and the space s/he is in an event, which is actualizing the meanings of the inner to be created and externalized.

I would like to thank Dr. Pekka Korvenmaa, for his collegial support in actualization this paper to be public. With all my being, I do thank my close friends, Claes Gustafsson, Martin Fuglsang and Annu Korhonen, for their being. The text is based on our reflections around the topic, and the life in general. Our voices has been resonating, this is as well their text as it is mine.

Prelude to the World of Voices

"I try to take off to entire feelings and atmospheres, which bring images to me. I search my way to the solitude cost.

I know the place, but every time there is a different path leading to there. There, I find the most beautiful stones. On the sand surface, I maybe draw images, which are faded away by the waves.

The waves of the unconscious wash the cost of the conscious. In the borderline of the water and the land, there are the surprises, images, findings. HERE my selection is instinctly sure. I believe to my image. I got with me that burning feeling, which makes the hand fly and to forget the time, until I have tested my image and realized it carrying or failing."

(Juhani Salovaara 1984)

By reading industrial designer Juhani Salovaara's reflection on the moment of creation, it makes me wonder how modest man Ludwig Wittgenstein must have been while articulating those famous words of his, which freely go about like this "what cannot be said, have to be quiet about". At least designer Salovaara is touching with his words a very intimate and intensive feeling, an experience, a phenomenon, for which there is not straight words as such. His words are painting an image in front of the reader, here me. With tones

and colours, shapes and smells are touching my inner experiences of the phenomenon, about which I think, with my understanding and reality, he is telling about. And the touch is strong, while the experience which he is painting about is so very intimate, and delicately close to the reality, the inner voices of mine. The intimacy of the story-telling, the story as such, and the touched experiences of the reader or the listener, are making his way of communicating a very powerful in bringing his inner voices, feelings and thoughts, into the world.

How one describes feelings? Maybe circulating around them, telling stories, small and nuanced, big and general, painting an image about the experienced moment, and about the existence in it, creating an atmosphere to a listener, reader, or a viewer, an atmosphere of understanding, letting the listener open up a door, and enter to the space of his voices, thou it is a space where the listener cannot fully ever enter. So will I try to discuss around that feeling, which the most creative people feel, and very intensively, while being in the flow of creation, forgetting the time and the space around, forgetting all concrete, material needs, while the pulse is beating at an accelerated tempo, cheeks all red, and all the body is warming - burning. The burn, flow, creation, how ever one would like to call it, while there is not any specific definition for it, nor a set name. It is an experience, a phenomenon, like happiness, euphoria, ecstasy, or orgasm, which everyone who do experience it, is recognizing it right away, and its existence is very clear, thou there might have not been before any conscious thinking around it. The thing is, that as talking about an experience of euphoria for example, we cannot say that the feeling one is feeling, would be the same as someone else is feeling, the experience is unique, unique for every person, unique in the situation, in that event. Nor there is no space for comparison between the experiences, while feelings are not measurable, and not under the quantitative analysis. We can, of course, talk about and around them, touch them as Salovaara has made in his text, with tones and voices. Thou Salovaara modestly explained, that his

lines are just a metaphor he is using, and that it is a very concrete one, a specific cost with sand and stones stemming far from the childhood, I do think his lines are more than that, more than just a metaphor. The meaning is inbound to the tones and to the rhythm of the lines, which are opening up to the world as such, as his inner voices talking to the world, like he would be turning his heart inside out. It has been said, that why to talk with metaphors, while we can talk about the things as they are, and that is a challenge. I think that is what is happening in Salovaara's lines, the lines are talking to the world as such, meanings inbound to the form of them, to the rhythm of them, to the voices echoing from them. And the echoes are different for each reader or listener, they are telling a different story, carrying different meanings, awaking different feelings and atmospheres, in connection to the reaching and to the touching of the tone of the writer, in dependence to the experiences, lived life, and sensitivity of the reader or the listener, and to his ability to listen, feel, and to be open to the voices of the teller, and to her/his willingness to be touched inside, with the voices from the outside. The ground for these echoes could be called memes, as Claes Gustafsson (1994) does, while he is explaining them to be as the cultural and personal inheritance, a landscape of meanings we are carrying with, which is changing all the time, but very slowly, and the past is always forming the view and the landscape of the future. Memes are like genes, forming us as human beings, defining what we are, without we having a control to it by ourselves. And as the landscape is so unexplored, while there is not any chance to explore it truly through, there is avoidably a temptation for continuous exploration, the continuous reflection and experiencing, while continuing Martin Fuglsang's (1997) reflection about the enigma of reflection, the ever continuing try of the conscious to encapsulate the ever escaping meaning, to which we are bound to. And contributing to Gustafsson's theory about the memes, seen as cultural genes of meanings, experiences, understanding and memory, in driving us for the continuous exploration and self-

reflection, and for the human need of explaining and building sort of theories and systems, for ourselves, of phenomena and experiences happening to and in us. So what I am trying to do with this paper is to light with words the phenomenon of the feeling of creation, of flow, which may sound impossible while taking into consideration the words of Wittgenstein. Though there is not specific words, while the feelings are feelable, not definable, I will try to circle around the focus of the paper, the feeling of creation, the burn, the flow, and light it from different perspectives, with the voices of designers and artists, and other creative people, and theoreticizing around the themes stemming from that empiria. My purpose is to create an atmosphere around the text, to awake feelings, and experiences, add some new perspectives to the already being experiences of the reader or a listener, and so let him to add her/his meanings to the story, and increase her/his understanding about the moment of creation.

This text itself is as much a piece of creation as the object of the observation is, the phenomenon of the flow itself. I am creating as well as I am writing about the creation; creating atmospheres and awaking sensations while writing about the atmospheres-creating and sensations-awaking of the designers and artists at their work, at their moment of flow. I experience the flow very intensively myself, while writing as a researcher, and very much while practising as a graphic designer, so I am here also practising self-reflexivity towards the text without pointing out the truths of the sayings or texts of the artists and designers which I am using as my empirical material, but lighting them, serving as a guide on the land of disseminated perspectives to the reader or listener to observe her/himself, and add and find her/his own meanings and understandings into and from them. It should be said in here, while talking about the truth and the reality, that there is not any universal final truth, nor reality for me, just realities and truths of individuals, bound to their meanings, their context. With reality I do mean the inner reality of oneself, the inner voice, and further more I am agreeing

with Ole Fogh Kirkeby (1994), that the reality is showing itself in action, in the event, where the meaning is created, in an event, which is then again bound to the context.

The reflexivity of this text is like a rubber mass, flexibly approached from different directions, from one of a practitioner or a theorist, voices inbound in it, different stories and different voices telling about the phenomenon under the research, theory intertwined to the empiria. Without underlining the theory out, it is inbound to the text, as the knowledge of using a tool is inbound to the action of an artist. The wholeness of the image is in telling a story, not the tool used, nor just the ability to use the tool. The understanding of using a tool for creation is creating something new, while intertwined with the own meanings of the user, meanings stemming from the inside.

An Impressionist on the Sea of Momentarity

As well as the purpose of any impressionistic piece of creation, the purpose of this text is about letting the voices resonate to form up a statue of voices to show an image, or a view, to a reader or a listener. To put it metaphorically, this is about acting as one vocalist among others in a chorus of different voices and stories, letting the voices resonate and so form a song with tones, rhythm and colours inbound to it, and with it, to paint an entire picture, not entire in a sense of being able to show all, only glimpses of the object under the picturing, but as such, being as an impressionist piece of art. Then the reality, the inner voices of the singers, could be seen as appearing glimpses of light of a lighthouse, showing way for the listener on the sea, not showing the one and only way, the right one, while there is not one, but guiding and showing the way on the sea of immeasurable possibilities to sail towards the destination decided by the seafarer.

While going back to the argumentation towards the words of Wittgenstein, we cannot underplay the power of language. The language itself is not the feeling, nor the reality, but it is a good tool in trying to

bring the reality to us, the inner feelings, the inner voice of oneself. As Kirkeby puts it, the meaning is created in the action. The action in here is the writing or talking, use of words, as a language, where the meaning is actualizing in that event, where the text is writing itself, which is also one of the leading French post-structuralists, Roland Barthes' main arguments concerning about the text. So the text is leading one to the ideas which were not in mind when starting the writing, as Gustafsson formulates the importance of the writing process as the externalization of thoughts, of unconscious, and so letting the inner voices talk to the conscious via the bodily phenomenon, in here, the writing, which as well could be, in an other context, painting, dancing, playing, any of the ways of the expression.

Elaborated further, according to Fuglsang, thoughts are bound to the body and hence to the situation, to the contextuality. So an artist is always in his/her context, from where s/he is writing, painting, moving, which is the point, where the organizing organizes, and never will be captured by a text after the moment has passed, and while not knowing the very context of the creator, and because "it is always in the temporality of presence, and the observation is always in distance", as he puts it. While observing or reflecting to the moment, the moment has already passed. The momentarity of the life has to be accepted as the basic notion against an idea of being able to retrospectively capture the point of reality, the inner voice, which only could be felt, experienced, in the moment, but not defined, from the distance.

With this text in here, I try to unfold the same phenomenon the artists are unfolding in their action of creation, trying to find the voice for expressing the feeling which cannot be captured by words, paints, movements as such. We can just circulate around that, which could be only felt, not described, the focus is in there, the empty space, where the dance dances, and the organizing organizes, the space which we ever cannot enter, nor encapsulate.

We are always bound to meaning, meaning which is in the context, in the moment. "When time is temporal, there is a meaning which escapes our consciousness, being an intrinsic part of our body, and thus always accompanying the present, as a non-distance bottomlessness", as Fuglsang beautifully puts it, and continues; "perhaps this is where the organizing is organizing as the enigma of reflection, an enigma which we never resolve, but which is the blind spot enabling us to enter into the landscape of the reflexive". So the reflection around a phenomenon of the feeling of creation is eternally stemming from the coastlessness of the temptation to enter to the space of unenterable, temptation to be on the borderline, the space where with Salovaara's words the waves of unconscious are washing the borderline of the unconscious.

My aim of discussing around the moment of creation and the feeling of flow, is to light that phenomenon holistically, under incoherent lights, which then may form a picture with new views for the reader. The idea of this text is to leave the reflection to the reader or to the listener. According to Janne Porttikivi (1996), the try to light the so-called truth, or reality, it needs to take a step away from unjust translations of the author. Further more according to him, a just mirror cannot anything else but to show the objects of mirroring as they are. With that he means that the author is not dead in a sense, but spread around the space, which is not any more just about the difference between the life and the object, but the entire life. Where as Barthes (1993) sees the author's death after s/he has written her/his text, with which he may mean that the author has not the control to the text after it is released from his hands. So the author cannot control the use nor the translation of her/his text.

Finally, as a creator, I would be more than happy being a poet, being able to tell stories in a concentrated form, avoiding all this amount of unnecessary words. As Nietzsche and Heidegger have said, "that ordinary language is a worn-down poem", so poetry could be seen as a manifestation

of pure passion. While unfortunately not being a poet, in the following paragraphs, I will light the phenomenon of the flow from the perspectives of some central themes around it; the solitudeness and being presence, stemming to the intimacy; love as a close feeling to the flow; the energy flow and the preparation; and the resonance of the mind and the body. The possibility of experiencing the flow together, and conditions for inspiration and stimulation, will be discussed later.

The Intimacy of Solitudeness

*That way is my will; I trust
in myself and in my grip.
The sea is open, into the blue
Drives my Genoan ship.*

*Everything shines for me new
and newer, Noon sleeps
upon space and time- :
Only your eye - monstrously
stares at me, infinity!*

("Toward New Seas" by Friedrich Nietzsche)

As Nietzsche's poem "Toward New Seas" is unbelievably brilliant in its intensity and power of telling, this seafaring metaphor of discoverer embraces many aspects of being a creator, or just a human being. It is seen by Harries (1988), inviting a reading of 'passing beyond the old to the new'. By his reading, Nietzsche knows that, like those of Dante's Ulysses, his curiosity and craving will not be sated by any discovery. This could be seen as the joyful border crossing between rational and irrational, conscious and unconscious. Barthes (1973) sees imaginary of the text, here seen as a product of creation, as the unconscious of the unconscious, referring to Nietzsche as he has embraced enthusiasm, practice and ethical action, which they claim to have been put to the margin as a science. For a creative person, with strong intuition, this kind of 'being on my way' is very recognizable, both for the tones of moving like an explorer and being on the border of the conscious and the unconscious, the old and the new; but also for the notion of being alone, the soli-

tudeness of an explorer. Also it could be seen as a general appearance of the way of being, being on the way, so living, living on the border, living with enthusiasm, which is then very much seen to be bound to the way of living and working of the artists, one with feeling, and with passion. To elaborate more around the promises of Nietzsche's seafaring metaphor, we can find notions of the human character as an explorer, who, in the end, and what lures Nietzsche, is not so much living in the promise of a new land as the depth of the sea,

borders, able to enter to the unexplored land, where s/he may or may not do findings, always unique, because the one and only solution does not exist. Poetry can also be seen as a perpetuation of egotism. Poems are highly self-reflective, ego as the center of the time and space. Egotism positively seen is vitalism, power of life, which can not be explained scientifically. According to vitalists the most important value is the life itself. Nietzsche as a vitalist, 'energizes', and sees everybody with the talents of an artist, having abi-



Bild 3
Bild från en av konferensens presentationer.

the whirlpool that means shipwreck. The explorer wants to go zu Grunde, to perish, as Harries has been reading Nietzsche. So this is a strong argument for the impossibility of the final truth. Harries has put it well: "Nietzsche demands of those who would follow him courage in the face of the constant possibility and final inevitability of shipwreck. Those who evade that possibility, who think themselves secure on firm land of one sort or another and are unwilling to recognize that we are all at the sea and that there is no ship not threatened by shipwreck, also have to refuse the abysmal depth of reality, that is to say, have to refuse life". This goes well with the concept of heroism by Nietzsche, where a hero is seen as a person having ability to cross the borders, the borders of conscious and unconscious, borders of challenges, in which notion the artist is the person able to do that, to cross the

lity to cross the borders, also in a very majestic way seen as heroism, very well suited with the image of an artist as a divine creator.

Paradoxically, another fundamental issue which may still be found from Nietzsche's seafaring metaphor, bound to the being of a divine, immortal creator, concerns the acknowledgement of final 'shipwreck' - the death. In management literature, the death has been embraced by Burkhard Sievers (1986) as one of his carrying arguments: "Any attempt towards discovering existential dimensions of meaning can be accomplished only if social scientists, managers and workers alike, both individually as well as collectively, again become aware of death as a fact of life; it is only through acknowledging mortality that humanization can occur". To bring this to the working of artists, it

would mean, that at the same time an artist would feel mortality in front of the final shipwreck, still sailing heroically, with the feeling of immortality. So an artist may be bound to the opposites of being, being in and out, present and distant. So it is not any solid, one way of being, but being very much in the movement, in the turns of the life, in the moment, so it requires a great deal of trust in oneself, and in one's grip, understanding, as said in Nietzsche's poem, the braveness, and the ability to present, to face the moment, with an open soul. As the pain is defining the happiness, so is the mortality giving energy to live, and to create. As put by Medea, "You have navigated with ageing soul far from the paternal home, passing beyond the sea as double rocks, and you now inhabit a foreign land", which could be translated as the finding of oneself, also as one of the event of innovation and creation.

As well it appears in egoism, to the artists, it is very common to have a great longing and need for distance and being alone while being in creation. As Johanna Rope, an architect and a visual artist, explained, that she needs to be sure, that when she starts working, she can be alone, have her room, into where she can enter, and shut the door behind her. The intimacy have to be ensured. Otherwise it would be like ribbing off the curtain just at the moment when one is naked. The moment of creation is so intimate, being so open with the soul, that the distance and the solitudeness is needed. It is very much being present, with oneself, in the moment, in a space and time of one's own, where the creation is taking place.

Esa Sariola, a prose writer and a dramatist, says that while being in a good writing mood, and having the process on, he wants to keep distance from things which might occupy his mind too much, like watching a movie with a serious topic or reading a touching book, which are too near to the material he is doing. He wants to keep untouched, unreachd, by other stories, as he articulated it, while writing his own one. The written material he could follow then, are for example televi-

sion series and comedies, which he is, of course, intensively following with the eye of a professional, commenting the screen writing and so.

To elaborate what it then means to have distance, to be alone, to be present, I would go to qualities of artists. Intuition is very much bound to the strengths of artists. To be intuitive captures high sensitivity. Sensitivity to the things around, being open to the outside, stemming from the inside, from the sensation of self and from the trust to one's own feelings. An intuitive person builds opinions and decisions on her/his feelings, sensations of the things, how the reality is appearing to her/him. And as the reality is seen as the inner voice of oneself, one have to be pretty strong with one's own identity, the subjectivity of one's life, having own voice as the dominating one in the chorus of life. This without praising any mysticism around the character of an artist. Also narcissism and egoism attached to artists, have not to be taken negative qualities, but very essential and powerful ones considering the needs of creativity, meaning the shift from the concrete to the spiritual, the space needed to allow for oneself to get the inside externalized, being present, allowing feelings to conduct the energy to come out. Also it is a great demonstration of listening, listening oneself, the inner voices, which would not be possible without the concentration, and by many means the concentration into oneself and the insides of the inner voices, from where the energy is stemming out. There would not be anything new to give out, awake the mind of the observer, as a piece of art, if not stemming from the artist her/himself. Otherwise it would be just mechanistic copying. As Marcus Groth, an actor and a director, put it, that the ability to create means being, existing, being present to the moment, being self. Also the creation is very much about listening the outside voices, to get inspired and influenced, moved and touched by the meanings of the others to increase the understanding. Like the feeling of love, the flow is stemming from the inside, thou the stimulus is coming from the outside. So the being present, for oneself, at the moment of crea-

tion, is very much like breathing, inhaling outside voices and exhaling the inner out, getting and giving.

The integrity of the moment of creation is remarkable. Everything feels to flow together, and to get externalized in a new form. The feeling of happiness and the feeling of productiveness are very strongly present, as Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1992) has been describing the feeling of flow. The conscious and the unconscious are working seamlessly together, the body is flowing steered by the mind, and the mind is flowing affected by the bodily event of the creation itself. The entirety of the being is making the being itself, as such, the main thing, and so this notion is reaching the ideas of Zen-Buddhism, resembling the idea of enlightenment. At this moment, the meanings are created. So the creator, an artist or a designer, is always in a context with her/himself, in the moment of creation, in seizing the moment, the feeling. Mark Cousins (1996) has put it clearly and concretely to the context of working, while saying that the passion is the driving force of working. The flow, the burn itself which invites us to externalize the inner energies, reenergizing us with the power of creation.

Finally, to close the discussion about the longing for the intimacy of solitude, where the presence can take place, it seems that the moment of creation is concentrated around the being, existing, being present, being open, naked, in the moment, entirely and focused, and letting the creation happen.

Togetheraleness

"There is only one passion which satisfies man's need to unite himself with the world, and to acquire at the same time a sense of integrity and individuality, and this is love. Love is union with somebody, or something, outside oneself, under the condition of retaining the separateness and integrity of one's own self. It is an experience of sharing, of communication, which permits the full unfolding of one's own inner activity. The experience of love does away the necessity of illusions. There

is no need to inflate the image of the other person, or of myself, since the reality of active sharing and loving permits me to transcend my individualized existence, and at the same time to experience myself as the bearer of the active powers which constitute the act of loving. What matters is the particular quality of loving, not the object. Love is in the experience of human solidarity with our fellow creatures, it is in the erotic love of man and woman, in the love of the mother for the child, and also in the love for oneself, as a human being; it is the mystical experience of union. In the act of loving, I am one with All, and yet I am myself, a unique, separate, limited, mortal human being. Indeed out of the very polarity between separateness and union, love is born and reborn."

(Erich Fromm 1955)

Erich Fromm's notions of love is by itself telling a great story about qualities of love, but also the love could be rather easily replaced by the feeling of flow. Basically, Fromm's notion could be seen as an argument against the subject - object orientation, and as an argument for the living in, being, existing, in a moment, feeling, thinking, doing, making - the form of inging - continuous way of living in; and in addition, to embrace the quality, the aesthetics of the being, living, feeling, doing. So it is the case in the feeling of flow, the aesthetics of the being in the moment, being present in life. So does the living the present then mean the same qualities as the living in love? We might get new perspectives for the flow by correlating it with the resembling qualities of love.

While starting to unfold the feelings of love and flow, it could be in a very simple level said that whereas love could be seen as a feeling of a long or even eternal time, flow is more or less a phenomenon of a certain period of time, happening relatively momentarily. For both the feelings, it is very central, that they are stemming from the inside, as deeply felt feelings. The stimulus of the feeling may come from the outside, but the ability to have flow, as the love, is living inside oneself. In love the other person, and in flow the piece of cre-

ation is a kind of path of the externalization of the feeling living inside. This goes together with Nietzsche's notion, discussed in the previous paragraph, that who ever can cross borders and that everybody is carrying the ability for creation inside oneself, so it could be seen, that the ability to love is an ever existing talent in the inside, which then just have to be called to the outside. In both the feelings, the feeling is very deep and profound, the time and the space loose importance, or there is not any conscious of them at all. Everything what is happening, is happening in there, in the moment, in the feeling. So it could be said, that there is not any time, nor space, just the passion. Thou said some lines ago, that the feeling of love is longer in the time, there could be recognized this even greater resemblance between the feelings of flow and love, that also in love, there are inevitably certain moments, when the feeling is even more intensively felt, like the intensity of flow. Putting this into concrete, that kind of moment could be a moment of meeting, a confrontation, where the inner energies of two people are meeting, in the feeling of understanding, where the resonance of the two takes place. So it could be seen, that the profound feeling is all the time living inside, but it finds its path out via a person or a piece of creation, where in that expression there could be moments of high resonance between the inner feeling and the other from the outside, the beloved one or the fruit of creation, which at that moment feels to melt together to one, to resonance as one voice.

In love, there is an essential part what makes it so unique, and so very entire, and it is the intimacy and the ultimate feeling of presence, being, being together, the togetherness with the beloved one, the feeling of the otherness without being an other outside, but the other inside the other, like being one, entire, whole together. Very strong and real, in love, is the togetherness by two in love - togetheraleness - having a space just for each other, a sanctuary, sharing it together, the great intimacy and feeling of being privileged, humble and happy. As in solitudeness, in love and its togetheraleness, other people

are distant, or distantly present, the other is occupying the mind, feeling and thought. Like in the flow while being together with the creation, there is not much space for others. Of course, there are times when being for the others also, but also then, the primary being is bounded to the other other, with whom one feels to be together thou being distant bodily, the mental bend is there, like the beloved ones, and like an artist is oftenly feeling, when being in the process or period of creation. Being in an other place, with other people and things is possible, of course, and how the life is normally going, but the mind is with the other other, longing and cherishing the idea of ability to get together. By discussing around characteristics and qualities of the feelings of flow and love, there is appearing nice new views and perspectives for the flow. Is it so that like in love, in the creation the creation is always present for the creator, thou being apart from the actual creation? So that it would be living along, in the mind as an enigma of the inner energies and the power of the creation. Is the creation intertwining the life to entirety of itself, with the intensity and totality of presence.

Bodily Issues

The concrete space for the creation to take place is typically very important for the creative persons, as discussed already before, to get the distance from the others, and to get the sanctuary quaranteed. Also the having of own rituals around the happening is essentially important. As a very tiny but very important personal ritual, one scientist explained how he just cannot slow down to the mood of writing without his headphones on him, regardless if there is music or not. Or like Hilikka Kauhainen, a visual artist, explained how she unconsciously knows when the flow is coming, it could take few days, there is a kind of an atmosphere of preparation present, to slow oneself to the mood of creation, to get other things ready, to clean the table for the next trip. It is like a path to the sources of creation, while the idea gets matured on the way to the final externalization of it, which then is a thunder storm alike happening. One designer is experien-

cing this being on the way as a preparation very literally. As he explains according to Eeva Kokkonen's (1996) interview, he is walking all his ideas. He is walking and walking along streets until the idea comes. So he can literally locate the place or the cross-road, where an idea or a form sees the day - light.

As Kauhanen continued, the actual thunder storm, after the silent period of preparation, is then a very intensive moment. The cheeks are blossoming and all the body is concentrated to the creation, which she describes to be a very energetic and good feeling, just alike Csikszentmihalyi (1992) has put the most central feelings of the flow; the feelings of happiness and productivity. Like Kauhanen is feeling the heat, Juhani Salovaara, an industrial designer, has measured his accelerated pulse during the creation. As well are the feelings of heat and acceleration of the body also diagnostized by a medical doctor and a physiologist, George Klein (1990) in his many articles. The preparation and the event could easily be seen in physical words as an energy loading and an explosion, conscious or unconscious. Very conscious it is for actors for example. The gathering of the information around the role and the play, the learning of the repliques of the role, and the mental, or even physical, energy loading and psyching oneself to get into the mood and atmosphere of the play and the part. But then, what is the irrational part of the whole preparation, is the very sudden end of it. The actor is all alone there on the stage. No help, no nothing at all. Just alone getting the energy out of oneself. Of course there are the other actors, and the audience, but in the final contribution, externalization of the role, the actor is all alone. As for designers, ones have to know how to use the tools of creation, but in the moment of creation, while the externalization of the inside is happening, one is alone, thou the working group might be there around, they are basically just for inspiration and for the increase of the understanding of the whole project, as the fellow actors are in the theatre case. Also for a pianist, there have to be the very obvious general training of the technique to play, theory of the

music and so on; and then the local, piece wise preparation for each piece of music s/he is supposed to play, the atmospheres and the meanings. Also s/he is finally alone at the moment of presentation.

In both feelings, the resonance, or the melt, of the body and the mind is phenomenal. The mind is moving the body, and the body is moving the mind. In flow it is happening with oneself only. The body and the mind are very much the same, moving at the same rhythm, resonating together, feeding each other. Like in making love, a touch of the beloved one awakes the soul and the spirit, and vice versa the spirit awaking the body, in flow the move of the hand while the aesthetics of the drawing a line may let new ideas blossom, and the ideas again move the body, in synchrony, feeding each other. Frida Kahlo's double self-portrait "Flag of Hope" - painted after an operation on her spinal column - shows how Kahlo's inner and outer worlds were interwoven, and how she was manifesting it brilliantly in this painting, as in so many other paintings of hers. As translated by Kettenman (1997), on the left, she is lying on a stretcher, the body marked with incisions, in a landscape of a desert, under the male sun, weakly, looking to the sun. On the right, she is sitting on the edge of the abyss, looking arrogantly to the observer, in a red festival attire with hair trimming and jewellery, in a landscape of a desert, under the female moon, four spermatozoa on her chest and lap, with a leather corset, the support of her back and hips, in one hand, a flag with a text of "*Arbol de la esperanza mantente firme*", "*The tree of hope, maintain solid*"

Epilogue - The Defence of Passion

"Et après? And afterwards?"

- What to write now? Can you still write anything?

- One writes with one's desire, and I am not through desiring."

(Roland Barthes)

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Konsommé - ett seminarium om immateriell design, internet och virtual reality

Text: Olle Torgny

När konferensen "Mind over Matter" anordnades våren 1996, var det någonting som jag fick reda på bland annat genom ett massutsänt epostmeddelande från någon på universitetet, med rubriken "Annorlunda, mystisk konferens".

I våras var det åter dags för en "annorlunda, mystisk konferens", denna gång på Nationalmuseum och i Futurnitures regi. Ämnet var även denna gång immateriell design och även denna gång kom en stor del av resonemanget att kretsa kring nya medier och alternativa verkligheter, men också kring ett nytt, immateriellt förhållningssätt till produkter, tjänster och handel.

Ämnet immateriella produkter är liksom virtuella världar ett svårt ämne, dels för att det är nyetablerat och har många definitioner men också för att en del av de nya företeelserna i sin natur är komplexa. När någonting är uppbyggt av föreställningar blir det också beroende av attityder och förkunskaper hos den som ska tolka. Virtuella världar kan se ut precis som helst och variera i komplexitet från datorns simulerande skrivbord till flerdimensionella rumsligheter som inte liknar någonting vi har sett i den så kallade verkligheten. Därför är det naturligt att

de som studerat fenomenen i lite mera detalj kan ha svårt att förklara olika begrepp och aspekter för en ovan publik. Själv tycker jag samtidigt att det är spännande och stimulerande att det idag finns nya designområden och teorier där man verkligen måste anstränga sig för att "hänga med"

Futurniture, som arrangerade Konsommé, är ett designföretag som startade 1993 i samband med utställningsprojektet "Futurniture" på galleri Doktor Glas i Kungsträdgården. Här ställdes olika designobjekt ut, merparten till försäljning, i de flesta fall producerade i respektive formgivares regi. Den här formen för produktion och försäljning fick snart ett uppsving och ett av de tydligaste exemplen är Designorget. Utställningen följdes upp med ännu en utställning i Paris och fler utställningsprojekt i Stockholm, varvid bland annat samarbete med reklammannen och designsamlaren Torbjörn Lenskog etablerades.

I vintras organiserade Futurniture tillsammans med Torbjörn Lenskog en utställning med valda delar av dennes designsamling. Utställningens namn var "Reternity" och platsen Nationalmuseum. Samtidigt som "Reternity" var en

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manifestation av nittonhundralets modernistiska produktkultur, ville man arrangera ett seminarium om de designområden som idag utvecklas snabbast, i anslutning till vårt samhälles förändring, årtusendeskifte osv.

Konsommé bestod förutom själva seminariet av en inledande endagsworkshop där en utvald krets av designers, konstnärer och kritiker diskuterade kring möjliga tidstypiska aktiviteter för Kulturhuvudstadsåret, framför allt med sikte på nya medier, verkligheter och designformer.

Därpå följde seminariet med flera internationellt kända talare, med en majoritet av designers och designstuderande i publiken.

Bild 4
Marcos Novak



Av talarna var det främst Christine Atha från Design Museum i London som resonerade kring konsumentprodukter, tingens roll i vår vardag samt hur ting upplevs och tolkas. Hon jämförde också vår gradvisa tillväxning till ny teknik som t ex epost med hur vi tidigare passat in ny teknik i vår miljö. Hon visade bland annat en bild av ett demonstrations tillfälle där den första telefonlinjen Paris - London visades upp 1891. Hon såg också den nya informationstekniken som en möjlighet att utöver alla andra kända möjligheter även

uppmuntra kulturella och sociala aktiviteter.

Roy Ascott, chef för The Centre for Advanced Inquiry in the Interactive Arts på Gwent College of Higher Education, berättade om sin medverkan i ett par projekt kring att skapa ett digitalt museum. Ascott berättade om ambitionerna att i elektronisk form skapa ett museum med betoning på dess roll som mötesplats. En intressant fråga är naturligtvis vad man ska visa i ett digitalt museum. Som ett exempel på detta berättade Ascott om hur synen på konst, och konstens roll, har förändrats. Förr var konstnären den aktiva emedan betraktaren var passiv - idag sker en utveckling mot det omvända förhållandet. Konsten har övergått från att vara passiv till att vara interaktiv. Härvid berörde Ascott även synen på verkligheten, som han menar är i sin helhet metaforisk dvs att ingenting kan förstås i termer av sig självt. Vi ägnar oss idag i tilltagande grad åt att manipulera historien, vi roar oss med att simulera det förflutna och kan med nya verktyg skapa en alternativ nutid.

Frigörelse från kroppen var ett fenomen som Ascott och flera av talarna tog upp. Även om vi i praktiken fortfarande är beroende av våra kroppar har vårt förhållande till dem förändras i takt med att ny teknik gjort det möjligt för oss att röra oss viktlost i virtuella verkligheter. Även i virtuella verkligheter bjuds möjligheter att representera oss själva genom någon form av förkroppsligande, t ex avater, vilket Ascott ville ifrågasätta och hellre framhålla nya metaforer för förkroppsligande. Ascott talade också om "The Wormhole", maskhållet, som metafor för hur vi under nya former rör oss från idé till idé, bild till bild, tanke till tanke, utan att vara helt medvetna om hur förflyttningen går till.

Även Marcos Novak, rektor för Advanced Design Research Program på School of Architecture, University of Texas i Austin talade om "The Wormhole", framför allt i förhållande till det krökta rummet och den euklidiska geometriens tillkorta kommande i såväl cyberrymden som idenfysiska världen. Novak har myntat uttrycket liquid architecture, ett arki-

tekturbegrepp som går bortom det vi kallar för byggnader men som om än i nya termer ändå handlar om de miljöer vi lever och umgås i. En stor del av Novaks föreläsning handlade om avatrar, dvs dessa olika skepnader som vi kan ikläda oss när vi rör oss i cyberrymden. Avatarerna kännetecknas, precis som de avatrar som förekommer i Hinduismen, av att de lätt kan ändra skepnad beroende på sammanhang och behov. De avatrar vi ser i de försök som görs idag är av naturliga skäl hårt knutna till den verklighet som idag omger oss, men kan i framtiden få allt friare uttryck, inte minst i takt med att nya interaktionsformer utvecklas som till exempel ansiktsuttryck, tal etc.

Novak talade också om tre förhållningssätt när nya meningsfulla fenomen skapas i den virtuella världen. För den process där man på ett ytligt plan sätter ihop olika attribut för att skapa nya helheter, använder Novak termen "collage". Ett exempel är när man på en avatar ersätter en arm med en trädgren. I de fall likartade men ändå olika objekt smälts eller "korsas" ihop använder Novak termen "morph", t ex när man utgår ifrån två olika armar för att smälta ihop dem till en ny arm. Slutligen talade Novak om "warping" ett begrepp som går mer på djupet, med kopplingar till "Spacetime" och andra dimensioner. Novak tar här som exempel hur en hummerklo kan ersätta en arm - i grunden är de båda "armar", även om de på ytan är väldigt olika.

En man som också ägnat sig åt alternativa verkligheter, fast på lite annorlunda sätt, är Richard Stanley, tidigare musikproducent och en av skaparna av Bonk Business, som visades på en utställning i Kulturhuset 1995. Bonk har genom det virtuella företaget "Bonk Business" skapat en alternativ verklighet, med många dimensioner och detaljnivåer.

Om man exempelvis får se ett produktblad, med färgbilder och tabeller, ger detta en känsla av trovärdighet - det ser sant ut eftersom någon uppenbarligen har tagit sig besväret och pengarna att ta fram produktbladet ifråga. Detta är ett exempel på hur Bonk leker med klichéer

och uttryck i den industriella kontexten.

Andra exempel är relabelling, hur man genom att exempelvis ändra yttre attribut ändrar hela produktens betydelse. Stanley talade också om hur konsten förr handlade om ägande och att det idag snarare handlar om "rättigheten att se", copyright etc. Han talade om det i fysiskt smärtlösa samhälle som IT-tekniken skapar och nämnde naturligtvis en Bonklösning på detta: en rättliknade tillsatts till datamusen som utlöses om man dubblarklickar för långsamt. Stanley talade också om den semiotiska förening som uppstår genom den mångfald av uttryck som breder ut sig i olika medier idag, men han menad samtidigt att en sjuåring idag inte utsätts för fler



Bild 5
Marcos Novak

"bytes" idag än på 1700-talet, de intryck man får är olika men enligt Stanley jämförbara i omfattning.

John Thackara, chef för Nederländernas designinstitut i Amsterdam och vid det här laget en välkänd profil i Designjournalen, talade om den nya tekniken ur ett ekonomiskt och ekologiskt perspektiv. Visst är den nya tekniken till stor nytta, men den kommer samtidigt att bidra till att 30% av de jobb som finns idag avskaffas. Han nämnde också ett nytt framväxande ekonomiskt system i Storbri-

tannien som har goda förutsättningar att utvecklas i samband med internets utbredning, nämligen "LETS", som är ett enkelt system för byteshandel och byte av tjänster, där man med hjälp av enkla "kvitton" kan byta tjänster även med en tredje part. Detta ska ses i ljuset av att de transaktioner som genomförs på världens fondbörser endast utgör en tiondel av den totala världshandeln. Thackara nämnde också ett par vardagliga exempel på immateriell design i betydelsen att vidga produktbegreppet där han berättade om hur tillverkare av hörapparater och sopsäckar, berikat sina fysiska produkt-sortiment med en flora av tjänster.

Bert Mulder, lärare på fakulteten Interaction Design i Utrecht, Holland, talade mycket om karaktären hos det postindustriella samhället och presenterade flera sympatiska framtidsscenarier. Han talade om hur vi går från hierarkier till nätverk, från statiska strukturer till dynamiska, från produkter till processer osv, hur den industriella kulturens enkla samband mellan orsak och verkan tappar sin betydelse. IT-tekniken innebär en sammansmältning mellan samhällsstyrning, utbildning, arbete, kultur och nöjen - vi kommer att kunna rösta, utbilda oss, arbeta och roa oss vid samma bildskärm. Inom ekonomin ser Mulder stora förändringar dels i form av lokala nätverk, exempelvis byteshandel i stil med LETS, men även andra typer av nätverk som t ex virtuella organisationer där ett antal samverkande partners arbetar under gemensam flagg. Upplösning av tidigare styrande faktorer som t ex dygnet är ett annat fenomen som möjliggörs genom den av den nya tekniken - ett företag med lokal-kontor på flera världsdelar kan utnyttja hela dygnet. Utbildning är i framtiden en kontinuerlig process som följer var och en under hela livet, och som integreras med arbetssituationen. Framtidens vinnare är inte nödvändigtvis de som har en bra grundutbildning, men de som är benägna att tillgodogöra sig ny information. När det gäller samhällsstyrningen ger IT-tekniken naturligtvis större möjlighet till decentralisering och lokalt inflytande. På denna nya spelplan, vad kommer att vara avgörande? Mulder menar att kulturen komm-

er att vara den kraft som driver samhället framåt.

När det gäller den nya IT-tekniken ser man idag en nästan gränslös entusiasm i alla möjliga sammanhang, en entusiasm som även präglade Konsommé-seminariet. Det var inte förrän vid den efterföljande debatten som någon vågade ifrågasätta de lysande framtidsutsikter som talarna, utom då möjligen Richard Stanley vars många idéer ofta har en kritisk underton, hade presenterats.

Mycket av diskussionen kretsade, som vanligt nu för tiden, kring Internet och här tog bl a Sara Ilstedt upp ett viktigt ämne: hur mycket av den nya tekniken inom telekommunikationer och liknande informationsteknik bygger verkligen på människors önskemål och behov, och hur mycket bygger helt enkelt på krassa ekonomiska intressen.

Sverige har en i jämförelse med övriga Europa hög "IT-mognad" vilket ökar möjligheterna för IT-tekniken att överbrygga våra långa avstånd och vilket i kombination med exempelvis vår språkkunskap öppnar stora möjligheter för oss.

Därför får det anses lyckosamt att den här typen av initiativ görs för att höja vår kompetens när det gäller att skapa meningsfulla produkter, exempelvis i IT - miljön.

Svensk Industridesigns bokförsäljning

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Design Management in Practice. Red: Jens Bernsen. Utgiven 1987, Danish Design Council/Design Center, Stockholm.

Designprocessen finns i alla industriella aktiviteter - mer eller mindre medvetet och med varierande framgång. Design Management konceptet innebär att integrera designprocessen som en funktionell del i företagets strategiska planering. Tio personer, alla tongivande inom designområdet, t ex Peter Gorb, Wally Olins, Jens Bernsen och Jens Nielsen, ger sin syn på hur design management kan användas i praktiken, från bilar till produkt-namn. Boken är på engelska. Pris: 200 kr exkl moms.

Plagiat stöld förebild inspiration. Författare: Marianne Gille och Marianne Levin. Utgiven 1990, Design Center/Centrum för immaterial-rätt och medierätt vid Handelshögskolan, Stockholm.

Att ta fram väl fungerande produkter tar tid och kostar pengar. En del företag plagierar därför sådana som man vet fungerar. Designer och företag behöver veta mer om det rättsliga skyddet av design. Boken visar 50 fall där designer och företag upplevt sig "plagierade". Det är en dokumentation av en utställning som arrangerades av Design Center. Marianne Gille, arkitekt och designer, var arrangör av utställningen. Marianne Levin är professor vid Centrum för immaterialrätt och medierätt vid Handelshögskolan i Stockholm. Pris: 200 kr exkl. moms.

The Visible Company. Författare Per Mollerup. Utgiven 1993, Svensk Industridesign/Industrilitteratur, Stockholm.

All Companies are visible. Some use their visibility more than others. The visible company is concerned with how companies signal their competence and increase it through an intelligent use of visual identity. They improve what they communicate. Per Mollerup is president of Per Mollerup/Designlab, a leading Scandinavian company in the field of visual communication. Per Mollerup has written a number of books on design. He has also developed television and radio programs in the field of visual communication and he lectures extensively in Denmark and around the world. Pris: 220 kr exkl moms.

The Human Dimension. Utgiven 1994, Svensk Industridesign, Stockholm.

I oktober 1994 arrangerade Svensk Industridesign, Arbetsmiljöfonden och Sveriges Tekniska Attachéer utställningen "Den Humanistiska Dimensionen" i Milano. Utställning visade 70 svenska företags produkter, utvecklade med omsorg om dem som skall använda dem. Ett antal namnkunniga personer, t ex Gustaf Rosell, Kerstin Wickman, Anty Pansera och Maria Benktzon, ger sin syn på denna humanistiska dimension, ett förhållningssätt som gör Sverige unikt inom användarinriktad produktutveckling. Boken är på engelska. Pris 250 kr exkl moms.

Design av företags- och produktnamn. Författare Jens Bernsen. Utgiven 1994, Svensk Industridesign/Industrilitteratur, Stockholm.

Ett bra namn är inköpsporten till identifikation, igenkännande och förståelse. Ett dåligt namn kan medverka till att man blir förbisedd eller feltolkad. Ett bra namn ger ett företag eller en produkt en god start, kanske även ett gott liv. Ett dåligt namn är en belastning. Utvecklingen av ett namn på ett företag eller en produkt är en designuppgift i sig. Boken kartlägger beslutspunkter som ligger bakom valet av namn och anger kvalitets-kriterier för denna designuppgift. Boken är både på svenska och engelska. Pris: 250 kr exkl moms.

Designerns roll i svensk möbelindustri. Författare: Ulrika Kjellström Attar. Utgiven 1997, Svensk Industridesign/Stockholms universitet, Företagsek.institutionen.

Studien är en uppföljning av en studie som gjordes 1980 av C. R. Julander och M. Näär på Handelshögskolan i Stockholm, om designerns roll i svensk möbelindustri. 17 år har förflutit sedan dess och mycket har hänt både inom designområdet och inom möbelindustrin. Design har uppmärksammats mycket av industrin, och många företag ser idag design som ett viktigt område för att skapa konkurrenskraft. Antalet företag inom möbelindustrin har minskat och frågan är därför hur de som är kvar ser på sin framtid och möjligheter att skapa lönsamhet. Studien visar att design är ett sätt att skapa lönsamhet, men samtidigt att det kräver stor skicklighet även inom marknadsföring.

Handla. Utgiven 1997 av Tullbergs kultur & reklambyrå.

Boken handlar om förändring, välfärd, arbete, lärande, konsumtion, arkitektur, design, kultur och framtid utifrån 1930-talets bok "acceptera". Författarna tar upp olika faktorer som styr utvecklingen av arbetslivet och för fram visioner kring lärande och förståelsen av kopplingen människa - maskin.

Pris: 460 inkl.moms. 15% rabatt för designjournalens läsare.

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