PARSONS THE NEW SCHOOL FOR DESIGN | MA DESIGN STUDIES | 2013

DESIGN PRACTICES & PARADIGMS

SPRING 2013

The MA DESIGN STUDIES
in the School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons

was created for designers and others who see that the world today is nothing less than the sum of design decisions – decisions that need to be cross-examined with intelligence, curiosity, and above all understanding. Seeing design as an intrinsically cross-disciplinary pursuit, students from a variety of backgrounds study among most progressive design practitioners in the world, work to develop ideas, tools, an in-depth understanding of design in the very broadest sense, and emerge with the demonstrable skills to have a voice as a writer, researcher, a scholar, curator or consultant in design.

Engaging with graduate work in Parsons and other New School divisions, especially the social sciences, the program develops students' capabilities to understand both the use of design processes to transform social relations and contemporary life and the profoundly affective power of the visual, the haptic, and the structural nature of the things, places and messages that comprise the very scaffolding of our existence.

Graduates from this program will go on to work in the design industry as part of product-development teams; they will apply their skills to design-led creative industries of media, communications and tech start-ups; take a lead in the new worlds of design curating, promotion, and criticism; and make a contribution to the public realm by helping to developing new trajectories that can shape the kinds of environments we will want to live in together.

Design Practices & Paradigms

What does the scope, structure and content of practice reveal about the state of design and the ambitions of design today? What does it mean to run an architecture practice that is inspired by the ways people build their homes and cities during times of extreme political crisis? How does a media designer transform his studio into a research-led enterprise that focuses on the needs of diverse communities around the world? What does it mean to make people fashion-able vs. fashionable?

Members of the inaugural MA Design Studies cohort at Parsons explored these questions and more this past spring in a new course entitled Design Practices & Paradigms, taught by Associate Professor **Susan Yelavich**, Director of the MA Design Studies program.

This booklet, which features three case studies, is a prototype for an extended publication of research on the changing nature of design practice that will be conducted over the next two years.

The Background

Design Practices & Paradigms was structured around a series of case studies of modes of practices that are changing the scope and ambitions of design in the 21st century.

The full roster of participating designers includes:

- **Constantin Boym and Laurene Boym**, product and communication designers, Boym Partners, NYC
- **Sean Donahue**, media designer; faculty, Art Center College of Design, Pasadena; principal, Research Centered Design
- **Hugh Dubberly**, service designer, Dubberly Design Office, San Francisco
- **Lisa Grocott**, communication designer, Associate Professor, School of Art, Media, and Technology, Parsons the New School for Design, NYC
- **Ivan Kucina**, architect, Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade, Serbia
- **Ellen Lupton**, graphic designer, educator, writer, and Senior Curator for Design at Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, NYC
- **Michael Murphy**, architect, MASS Design Group, Boston
- **Otto von Busch**, fashion designer, Assistant Professor of Integrative Fashion at Parsons the New School for Design, and at Konstfack University College of Art, Craft and Design in Stockholm

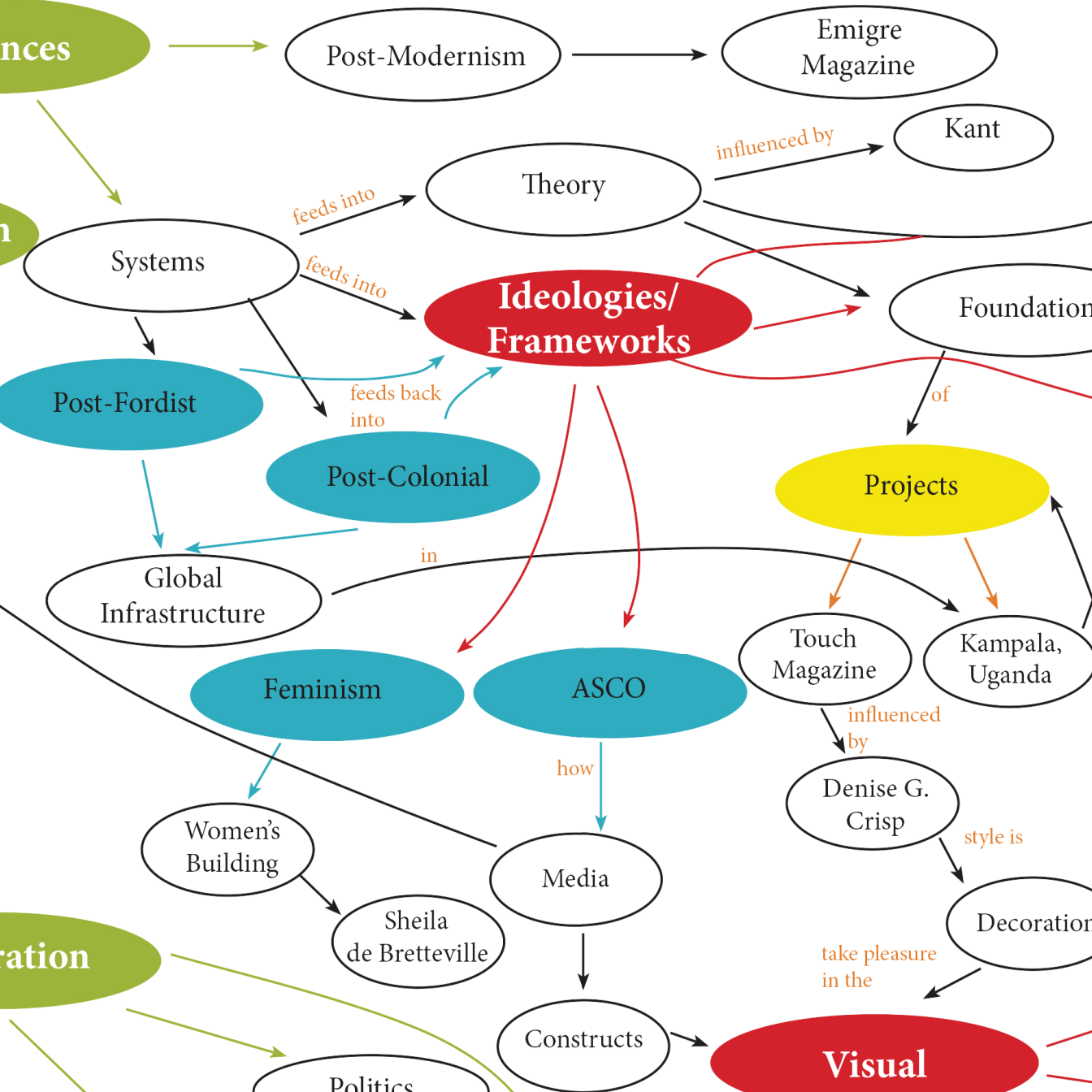
We are deeply grateful to all of the designers, who so generously gave their time to participate in this project. Featured in this prototype are: Sean Donahue, Ivan Kucina, and Otto von Busch.

In this course, students studied a particular designer's approach to production, collaboration, and authorship as well as the social and intellectual context that shaped the designer's projects and values. Students were provided with readings about various modes and philosophies of design today. (See syllabus in the appendix.) They did independent research, conducted interviews, and produced concept maps of their designer's process and practice. The semester culminated in the production of a research paper that offered a critical perspective on the contributions, values, and questions raised by the modes of practice they studied.

To view the entire spectrum of work done in Design Practices and Paradigms, see: http://designpracticesandparadigms.wordpress.com. To learn more about the MA Design Studies program, see http://adht.parsons.edu/designstudies/

The students in Design Practices and Paradigms:

- **Hayley Arsenault**, MA Design Studies, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons
- **Jessica Iwaniec**, MA History of Decorative Arts and Design, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons
- **Sarah Lillenberg**, MA Design Studies, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons
- **Niberca Polo**, MA Design Studies, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons
- **Kamala Murali,** MA Design Studies, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons
- **Melissa McWilliams**, MA Design Studies, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons
- **Divia Padayachee**, MA Design Studies, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons
- **Dora Sapunar**, MA Design Studies, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons
- **Tia Remington-Bell**, MA Design Studies, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons
- **Cedric Rene-Mark Williams**, MA Anthro-pology, New School for Social Research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"I think a large part of my work is speculative. It provides me an opportunity to pose questions that ultimately translate into more significant inquiries about the world around me and my discipline"

Sean Donahue, Media Designer:

Using Design Research to Encourage Conversation within Communities

by DIVIA PADAYACHEE.
Divia Padaychee hails from Durban, South Africa. She holds a Bachelor of Journalism in Communication Design. She is a first-year student in Parsons MA Design Studies program, where she is researching various modes of media design.

Sean Donahue, media designer, is a core member of faculty in the Media Design Graduate program at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California.1 He is also the principal of Research Centered Design, a design practice, based in Los Angeles, which aims to investigate ways in which design research, as a discipline, can inform the practice in social situations.

Design research is at the core of Donahue's practice. It involves the curation of ideologies and the creation of conversation. He makes it clear that design research is not about fitting it into existing discipline, neither is it about solving problems. This goes against what design advocate Yanki Lee believes the discipline to be, "the design focus is not only focus on solving problems... but also on enhancing our design capabilities to search for optimal solutions for all."2

Donahue's practice is based on speculative and critical thought, which encourages questioning and investigation, elements that are common in his work as well as in the classroom. "I think a large part of my work is speculative. It provides me an opportunity to pose questions that ultimately translate into more significant inquiries about the world around me and my discipline".3 This requires input by the community to delve into the impact of design decisions.4

Dunne and Raby state that "critical design or design that asks carefully crafted questions and makes us think, is just as difficult and just as important ad design that solves problems or finds answers. Its purpose is to stimulate discussion and debate among designers, industry and the public about the aesthetic quality of our electronically mediated existence."5

Although Donahue's practice is not involved in design of objects in this sense of the critical, the idea that critical design stimulates discussion holds true in his work. Encouraging conversation between designers and those impacted by design is a significant methodology used by Donahue. Some of the communities he has worked with include the elderly community, the visually impaired and the Latino community in Los Angeles. Donahue's practice is rich in collaboration, exploration and research of a design nature and design influence.

Donahue refers to himself as a media designer and a maker, "I make tactile things through which I am able to create an understanding of the result of the processes I have used."6 He creates artifacts, rooted in graphic design, that involve three concepts, "hybridity, emergence and discovery", which are also incorporated in his students' work.7 Extra-curricular activities during his years as a scholar as well as organizations and movements outside of his own have influenced the ideologies embedded in his work. Post-Colonial studies and post-Fordism theory "has played a role in understanding some of the global infrastructure of those contexts and how just to negotiate the space and orient myself and design's work in this space."8 He also embraces post-modernist design ideologies where he believes design relays an emotional and ephemeral experience.

Two movements of significance to his ideologies are Asco and the Women's Building. Asco, a Chicano artist collective based in Los Angeles, focused on the construction of images and identity within the media. The Women's Building, also based in Los Angeles, provided a platform for the women's movement and feminism as a whole. These movements have provided a sounding board for critique, not just of other institutions but also to provide new alternatives to those critiques. "That's something that has really been a staple of my work in design research, formalist dimensions and what it means to be social."9

Design, to Donahue, is about the construction and production of knowledge however he believes the term to be generic when used by those who do not immerse themselves in the field. "Whether your work is art or design is whether or not you choose to participate in the mechanisms that critically evaluate and participate in the knowledge construction of that said discipline."10 Donahue reassures that though not everyone can call themselves a designer, "the reality is that people create or construct their own world", 11 a statement that Cross mirrors in his work.12

The relationship between design and other disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology, psychology and philosophy, is not as simple as Donahue would like it to be. "I wish designers could just

follow their intuitions and their passions but connect with these disciplines in a way that saw design as not a second class citizen but a series of knowledge capital that is just executed through a different mode, through knowledge constructed in a different way and explore the potential of that and bring that back to design to talk about those relationships."13

Regarding his students, Donahue has created a pedagogy of new alternatives to the current mode of teaching as a way to illustrate how to draw upon different modes of thought according to one's expectations. This encourages students to explore spaces of their interest "as opposed to fitting into spaces where other people want to use designers."14 Design as a discipline should be aware of the knowledge of other modes of thought; however, this relationship should be symbiotic. "I wish anthropologists would talk to designers more when it comes to some of these things to build off our history of scholarship around how these ideas manifest as visual and material communications."15

During the first five years of his practice, Donahue did not share any of his design work with other disciplines in order for him to have the space and freedom to investigate how design research could "influence, inform and supplement the work around shared areas of interest" in said disciplines.16 This questioning is still valid because there is currently a crisis whereby design is being forced into fitting within existing models. An example he uses to demonstrate this is design ethnography, "I understand what design ethnography can be but why call it design ethnography? Why not just call it design?"17

Spearheading Research Centered Design, Donahue knows where design rests with regard to research practices, "Designing is researching."18 To this he adds that design research shouldn't be represented as any other discipline because it is the process of design.19 Designers use the artificial to observe interactions and it is within the act of interaction that meanings are constructed, therefore "form influences behavior."20

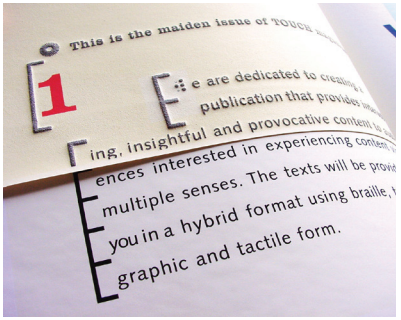
To exemplify Donahue's methodologies and ideologies two projects led by Donahue will be evaluated; the first, Touch Magazine and the second, LA Has Faults. These projects explore Donahue's work as "addressing human and environmental" dilemmas through design research and design strategies.21

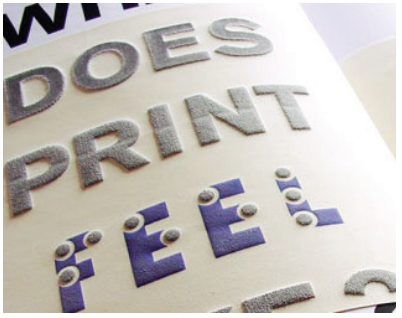
Touch Magazine illustrates how design research can produce conversation within design practice as well as tactile outcomes as a response to the conversation. Touch Magazine was created for both low-vision and no-vision communities.22 Through in-depth investigation and innovation Donahue was able to merge the interests and needs of these communities.

The process stretched over seven years during which Donahue interviewed low-vision and no-vision individuals, took part in their daily routines and witnessed their family life. He posed the question, "Could the application of the principles of typography to Braille communication enhance the tactile language?"23

Donahue learnt that low-vision individuals are classified as being blind even though they do have a small ability to see forms. This isolates them in the community because they fall into the gap between the sighted and non-sighted.24 To assist in the transition from sight to no sight Donahue developed graphics that bridge this communicative gap.

Braille, text, texture and conventional visuals are incorporated into a single publication to address all needs. Thermographic ink was utilized to create raised text and visual forms so that low-vision readers could feel their way through the magazine whilst looking at visually stimulating forms.25





Left (fig. 1): Touch Magazine, Sean Donahue, 2002. **Contrasting conventional and raised text.** Research Centered Design | Center (fig. 2): Touch Magazine, Sean Donahue, 2002. **Combining raised text and Braille.** Research Centered Design | Right (fig.3): Touch Magazine, Sean Donahue, 2002. **A Rolling Stone Magazine cover using Braille in place of text.** Research Centered Design

By making text tactile, Donahue moved away from conventional graphic methods and paved the way for a new graphic audience. The publication addressed "both physical and physiological needs of the community" creating an experience and a space for imagination.26 However, an issue that arose during the iterations of this process was the provocative notion of touching. The raised image of a woman was taken as more provocative to the touch than by looking at the image, which was ironic to Donahue as he believed there was no real difference in looking at or feeling the image.

Whilst individuals were involved in the interview and immersive process, strong evidence of individuals being involved in the design process was not apparent. There were iterative phases of the magazine were Donahue would receive feedback but none seemed to imply the individuals ideas on a creative solution. By stating that design research is a collaborative discipline one would expect to see more inclusion of individuals in the design conceptualization process. The ideologies present in this project are part influence and part inspiration. It is clear to see the post-modernist perspective that Donahue has advocated. Moving away from conventional norms he was able to integrate trajectories that focused on the individual rather than a consumer. His inspiration behind new graphic forms is inspired by designer Denise Gonzales Crisps whose approach towards the decorational acknowledges that individuals should take pleasure in design and not simply as a functional means. "I trust you will believe me when I say I am no Corbusier. For unlike him I value ornament for its own sake. But like him I believe designers invent out of one moment toward a truer one."27

Donahue borrows from other disciplines to enhance design research by interviewing the community he is designing for and attempting to understand what design means to them by immersing himself in their daily routine as an ethnographer does. But at the

same time, uses iterative processes to get feedback on the artifacts that he believes would impact the community in a positive way. The attention paid to designing for the individual rather than a consumer market is certainly due to his post-Fordist ideals. The creation of a specialized artifact with the use of technologies, which are not used in mainstream graphic design, illustrates the impact that this system has on his work and his thinking.

The LA Has Faults initiative was used as a platform to address earthquake preparedness in communities whose infrastructure lacked efficient and sufficient means of communication before and during the natural disaster.28 The aim of this outreach project was to create innovative ways of encouraging effective communication to inform the predominantly Latino-American community in MacArthur Park, Los Angeles. "This initiative was led by Donahue as a member of faculty in the Media Design Program at Art Center College of Design and four core designers; Yee Chan, Vera Valentine, Hye Rin Kang and Ken Huang; sponsored by Design Matters at Art Center College of Design."29

The design interventions involved two phases; phase one: introduction and phase two: starting a conversation.30 Phase one, which took place in March 2008, was focused on introducing the design team to the community through acquisition of inquiry. The team constructed large-scale models, 10-feet high, consisting of letters, which spelt out five words. The words "Shake", "Shift", "Aware", "Alerta" and "Alto", spelt in English and Spanish, were left to stand for half an hour at a time. Curiosity led residents and visitors of MacArthur Park to question the presence of these artifacts as well as experience them by playing around or resting on the objects.

Communication with residents at the site allowed for phase two of the project. In May 2008 the team rented a retail space, which they converted into a temporary community center for two weeks. Community leaders, residents and other stakeholders used the community center to communicate

Donahue, 2008. Yee Chan | Right (fig. 5): LA Has Faults, MacArthur Park, Los Angeles, Sean Donahue, 2008. **The design team with the "Alto" model.** Yee Chan

issues regarding earthquake preparedness.Residents were provided an outlet to communicate their current earthquake preparedness strategy, which facilitated talks on the type of information that the residents already had and the strategies that they were not aware of.

The outcome of the project led it to become "a national and international example of the power of design thinking applied to disaster preparedness."31 Using a multidisciplinary approach the project provoked conversation between all sectors of the community with regard to their combined safety efforts. It reaffirmed the urgent need for collaboration and innovation not only within the design practice

but also between communities and related stakeholders too.32 The result of the project also inspired "a blueprint for mitigation efforts that are also vitally needed beyond Los Angeles, and statewide in California and beyond."33

The strengths of this project were that all sectors of the community were welcomed to participate in conversations regarding their wellbeing. The criticality of the project encouraged the development of safety measures by the community. However, to quote Dilnot's critique of critical design, "But this also tells us why the critical is a problem for research for it is that which cannot be predicted –

Left (fig. 6): **LA Has Faults, MacArthur Park**, Los Angeles, Sean Donahue, 2008. **Conversations with the community.** Yee Chan | Right (fig.7): **LA Has Faults, Community Center,** MacArthur Park, Los Angeles, Sean Donahue, 2008. Yee Chan

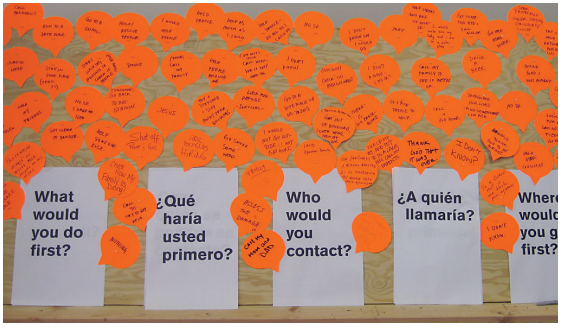
since the result of the critical process in relation to a situation cannot be known in advance."34 This is evident in the residents' initial reactions to the project. When residents were made aware that the event was sponsored by the government they were reluctant to fully participate for fear that their relatives who were not documented resident would be deported.35 Other unpleasantries involving the government came down to trusting who would be able to provide aid and in this case the residents trusted religious and cultural advocates over the government.

To gain trust would be to participate in negotiation be it between the government, the designers and the residents. Donahue refers to the government as a medium that instills in its production systems ideologies that are distributed within a community. To avoid a similar lack of trust, designers should be aware of intrusion into a society. In light of negotiating between different parties the designer must suspend all assumptions before entering into a project.

As with Touch Magazine involving the community in the design process was not apparent in this case study. Though residents were encouraged to participate in communicative processes such as writing down their specific plan of action in the event of an earthquake, it was not their idea to use that method of communication. Providing collaboration beyond simply participating would do well to gain the trust of residents and stakeholders who may be apprehensive about working with designers who are not familiar with their community.36

Donahue's definition of design as research comes forth in both Touch Magazine and LA Has Faults. Using artifacts he formed conversations around issues that were given little attention before. It is through the initial iteration that discoveries are made. This is what Donahue sees the responsibility of design as a discipline to be. Communication and questioning is at the core of his work, leading to the construction of knowledge inherent in design research.

These projects may address a problem within a community but Donahue makes it clear that is it not about solving a problem. The aim of design research should be to design a language that, in the form of artifacts or literature, becomes integrated into a society. It is not to say that the community should become dependent on the designer who looks at



Left (fig. 8): **LA Has Faults, Communicative strategy**, MacArthur Park, Los Angeles, Sean Donahue, 2008. Photo: Yee Chan | Right (fig. 9): **LA Has Faults exhibition**, Cooper-Hewitt Triennial, Sean Donahue, 2010.

the problem another way. The design should impart strategies that fit into existing frameworks so that there is very little intrusion felt by the members of that community.37

Donahue is able to utilize his graphic design background in the results of his investigations. His methodologies place design in a realm of its own in the sense that design, as a method of research in itself, need not try to alter its condition in order to fit into another discipline. Design research as observed in the case studies above evolve within a critical and speculative environment, encouraging conversation and communication, which Donahue believes is one of the core elements in design. His work creates an opportunity for other designers within the field to consider the strategies he utilizes and adapt them to their own work so that the knowledge developed in design research may extend to other fields as possible trajectories. However, for design research to be accepted as a discipline in its own right, certain ideologies need to be overcome. These ideologies refer to the notion that certain methodologies belong to certain modes of thought such as observation being paired with anthropology. This is the difficulty of such a proposal. There is also the possibility of design research becoming a liability to the design field. If design research becomes a discipline, which only employs its own mechanisms then it may have to face exclusion from other modes of thought.

The success of design research depends on trust. Donahue explains that, from his experience, other disciplines are looking for familiar methodologies used in design and when the frameworks do not look like their own they find difficulty in trusting the results of such methods. Existing disciplines need to be reassured that design's methodologies are valid so that they may employ design strategies in their own field. Two questions can lead design to gaining trust; "firstly, what does design need its research to contain in order to advance it and

secondly, what does it need to be in order to enter not as another but as a supplement to these external spaces?"38

These questions would address the central issues in design research today and through consistent efforts the validity of design research will serve as the stepping stone for alternative modes of thought to adopt ideologies inherent in design.

Looking forward, the ideologies, mechanisms, systems and language provoked by Donahue's work as a media designer serves as an opportunity for the greater design community, be it in academia or business, to take design forward as a mode of thought that has earned its place in critical thinking. Donahue's outlook has the potential to reaffirm that aesthetics in design does not only benefit the consumer but also the observer, the critique and the inquisitive.

Notes:

1. Art Center College of Design, "Art, Broadcast Cinema, Industrial Design, Media Design," Graduate Programs, 2009/10, 5.

2. Magnus Ericson and Ramia Mazé, "Interview with Yanki Lee," in Design Act: Socially and politically engaged design today – critical roles and emerging tactics, (Sternberg Press, 2011), 210.

3. Emmet Byrne, Alex DeArmond, and Jon Sueda, "All Possible Futures: (Un)Realized Projects," Task Newsletter 2: Not What If What If Not, Summer 2009, 94.

4. Sean Donahue, "Inclusive Design in Focus: debating the business benefits," Innovation For All Conference, Norwegian Design Council, http://www.norskdesign.no/video/the-best-on-inclusive-design-article14869-640.html.

5. Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby, "Designer as Author," in Design Noir: The Secretive Life of Electronic Objects, (London: August/Birkhauser, 2001), 58.

6. Sean Donahue, interview by Divia Padayachee, Design Practices and Paradigms Interview 1, February 23, 2013.
7. Art Center, Graduate Programs, 2.

8. Sean Donahue, interview by Divia Padayachee, Design Practices and Paradigms Interview 3, April 3, 2013.

9. Ibid.

10. Sean Donahue, interview by Divia Padayachee, Design Practices and Paradigms Interview 2, April 2, 2013.

11. Sean Donahue, Interview 1.
12. Nigel Cross, "Design Ability," in Design Thinking: Understanding How Designers Think and Work, (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2011), 3.

13. Sean Donahue, Interview 2.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Sean Donahue, interviewed by Eileen Hsu, An Interview with Sean Donahue, August 3, 2011.

19. Sean Donahue, "Enabling Design," in Design Research: Methods and Perspectives, ed. Brenda Laurel (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 166.

20. Sean Donahue, Interview 1.

21. "Art Center Earthquake Project Showcased at Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum," Dotted Line Blog, http://blogs.artcenter.edu/dottedline/2010/05/11/designmatters-cooper-hewitt/.
22. Donahue, Enabling Design, 164.

23. Donahue, Enabling Design, 169.

24. Yolanda, Zappaterra, "Touch Sensitive," Design Weekly, April 24, 2008, 2.

25. Why Design Now?, Cooper-Hewitt National Design Triennial, http://archive.cooperhewitt.org/why-design-now/exhibitions.cooperhewitt.org/Why-Design-Now/project/touch-magazine-2-3.html.

26. Sean Donahue, Interview 3.

27. Gonzales Crisp, Denise, "Toward Definition of the Deco-Rational," in Design Research: Methods and Perspectives, ed. Brenda Laurel (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 94.

28. Mariana Amatullo and Sean Donahue, ""LA Has Faults": Pilot Study and Public Awareness Campaign for Earthquake Preparedness," The Los Angeles Earthquake: Get Ready Project, September, 2008, 3.

29. Ibid., 4.

30. Art Center, Dotted Line Blog.

31. Ericson, "Interview with Yanki Lee," 211.

32. "Los Angeles Earthquake: Get Ready," Design Matters: Art Center College of Design, http://www.designmattersatartcenter.org/proj/the-los-angeles-earthquake-get-ready/.

33. Clive Dilnot, "The Critical in Design (Part One)," Journal of Writing in Creative Practice 1, no. 2 (2008): 179-180.

34. Sean Donahue, Interview 2.

35. Sean Donahue, Rama Gheerawo and Anne-Marie Willis, "Beyond Progressive Design," Design Philosophy Papers 3 (2011): 2.

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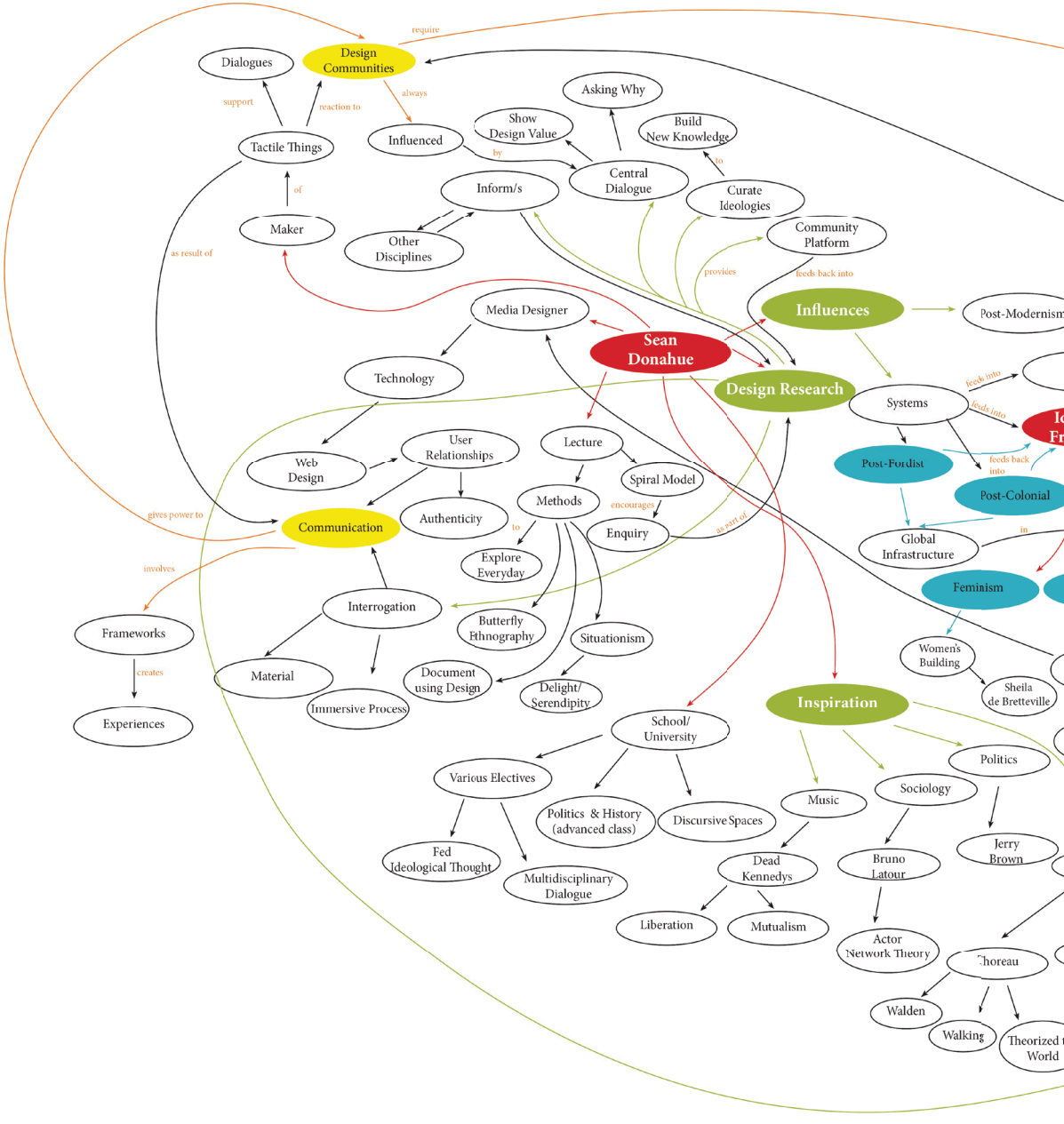
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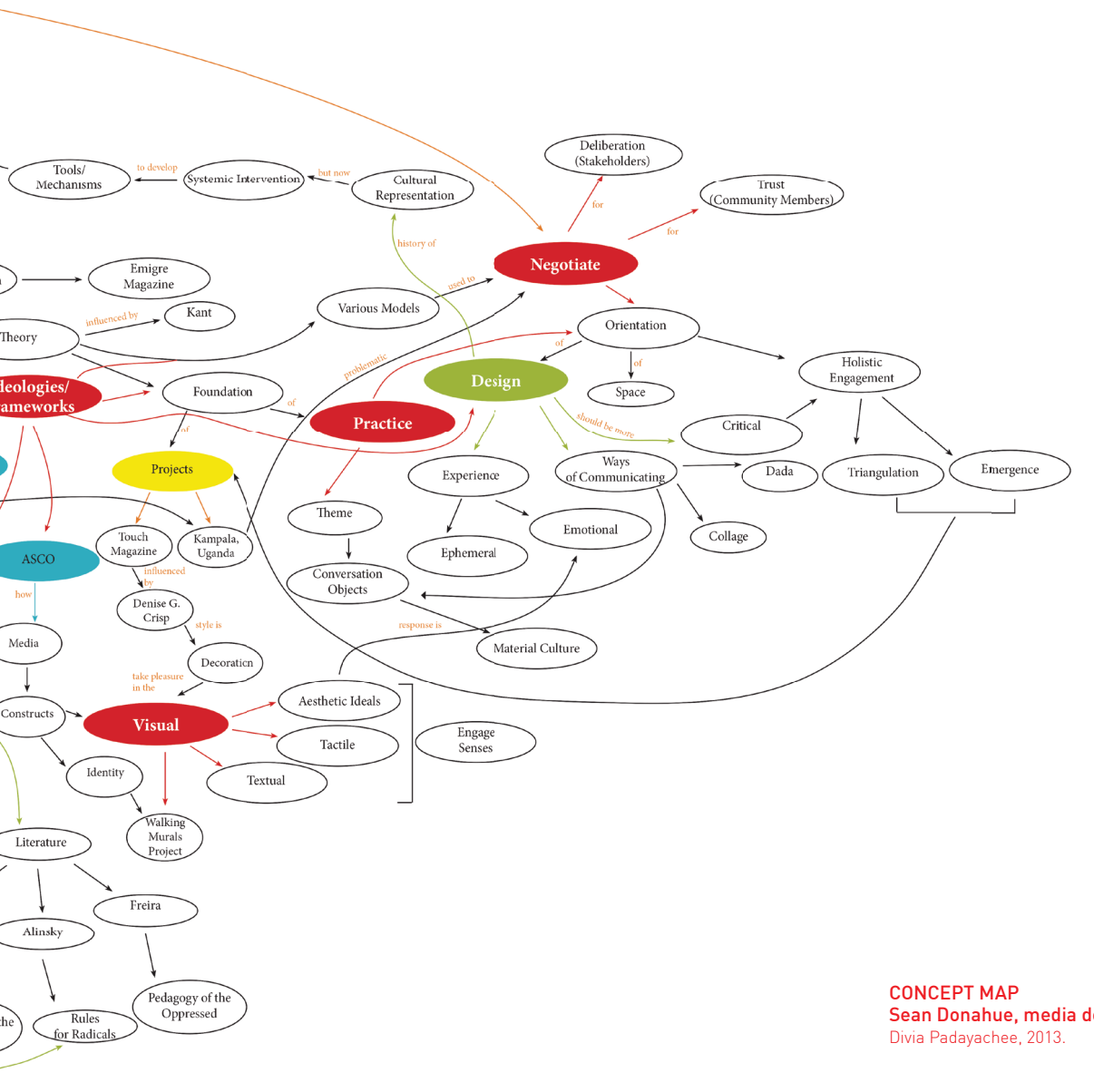
feeds back into
Post-Colonial
Web Design
User Relationships
Lecture
Spiral Model
gives power to
Communication
Authenticity
Methods
encourages
Enquiry
is part of
Global Infrastructure
in
Explore Everyday
involves
Interrogation
Feminism
Frameworks
Butterfly Ethnography
Situationism
Women's Building
creates
Material
Document using Design
Delight/ Serendipity
Sheila de Bretteville
Experiences
Immersive Process
Inspiration
School/ University
Politics
Various Electives
Sociology
Music
Politics & History (advanced class)
Discursive Spaces
Jerry Brown
Fed Ideological Thought
Dead Kennedys
Bruno Latour
Multidisciplinary Dialogue
Liberation
Mutualism
Actor Network Theory
Thoreau
Walden
Walking



CONCEPT MAP
Sean Donahue, media designer.
Divia Padayachee, 2013.

Sean Donahue
INTERVIEW 1

Divia Padayachee: Did you have a role model growing up or was there someone that you were inspired by?
Sean Donahue: No, I don't think so. There were certainly people who I thought had provocative attitudes towards things. I wouldn't call them role models as much as people that I felt had some kind of position or orientation that I thought was something I should pay attention to. I think that's an important distinction to make, the difference between a role model or someone I looked up to versus people that I thought had provocative ideas because that effectively says a lot about my orientation now which is very much about this holistic engagement that is about triangulations, about emergence. These people transcend different areas. Thoreau, for me, from a literary standpoint was someone who embraced a poeticism in how he wrote about the world that had a very clear sense of values that were embedded in that and that were part of that writing. A piece like Walking by Thoreau which is this kind of meditation on what it means to see walking as a worldview but is also very explicit and what that represents. For example the idea of walking West meant progress, it meant exploring a future, that position was embedded in lyricism as well and part of the ongoing dialogue, it wasn't completely metaphorical, it wasn't completely lyrical but it also wasn't hyperbole or an antagonism that was based explicitly in being a non-position to somebody else's position. Somebody like that was an important voice in the same way that I thought somebody like Jello Biafra from the Dead Kennedys had an important thing to say from a music standpoint. Punk music being this liberation between the stage and the group and the setting is not elevating the band but it's about the experience of this mutualism, and at the same time the lyrics and the music was responding to politics of Jerry Brown in San Francisco.

DP: During your academic career were you involved in any extra-curricular activities?
SD: Yes, extra-curricular activities were always important. When I was young, I was very American in the sense that I was very active in athletics but also chorus and music. But when you get to more serious things in high school where you're picking a future, taking advanced classes in American politics or history, that was important. Then in college I was very much part of discursive spaces whether that was student forums for art or taking classes in other disciplines like a criticism class and being in a fraternity. I think going to a university as an undergrad was important because having a liberal studies based education was significant. When students come to undergrad at Parsons or Art Center it's basically specializing in design. They have some extra classes that expose them to thought from other disciplines but it's a very design centric education whereas my undergraduate degree was at a university. So for the first two years of my education I basically took classes in everything but the major that I was going to declare and that was important because it fed into my interests and was ideal, being exposed to those different worldviews. A lot of this was in my minors in studying whether it was marketing, American politics, and geography in exploring, through as many credits as I could, what those different worlds could bring. I really stacked the credit deck in my undergrad education and there wasn't a lot of time spent outside of that.

DP: Were there any other disciplines that you took classes in?
SD: Yes. We had to take global studies which exposes you to a few categories or classes that being the sciences, physics, math, criminology, philosophy and of course we had art classes through the art school but then we also had critical thinking and philosophy through other disciplines where we looked at things like contemporary thoughts around post-modernism.

DP: Did any of the disciplines you have studied trigger the development or evolution of your practice?
SD: Yeah, I think they become reflective of the mode of operation I have in my practice which is, how do you have a multi-disciplinary dialogue about these things? A lot of my work, in post-grad school, was in exercising what design could contribute that was outside of design and that was very much looking at these other disciplines and inserting design within them. Whether that was the Sociology of History which was a conference that I presented a paper in and shared a panel or something that was something closer to design. For the first five years of my practice I had committed to not sharing any of my work in design with these other disciplines as a way to begin to investigate how design research, which is one of my focuses, could influence and inform and supplement the work around shared areas of interest in these other disciplines. And I think that's still a valid question for design research to ask. I gave this paper at the last educator's conference at AIGA in North Carolina where I think the real crises in design research right now is that so many people are rushing to fit it within existing models of knowledge production and the mechanisms that support that and I think for design it needs to be a little different or a lot different in some cases and that takes time to explore. We can't be ethnographers, so design anthropology, for me is really weird because in my company I'll just hire an anthropologist to do that and so, what does that mean and how is that different from anthropology? I understand the distinction from design but anthropologists are pretty good at what they do and ethnographers study for a very long time to be ethnographers and I understand what design ethnography

can be but why call it design ethnography? Why not just call it design?

DP: I find it intriguing when you say that with design research it's not about fitting design into other models, it's about how design as a discipline can focus in on research purely as design.

SD: Right, so a lot of the other disciplines, what they're really looking for are ways to try to trust the kind of content that we give them. So if it doesn't look like what they have, if it's not trying to be what they have then the next question is what is it? What does it need to support our knowledge development and the things we need to know for designers? Sociologists produce knowledge to inform other sociologists, not just people outside of sociology. The first question is, what does design need research to be in order to advance design and its research? And the next question is, depending on what that looks like, what does it need to be in order to enter as not another but a supplement to these other spaces? When you do projects that do this is, you know, it doesn't have to match the criteria that sociologists or ethnographers have for their own work. [But] other disciplines need to see that you have a responsible mechanism within your discipline to evaluate and validate the kind of work you're doing so that they can trust it to include it in the work that they're doing. And they don't see that, they don't understand how that is happening and they don't understand how it's another. A question you'll commonly get is, from say an ethnographer or an anthropologist is, as a designer you talk about this observation that you have so you've done a house study on aging communities or domestic space and you come up with this unique observation that's an insight to us or an opportunity space, and an anthropologist or ethnographer quickly wants to know how many people did you interview? What's the sample size? Those are the mechanisms that that discipline has established in order to create a generalizable observation that they can validate. So part of your responsibility is to say well ok that's how you have developed mechanisms to validate your work but for the work that we're doing it's not about establishing generalizable principles. It's about finding an opportunity for design to explore, that approaches this issue or unique circumstance in a different way and that becomes the platform for a brief of investigation. So for an outcome, let's say for a visual impaired person, you recognize that somebody who has sight is given all brail material. The outcome of that isn't that they would prefer something that's half graphic and half brail; it becomes a launching pad to explore ... all the other options. What kinds of trajectories does exploring them, getting them in front of people, offer? These are some of the outcomes of those explorations. What further opportunities come out of that? And then that's where collaborating with other disciplines leads to sharing mechanisms for validation which is important. But in order to produce valuable research we don't have to follow what sociology requires in order to have a valid outcome because our needs are totally different. So if this is about a company who wants to produce a million things and they want to be sure that there are certain expectations that are met or a niche that's filled there's a whole other series of research projects that will help establish that requirement for them but that doesn't have to be present in your work. And so I think this identifying what does design need in its research to be in order to be valid and to support its own work and how do we communicate that, is a value to us and how that supplements from a different perspective, the other areas of shared engagement with other disciplines is really one of the central dialogues in design research right now. Right now it's trying to be faux scientific.

One of the things our students would do in methodologies is, for example, over the summer I teach a class called Media Design People and Publics, and part of one of the modules in that class is what are strategies for exploring the everyday? What are different methods to do that? I give them a continuum of methods to explore. There are all the tactics used in human centered design and the quotidian, interviewing somebody, shadowing somebody, observing them doing a task, UX design, have them make choices. But then there's also, why don't designers talk about their strategies to explore a crime scene? So I gave them methods to explore a space that uses methodologies from criminology that are about exploring a crime scene. There's a grid walking method, there's different observation tactics that they use. Why aren't we talking about situationism where delight and serendipity play a role in how you orient yourself through the city, so you just have to walk in a trajectory. There are other disciplines that have methods as observation and so this default, some kind of anthropological or ethnographic approach, is not default, it's a choice that a series of people have made and stream rolled. You can borrow from geography. There's a whole series of systems of walking through geographic locations in order to spot [...] architecture that's been overlooked or artifacts in the ground, and that is a viable strategy. Why isn't that considered on the plate? That's about the archeology of human existence and that's certainly a question design is interested in, making material culture for the last 100 years. Let alone, if you think about objects of utility as material culture, that's the whole world of our history, it follows the same trajectory. So I give the student all of these things, this continuum of strategies for observing the everyday and they have to go through a series of three of them. They can pick whichever three, but in that, what is revealed? When you walk around a hotel room as if it were a crime scene what do you learn? And not in the sense of finding a crime but a sense of [...] a strategy for observation. It's a very rigorous and rigid pattern that doesn't leave any space unturned. So how do you document that? What are the things that you find out of that? Sometimes it's really interesting and it gives

you a different way of approaching something other than a kind of human-centered, product-oriented orientation towards somebody's life. And then we are able to talk about what are the theologies that have created these. What are the positions? What are the things that they're searching for and in order to support what? For designers there should be this push and pull. In my view, if we are going to look at other disciplines for support and exploring these worlds, why aren't we looking at a larger framework? Part of what you do as a researcher is you curate those ideologies and those positions that support your orientation. You use those to build new knowledge and by defaulting to human-centered design or user-centered design and the worlds that they came from. You kind of don't leave those other spaces to be explored. Situationism, although engaging things like serendipity, it created an entire field of psycho-geography that is a real study. Out of these things that started with a more theoretical position, things do manifest and so why aren't they explored? I call it Butterfly ethnography where these kids go onto a street corner and start asking people or the community random questions. The Butterfly Man approach, you just swing it at whatever. But there are actually lots of methodologies to get to know and understand the world around you and I think we should be able to explore those. Or each researcher should develop a body that supports a trajectory they're interested in. Out of that rich cross-section the discipline begins to talk about what does it mean for a designer to work in these spaces with these particular languages. Take something like cultural probes; Bill Gaver was a psychologist [...] the pedagogy of the form and why it looks so simple, why it looks so default, came out of an orientation towards decoration [...]. The belief that you could somehow cut out the opinion of the study or influence a group of people by using default typefaces and very simple constructions of the page that's an ideology. It's a belief that came from a different discipline and you can say that's just rubbish and that that's no less default than using script handwriting is default.

DP: Is there any discipline in particular that you would say has influenced or triggered your practice?

SD: Design [Laughs] You can put that as number one on your list. No, I mean, design in various ways has, depending on the discipline you're talking about. So you take a discipline like graphic design and that has a long history of communicating to people and for people, and even of observing people. We look at people really well, we photograph them, we draw them but we don't have a long history of talking to people and so I think you do reference other disciplines. But don't get me wrong, my argument around what research needs to be for design and how it develops that is very different than recognizing that there are disciplines that have a long history of scholarship in a space that we can benefit learning from, just like I wish anthropologists would talk to designers more when it comes to some of these things to build off our history of scholarship around how these ideas manifest as visual and material communications. In that sense, interviewing people and the range of scholarship around how to talk to people in different ways has influenced how I understand my ability to construct those spaces but that has as much to do with community-centered activism at this point in my career as opposed to anthropology. You talk about anthropology as a discipline but you also talk about something like Rules for Radicals by Saul Alinsky or Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire with those, as you get into it, it's less about the discipline and more about ways of orientation and platforms of orientation. I don't want my students to be ethnographers but I would like them to understand ethnographic orientations. But I think in the same aspect situationism as well as feminist thought played a huge role in me getting some perspective on a discipline that I had little ability to push and pull.

DP: Can you elaborate on that?

SD: Well, feminist theory for me was really an opportunity for me to understand and gave me a platform to look at feminist thought. You know, you have these conversations around philosophy where you talk about ontology and epistemology and how knowledge is constructed and oriented but for me the big difference is when I started to engage feminist theory you recognize these as manifestations of positionality, of a set of frameworks and of course that's acknowledged in philosophy but through feminist theory I was really able to see that these are extensions of men, extensions of authority and that those positions get embedded within those philosophies and those epistemologies and those get embedded in actions and those actions are manifested out of those positionalities. Again, in theory you talk about that but these are all justifiable truths. What it did was it gave me a mechanism to see it as something or in relationship to something and for me that was a huge move forward in recognizing [that], [...] when we talk about social practice, systemic adoption of these beliefs which remove the barriers of other ways of thinking, other ways of being or other ways of living your life in the world.

DP: I thought about feminism when I watched your presentation on the Roxy project.

SD: Yeah part of the challenge, especially when you're doing these community engagement projects, is so much of the history of design has been design's role in how to culturally represent. It's kind of a cultural studies position on relationships with communities or communities of under-representation or whatever language that develops around that. So there's the screen printing workshops and the community mural development. There are these mechanisms that are about the authenticity coming from using the hand and the

visual vernacular that comes out of a particular community or public "voice". And, I used to get these interesting questions particularly around the work of L.A Has Faults because that was a particular Latino community and how all of it has this kind of default nature to it. It doesn't really look like a Latino, underserved community. There's a type of graphic defaultness to it and it's interesting because that critique comes from this long history of us being cultural representatives. We're the voice of the community that doesn't have voice and there is a cultural studies positionality to that. It's interesting because the projects that engage in those are much more about a systemic intervention than they are cultural representation and so the language that develops as part of that intervention, the space of intervention is very much about how to develop tools and mechanisms that intervene themselves in those structures of systemic implications. Whether that's government agency or voting or master plans for city development, it's less of design's role being culturally representative and all the baggage that comes with that, and much more about an intervention in systemic mechanisms. It's been an interesting dialogue that's come up over the last couple of years that's exciting but also a back and forth.

DP: Which disciplines do you believe design should form relationships with for the practice to develop further?

SD: All of them. I think the answer is what do you want. For me, my role as an educator, I was terrified that all my students were going to go to the same job. I'm a media designer but a lot of my earlier education is in graphic design so my earlier teaching was in the graphic design program at North Carolina State, Art Center, Royal College of Art, and what terrified me very early on was that basically all my students are going to go to the same job. They don't have an option as to what they want to explore. They had an option of whether to design books or posters or web stuff and to me that's not really a selection of options. You're actually being educated to do all of those. So I asked myself, how can I create an environment (well it started with an assignment) that allows people to exercise their own position and interests within the negotiation of the assignment as a way to set up a pedagogy of curriculum that would allow students to develop a practice that was about them exploring the spaces that they wanted to explore as opposed to fitting into spaces where other people want to use designers. It started very simply by saying, well instead of doing a book project we're going to do a bound sequence project. This is a very formalist exercise but it required [the student] to make choices based on a series of projections that [they] wanted to explore or reinforce. When I say a book project everyone already has an idea of what a book looks like. When I say a bound sequence you can have a conversation. What's a sequence? Film is a sequence, a series of posters is a sequence, pages in a book are a sequence, and a series of website [pages] is a sequence. How do you bind something? In a book you literally do that but in a series of poster you could use position as a way over distance, to say these all have a connection you could use color and suggestion through lines to connect four pieces of paper. It becomes a conversation around, how do you use the elements of design as mechanisms to construct meaning to reach these qualities as opposed to designing a book? That branched off to, how do you create an assignment where people meet certain criteria of place? With a poster project it's how to communicate to multiple people in transient space. This is what a poster does. It's a mechanism that lots of people can see in spaces that people typically don't hang out, and they're on the go somewhere. This is what a poster does except you don't give people the luxury of defaulting to a format that's already been established. Therefore they explore a series of mechanisms. The same thing [happens] when you want to affect a certain issue or condition. It's not a homelessness project, that's a losing proposition. You identify a set of conditions that you want people to explore and that gives them a platform to ask questions that they're interested in because they're part of the study, part of the research just like an ethnographer is. I don't know that it is a series of disciplinary relationships that I would advocate for. I wish designers could just follow their intuitions and their passions but connect with these disciplines in a way that saw design as not a second class citizen but [as] a series of knowledge capital that is just executed through a different mode, through knowledge constructed in a different way and explore the potential of that and bring that back to design to talk about those relationships. Anthropologists don't say, we need to limit ourselves to just sociologists. They say everybody should know their information.

DP: Listening to what you want your students to be able to do when they leave school, do you feel that specializations prevent designers from thinking critically with other modes of thought?

SD: No I don't actually because I think that these are just strategies. There's a set of twin doctors who used to work out of UCLA and they were specialist internalists. They were [female] doctors working specifically with [female] specific conditions and organs. One of the things in their work that they quickly identified, by having that specificity, was observing a white male doctor around 65 years old doing a procedure on [...] testicular cancer. Then they watched another male doctor do a procedure on a woman that I think was a hysterectomy. The sensitivity with which the procedure was carried out between the two [patients] was so extremely different that the care to not impact certain sensory parts of the [...] man in that region was not executed to the same extent in the woman's exam. Then they went into how the procedures are actually created to do them and again, created by men, for men clearly were much more concerned about how they were going to impact surrounding tissues

[of the male patient]. These are the people making the procedures for doctors to carry out. So in specializing [the female doctors] were able to find the ideological, epistemological gender orientations that constructed the procedures because it's been a white male dominated discipline for many years. This specialization allowed them to go into a whole other series of work which is re-envisioning these procedures. Students should participate in their education not be consumers of it. I think we are really quick to canonize things like, "you should know this and this and if you know these two things you're good to go", as opposed to constructing knowledge. There is a constellation of near disciplines that we have had a history with over the last 50 years [...]. Anthropology and ethnography have been [...] important to design as it gets closer to the human condition as far as understanding and observing it. We should acknowledge that but [...] orient students to recognize [...] that they are the ones fostering these relationships along with defining who their work is going to be responsible to. A lot of the issues that come up in our class is, well is it art? Is it design? And I think that's a great example of why there are false distinctions. Whether your work is art or design is whether or not you choose to participate in the mechanisms that critically evaluate and participate in the knowledge construction of that said discipline. You can show in a gallery but that doesn't make your work art. Participating in the criticism of art and in the evaluation of art, that makes your work art. We have all seen ethnographers do really shitty design and I certainly wouldn't call them a designer. If they called themselves designers I would ask, how are you making that call? Just because you are designing doesn't make you a designer. You would have to hold yourself to the critical platforms in that space in order to say well I'm really engaged here. When we are talking about specializing I think specialization can be a really interesting way to get at something. I think it's the atmosphere that you create in those curricula that enable students to see themselves as the co-constructors of knowledge and of the discipline and setting up pedagogies in curricula that support that. To give you an example, a typical curriculum in a design studio environment would be, [...] two terms of very hands on or very predetermined content. In graduate work you're going to have a class in transmedia design, critical theory, people knowing and then for your last two terms you're going to do your thesis work and the idea there (it's called the banking model) is that you are taught all that you need to know and now that you know it, you can [...] develop a critical position and now you should know how to really approach your work. Whereas in the graduate curriculum I'm interested in, it's more of a spiral model. It's this critically reflective model that has students engage in their own execution of a series of questions and as part of that they engage in a larger set of knowledge that may be more specific or more general depending on where they are. So the day you come into the masters program that I'm a part of your thesis starts now. The classes are going to support that in every way, everyday to help that. For some students that is really hard because it forces you to participate, it's not passive, [...] and be comfortable with not knowing an emerging environment. But my perspective on that is much more conducive. I don't want to put people in the same places ten years ago. In relationship to the idea of design research, how do you establish an advance standing graduate level engagement with what it means to be a designer in an environment where enquiry is part of that process, not reserved exclusively to a studio context? There are [many] programs over the last 50 years that have explored research in design for example you have Cranbrook which brought post-modernity and a formalist articulation of that into graphic design, that's all research. California Arts in the late 80's, exact same thing, amazing formalist spaces, the Bauhaus, these were places where research happened. But what we are talking about, with the current context, is how do you develop platforms to support a multi-knowledge constructed environment?

INTERVIEW 2

DP: What are the ideologies that surround your work?
SD: Some of this builds [...] on the conversation we had around the idea of whether something is theoretically based or [...] [based on] the frameworks that you use to articulate the foundations of your work. I wouldn't say there is one particular theoretical framework that I use as a foundation for my work. But I do think, with the work that I am doing now, given that a lot of it is about exploring developing contexts [and] working in a post-Fordist economy, post-Fordist theory has played a role in understanding some of the global infrastructure of those things [as well as] post-colonial studies, actually we're in a post-post-colonial studies world right now. Those two have been the kind of worlds that I have been [...] influenced [by], the ideologies that you get confronted with [...] and the frameworks that you get confronted with. When you start to work in these other spaces you're clearly influenced by Kant. All of the theoretical frameworks that I've been trying to look at are different models for understanding how to negotiate the space and orient myself and design's work in this space. I don't think post-Fordism is a model as much as a way of understanding what the global context is. And post-colonial studies specifically since my work is in Africa [...] there's such a problematic in understanding how to negotiate that from a different platform.

DP: I know you to be a communications designer is that correct?
SD: Yeah, media designer.

DP: Ok, so looking at the history of design and object making, what were the ideologies that made a mark on your way of thinking?

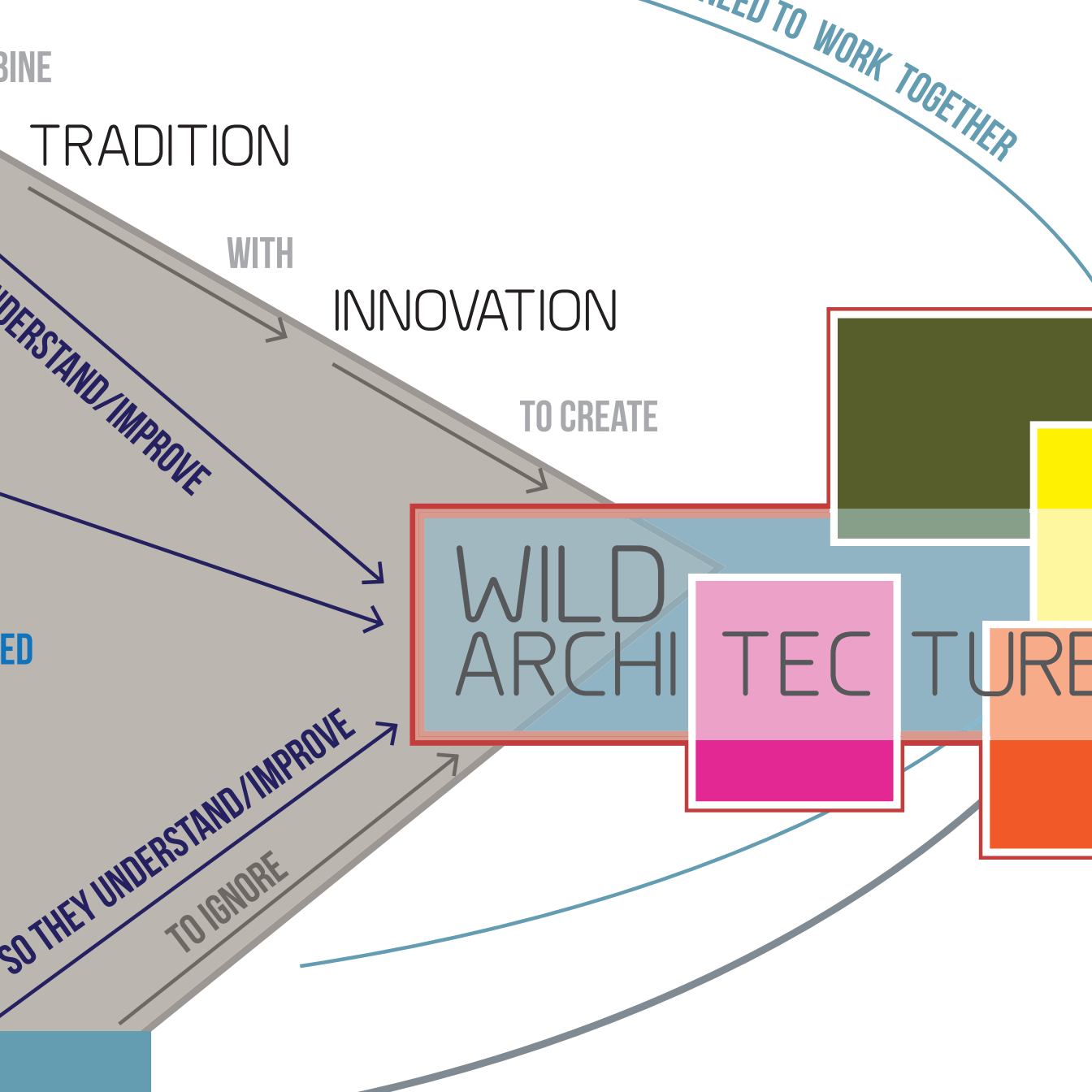
SD: Sure, I think that's where some of the more traditional post-modernism impacts on graphic design and [...] things like Emigre Magazine and some of the early work by Futurist typography, not their ideology but certainly the typography that came out of that ideology of erasing the future. I mean, you can accelerate history with the visual language that came out of that. What was really important in getting my attention in design is the sense that there could be this emotional, ephemeral experience that's created out of it, not just a functional problem that's solved. A lot of the early modernist stuff was very much about sign and symbol and vernacular and that clarity of communication, for example Paul Rand. There's a great essay by Steven Heller called The Cult of the Ugly where he was the first one to go out on a limb and make a critique of Emigre [...] and about how ugly it is and how tasteless it is. It just became the call cry of a generation of people that were based on a whole different set of practice and interests and the essay greatly mischaracterizes all of the post-modern work and says it's contemporary. Twenty years later we know that Emigre was one of the most significant 20th century publications of graphic design. That movement wasn't about taste it was about different ways of communicating in the same way that Dada and Collage was. A lot of my later work became about exploring the role of technology and so I did a lot of web design and out of that came the idea of user-ness, not marketing but user relationships. Good grips, for all its failings, from an advanced ideological position, should be recognized as my work is recognized as something that allowed me to not just be about empathy but [about designing] things that actually impact people in different ways. And through the material environment as a media designer, that's an important dimension to cross over. A table is as much able to communicate something as a poster is.

DP: With regard to Touch Magazine were there any graphic design styles movements that you used or drew on to design the magazine?
SD: There were more [influences] through the work of Denise Gonzales Crisp and her argument around the decorational. She was a faculty member of mine when I worked on that project [as] a graduate student. For me it was less of a style influence than it was recognizing that decoration and the ability to just take pleasure in something that you see is a value, and that decoration isn't unnecessary or frivolous but it is the embodiment of a set of ideals, aesthetic ideals. There's a value in just looking at something and making someone smile or go "urgh". That's an emotional response that design has the affordance to facilitate. With Touch magazine it was an opportunity to explore, for people who had different kinds of vision, the same kind of experience that historically [...] was a one to one translation of the word. When you talk about communications, the editorial voice of the magazine is not just the word choice but the illustrations that go with that, the kind of photography that goes with that, the typography that the words are set in, you know, that's an editorial relationship between the magazine and its readership and this idea of that being frivolous was really the catalyst to explore what can you do with texture? How can texture be visual and tactile? It is both actually, so how can you play with patterns and interject serious conversations with moments of delight or pleasure? Those are all valuable parts of communication that you should be able to experience regardless of whether you have vision or not. Some of it was also to be a bit provocative in the sense that we can look at a picture of Brittany Spears scantily clad but for some reason it seemed inappropriate for someone who doesn't have vision to feel the outlines of that same figure. So why shouldn't they be able to do that? You're comfortable looking at it, why shouldn't they be able to touch it? Somehow the act of touching solicited much more paternalistic responses than it being on every newsstand on every news corner in L.A. Some of it was to challenge that [...] within the communities that serviced those publications.

DP: In our previous interview you briefly mentioned two movements that had an effect on you; ASCO and the Women's Building. Could you please elaborate on that?
SD: Sure, the thing that's interesting about ASCO is its collective atmosphere. They were interested in how media constructs image and identity and how they could create media as a way to insert their own critique and criticism, not just of media but of identity. They would do these projects called "Walking Murals" so they would dress in costumes and walk through communities. They also did a series of projects that were called "No Movie". They were stills that looked exactly like they were from a movie but they were engaging in stereotypical representations of what it meant to be a Latino in Southern California and how that was being represented in media. But they constructed these images in a way that we weren't quite sure whether that was a Hollywood produced thing or if it was a critique, you just didn't know. This was way before Matthew Barney and way before [...] high production cinema. So it was a critique of the apparatus but also a critique of the infrastructure of production and the ideologies that are behind that that produce those media and so for me that was a very powerful creative space. Government is the same thing. I have been doing a whole series of projects that explore government as a medium. For example, a petition is a medium and these have embedded values and could be used to push and pull issues and communication. The Women's Building in L.A. was very powerful because it was a group of people who just said, "We're going to create our own mechanism" and again this is what feminism, for me, has provided. A very powerful sounding board in the sense that they're not just critiquing the institutions but creating your own as a way to critique institutions but also provide alternatives. The Women's Building which evolved from

a graphic design perspective, Sheila de Bretteville who's known historically in design, was one of the three founding partners. That exercise was a movement that just took ownership of it completely and restructured the structure in order to create different roles and engagements that directly confronted gender as part of that. And I think that's something that has really been a staple of my work in design research, formalist dimensions, what it means to be social. I think those are really important threads of work that intersect in and out. Even when I'm talking about an aging community or engaging a Latino community on impairments, part of that investigation is the material interrogation and a communication interrogation; it's not just solving a problem for a particular community. In order to achieve a goal you have to explore the material and the design language needs to be interrogated as well. So we spoke about cultural studies and how authenticity comes through having a community handwrite things and it's reflective of the designer's voice, so how do you have a multiplicity of voices? Particularly when the history of typefaces is about fixing features, so it's all about continuity. How do you structurally change that? I created a typeface that shapes itself depending on the most recent earthquake readings in a particular neighborhood. When you typeset it, it connects to an address in that area and it sets the letters relative to the most recent Richter scale reading and so it connects it to geography and time. It can do that for any zip code or any block that you connect that typeface to. Therefore, if we talk about voice it's infinite. And that's where the organizations influenced me because they explore alternative systemic models and they knew it was about engaging alternative production models in order to produce alternative trajectories. It's not just making something different; you have to make a process to make something different.

DP: If you had to present a talk in the Design Studiers program, which projects would you use to exemplify your practice?
SD: I guess it wouldn't be one project. It would be a theme, something on conversation objects; a suite of projects that could include moments from a series of projects but also include some student work. The conversation would be around, how do you use design as a mechanism to facilitate different kinds of conversations? That would include the typeface that I just mentioned and a whole range of student work that explores objects as a mechanism to do that.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"You have to be able to research the world in front of you. You are not an outsider. You are inside that world, so you have to develop certain kinds of receptors in order to be able to sense what is going on around you. And then you have to learn how to organize this experience that you had and how to intervene, with the idea that you're doing it for the good of everyone, not only for yourself."

Ivan Kucina:
Wild Architecture

by DORA SAPUNAR.
Dora Sapunar comes from Split, Croatia. She holds Master's Degrees in Art History and English. She is currently a student in the MA Design Studies program at Parsons where her focus is on socialist design and interiors.

The Balkans have always held an ambiguous position on the map of the world. They have been considered liminal spaces, constantly in transition between the past and future, but truly belonging to neither. The West has often thought of the Balkans as an exotic Other. The German expressionists travelled there in search of the untainted primitive while contemporary Hollywood movies search for the primitive in the present. For their part, the people in the Balkans have always tried to smooth out these differences, always yearning for something, erasing some of their own idiosyncrasies in order to appear less like the Other and more like the One. At different times, and sometimes even at the same time, the Balkans have strived for the East and the West, rarely proud of what was already there. This path, hardly sustainable in the long run led to the question whether Balkan could ever learn from itself.

The Balkan and its surrounding myths have left a mark on all those who were brought up in this region. Ivan Kucina is a part of a new generation of architects, designers and activists who are trying to reconcile these different ideas and histories that have left an imprint on this region. They are trying to understand the environment they were brought up in and frame it in a meaningful context. A part of this process is coming to terms with the multiplicity of meanings that are attached to these spaces and the impossibility of creating a unified definition. Kucina's practice is not bounded either, by scope or discipline. He moves seamlessly between architecture, design, art, education and activism in order to tap into the past and present and come up with design strategies that could be useful in the future.

Ivan Kucina was born in Belgrade in 1961. He spent his childhood in what was then Yugoslavia, on the surface a unified country with strong aspirations of greatness. He enrolled in the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Belgrade, a very rigorous and rigid program, which was focused on perfecting technical responses to ideal situations. What was evident to him was that there was a discord between the harmonious imagined and the chaotic real. The problems encountered in his own educational context were supplanted by studies abroad, particularly a summer program in Delft, the Netherlands. These programs helped Kucina understand architecture not as a finished product but as a process that takes place in a complex environment. He started engaging with current political and social issues, looking at the already existing solutions and working with other agents involved in these processes in trying to come up with strategies that could lead to certain improvements on the scale of individual architecture as well as broader cityscapes. He graduated in 1988, around the time when seismic shifts were rocking Yugoslavia. The quick shift from socialism to capitalism made many established modes of acting and things obsolete. In this political situation. innovativeness rose as a crucial survival tactic. This forced many professionals, and Kucina among them, to adopt a Jack-of-all-trades attitude and not become tied to a single career path. Kucina has combined the rigor of traditional architectural training with the openness of contemporary approaches to architecture and design. This was concurrent with analogous developments in the cityscapes of Belgrade, Serbia, and the Balkans in general, where tradition started meshing with the flood of the new.

The first important idea that arises when looking at Kucina's practice and his general approach to architecture, is his attempt to try to understand the world that he is a part of. This broad interest led to a realization that the similarities in architecture and cites move past the boundaries of countries. This insight was reflected in **The School of Missing Studies**, a project that he co-authored with Srdjan Jovanovic-Weiss from 2003 until 2007 (Figure 1). The project, which included a workshop for Serbian and American students of architecture in New York City, was meant as an exchange between people from different countries in an attempt to understand how certain ideas permeate different contexts. For instance, it attempted to dispel the misconception that terms such as 'transitional' should only be relegated to places like the Balkans. This understanding of the area, which is thought to be liminal and constantly moving in-between extremes, applies to other contexts as well. In some way all cities can be seen as transitional.

However, this look at the broad scale means little if a critical eye is not cast on the immediate context as well. In his work Kucina has often probed into

the uncomfortable aspects of Balkan history. **The Lost Highway Expedition** (Figure 2) was a project, which took place from July 30 to August 24 in 2006, involving a group of over 200 artists, designers and activists, who retraced the Highway of Brotherhood and Unity. The highway, built as part of a volunteering campaign in the sixties was meant to physically connect different parts of the country as well as become a manifestation of the unity of the different nations that made up Yugoslavia. The fact that the highway remained unfinished symbolically marked the failed aspirations of socialism. The 2006 expedition began in Ljubljana and travelled through Zagreb, Novi Sad, Belgrade, Podgorica and ended in Sarajevo. It was meant to reestablish communication between different disciplines, points of view and nations. What was different from the way the highway was originally envisaged was that this particular communication was not forced. It did not base itself on idealistic notions of similarity between these nations, rather it promoted discussion and an understanding of diversity. Through its connection with a specific location the project put an emphasis on space. Through the historical significance of the highway it pointed to the importance of the past in thinking about the contemporary. But this symbolic action was in essence meant to map the contemporary spaces and processes of former Yugoslavia and pose questions about the future developments of this area.

The same way it's difficult to look at objects without taking into consideration the context in which they were made it is important to look at how a time and a place inscribed themselves on particular objects. In his practice Kucina remains sensitive to the ways in which political and economic issues are manifested in architecture and urban environments. He tackles the complexity of these issues, not by simplifying and forcing them into categories, but by working within this chaos, making connections and creating possible scenarios and strategies.

Left (fig. 1): **School of Missing Studies** | Right (fig. 2): **Lost Highway Expedition.**

In our contemporary world the crucial units for this complexity are cities, and this has been one of the arenas that Kucina has often come back to. Post-socialist cities are great examples of the inherent contradictions found within contemporary urban environments. In what was then Yugoslavia, urbanism, and more particularly housing, were used to express the great ambitions of socialist ideology. They were supposed to foster a new society of equality and order, and at the same time promote it to the rest of the world. Stylistically it used modernist forms and ideas to express these ideals. New apartment buildings were usually built on large empty lots outside city centers. Although ambitious in scale, they were often constructed using cheap materials, without regard for certain basic needs. Frequently disconnected from the city center they functioned as islands onto themselves. They became deteriorating examples of a particular delusion of grandeur, especially following the quick and sweeping transition to capitalism. The wish to catch up to the rest of the world once more meant a disregard for the traditional in order to get to new goals quickly. New developments went uncontrolled on all levels.

This economic undercurrent played a crucial role in new urban developments. As wealth was distributed more and more unevenly, people, already used to finding ways around bureaucratic standstills, circumvented tradi-tional flows of economy and started building alternative routes that functioned in the grey areas between the legal and illegal. As governments were inert and disinterested, the citizens took decision-making into their own hands by taking control of their immediate environment. This informal economy, which was based on practical decision-making, organized and regulated itself on the micro-scale. In method this approach drew from what was available and using common sense and ingenuity that are freed from established modes of thinking generated new solutions. This ingenuity reshaped the economic realm and concurrently the architectural and urban environments.

In architecture, as much as in economy, there was a need for a fast reaction to new conditions, allowed by the maneuvering space in the rupture between the two systems. This initiative to modify and create was taken by individual citizens. They adapted what was already there and created new forms in order to meet their current needs. They built, improved, and modified their living and working spaces in a way that wasn't controlled and restricted by regulations, for the most part unheeded, especially during the conflict in the region, which lasted from 1991 to 1999. These ideas spread quickly, and what began as simple modifications became a series of complex environments.

Architecturally, some characteristics are pervasive in many of these buildings. Because they are built not as a result of long-term savings but rather from day-to-day earnings they are process-based and additive in nature. Precisely for this reason they are never finished but rather function in a constant state of flux. They often grow from already existing buildings and are seen as symbiotic organisms or viral growths depending on the perspective of the onlooker. Often, architectural elements and floors are added with little or no consideration for the original plans. If they are new buildings they frequently have no set plans but rather grow organically, starting from the basic infrastructure and leaving open the possibility for future expansion by new generations. These houses are often built by the owners themselves or their friends and

acquaintances, using readily available materials. This gives them a particular do-it-yourself (DIY) quality that demystifies and deconstructs the idea of a single author, the consummate professional—the architect. They combine local practical knowledge of construction with newly available high-tech solutions. These processes can be summed up as "doing and making that intervenes in the general distribution of doing and making."

Despite their creativity these developments are often criticized by both architects and governments. They are considered illegal, urban blight that spreads like a virus over regulated urban areas. These opinions are based on what now are understood to be misguided ideals of a unified, well-regulated urbanity that is meant to bring order intro the potential chaos of cities.

Kucina has proposed taking a more fluid, organic approach to cities. His is an approach that accounts for the fact that urbanity has always been embedded in the everyday. He has tackled these issues as part of the Stealth Group, where along with Ana Dzokic, Marc Neelen and Milica Topalovic he conducted a series of research projects, workshops and actions that analyzed urban developments in Belgrade and the rising importance of this new vernacular of building that they termed wild architecture (Figure 3). Their goal was both to learn from these cases as well as help develop strategies that would make them more sustainable.

For instance, in wild architecture the notion of temporality is key. As there is no plan from which the project starts there is often little planning for the future as well. Other than a vague idea of expansion and the constant potential of upgrade there is no unifying vision to these projects. Since wild architecture can still be considered as a means of survival in a new social and economical order it exists

Figure 3. **Wild Architecture**

in a state of constant present. This however means that there is no environmental awareness, no sense of the impact that these buildings are having on the environment. The role of the architect, according to Kucina, would be to bring in his own specialized

knowledge to address these issues. By working as a group, the citizens, architects, professionals from different disciplines and the governments would be able to teach each other and learn from each other at the same time.

Balkanization

Concurrency - spatial implications of the various simultaneous states of existence

Hybrid - invention resulting from the fusion of multiplicity

Fragmentation - reduction of authority and the growth of self organized bottom-up initiatives

Convertible Border - potential of distorting limitations into space of exchange

Expandability – capacity of hosting body to adapt to the uncoordinated external partitions

Temporary Hierarchy - ability to take over particular spatial action for the limited time

Leftover - free spaces in between fulfilled desires

Raw End - unintentional result of the most literal application of basic building tools

Under Construction – continual delay due to undetermined building process

As a professionally trained architect Kucina has applied some of the lessons extracted from wild cities into his practice (Figure 4). Two projects in particular show how Kucina adapted these strategies: the Museum Macura and the Mancic House. In 2008 Vladimir Macura, wanting to display his extensive collection of neo-avant-garde art, opened a museum in Novi Banovci, Serbia. He employed Kucina and his partner Nenad Katic to come up with a plan for this building. The architects sent in the preliminary plans but then failed to hear back from Macura. A year later, a trip to Novi Banovci revealed that Macura had finished the project on his own. Drawing from fragments of the plans, Macura independently brought in changes and adapted the plans to suit his wants and needs. Although the architects weren't consulted and weren't satisfied with some of the decisions made, they had no objections to ceding power to the client. Their understanding of architecture as a process of communication where all parties are equal, made them recognize Macura

Left (fig. 4): **Strategies of Wild Architecture** | Top (fig. 5): **Museum Macura.**

as one of the authors of the building. The museum was constructed using simple materials, such as brick and concrete, which are common building materials in the surrounding areas. The museum allows for a sense of the chaotic that permeates it, bringing it closer to wild building than an ordered museum space.

The Mancic family house (Figure 6), begun in 2001, was designed with similar principles in mind. The work of Kucina and Katic, this project is done in phases, where building is concurrent with planning. The client is a crucial agent in this process, making important decisions as part of every phase of the project, responding to ideas proposed by the architects and coming up with ideas his own. The house is meant to function as a dialogue between the traditional and the contemporary, combining

technology with local traditional knowledge in order to create a sustainable structure. This is another example of learning from wild buildings - seeing architecture as a process and not taking any value away from the unfinished state. This interest in learning from the everyday led Kucina to focus on bringing these lessons from the streets into the halls of architecture schools. Since 1997 he has been a professor at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade, where working first with freshmen and later with graduate students, he tries to bring back an awareness of reality into otherwise abstract studies. He believes it's important for students to understand that they are a part of the world that they are designing for and that they should be able to sense what is going on around them.

Top (fig. 6): **Manic House** under construction

Being attuned to the times has played a major role in Kucina's practice and is a critical quality in the constantly changing environment architects are working in. According to Kucina, architecture schools should provide students with knowledge on "how to research that, how to grab the informa-tion on what's going on, how to organize the experience that [they] had and then how to intervene into that with the idea that [they're] doing that for the good of all, not only for themselves." This educational approach therefore combines the practicality of the everyday with a particular mode of activist idealism.

However, Kucina believes this process of learning should not stop with architects. The next step, communication, helps all involved parties to learn from each other and use their combined strengths to improve current living conditions. At this point there are several distinct groups that all have an impact on these issues: citizens, architects and governments.

Design programs often attempt to encourage citizen participation, but because there has been so much self-motivated building and so many citizen initiatives in Serbia and the Balkans, Kucina's goal is somewhat different. He attempts to encourage understanding and communication in a situation where different groups have little contact but much to offer each other. This can best be achieved through discussions, workshops, seminars and performances that involve

all the interested parties in an interdisciplinary process of creating strategies. Kucina believes that exchange is the crucial link that can hold this chain together. Through the projects and workshops he has organized, a network of interactions is created that works horizontally and not hierarchically.

Out of increased understanding and communication arises the opportunity for change. Citizens work together with architects, designers, researchers, activists, administrators and artists in order to create a better urban environment for everyone involved. So in this equation, the architect plays only one of the main roles, but this involvement is still important. Architects and designers should be present in all phases of this process, they should catalogue the existing processes and strategies, help develop sustainable strategies for the future and help facilitate their implementation, or as architecture critic and theorist John Thackara phrases it, "help shape emergent processes."

One of the methods that is particularly suited for these situations is the workshop, which is one of the main formats that Kucina employs. Being dynamic and flexible it easily adapts to the specific needs of different situations. In Kucina's work we can see an approach to cities as organisms.

The workshop, as a method of educating and bringing up discussions, has some of these aspects as well. In workshops the human factor is crucial, as well as the aspect of time. Although these aspects can be a great advantage in some instances, they can also be detrimental to the process in others. The human factor can be unpredictable and the usually time limited nature of workshops can lack the necessary follow-through. But looking at Kucina's practice, from the Lost Highway Expedition to the Mancic House, it is often the experiment, the process and the spark of conversation that is more important than the end result. This can be related to his immediate context and wild cities once more, since the wildness is not merely a characteristic of architecture but a social process as well.

All the elements of wild architecture: the fluidity, hybridity and inventiveness can also be seen in social circumstances, from street traders to amateur builders themselves. On the other hand Kucina's interest in intangible processes could also be related to the work of John Cage which has influenced him, as well as his personal belief that the object is not necessarily important. More valuable is its ability to radiate and mediate understanding and communication.

His current project, the analysis and work in the Savamala neighborhood of Belgrade, is illustrative of this emphasis on establishing communication between different agents in urban processes. This project, part of Goethe Institute's Urban Incubator, attempts to find alternative methods of urban development that do not necessarily rely on the actual process of building, but attempt to bring communities closer through dialogue in the form of workshops, events and actions. Kucina believes that "participatory processes are helping communities to identify themselves as communities and then with that, to also appropriate the space that is not just given to them, but is also made by them."

Throughout this paper, Kucina as a person and architect has come through forcefully at some times and disappeared at others. This is the true nature of communication - taking turns to talk but also taking the time to hear what others have to say. This quality is crucial in Kucina's practice, where understanding,

communication and process take precedence over the importance of object authorship. Navigating in and between the boundaries of disciplines, both an educator, architect, artist and activist Kucina's practice tackles many important contemporary issues and offers a new way of dealing with the complex realities of the Balkans.

Notes:

1. Marco Navarro. "Repairing Cities, 1, 2, 3, 4." http://www.ymag.it/schede.asp?id=9097

2. Thomas Markussen. "The Disruptive Aesthetics of Design Activism: Enacting DesignBetween Art and Politics." Design Issues, no. 29 (Winter 2013): 38-50. pg. 46

3. Interview with Ivan Kucina, conducted on March 15, 2013.

4. Ivan Kucina, "Participativni Projekt Peti Park = the Participatory Project for Peti Park." Oris 13.67 (2011): 94-101.

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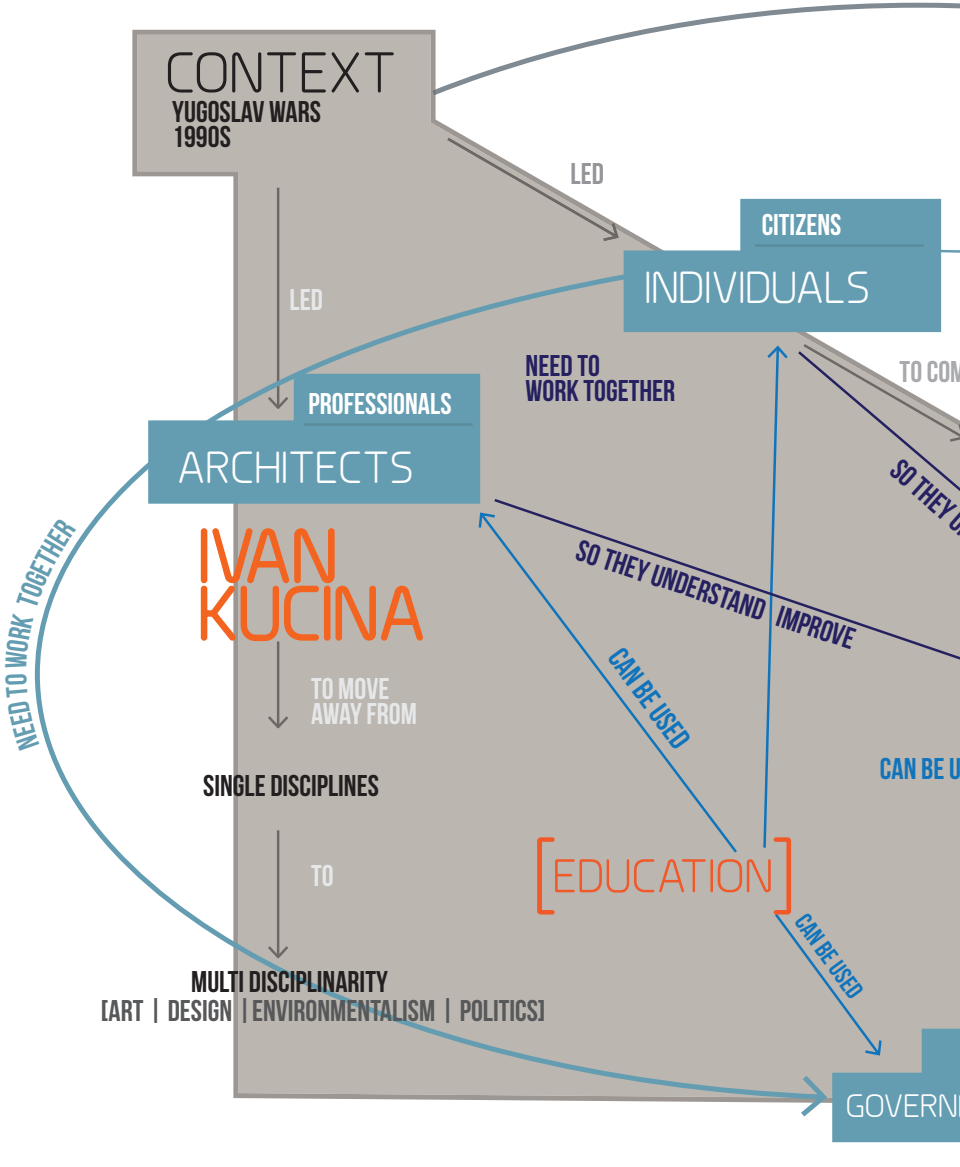
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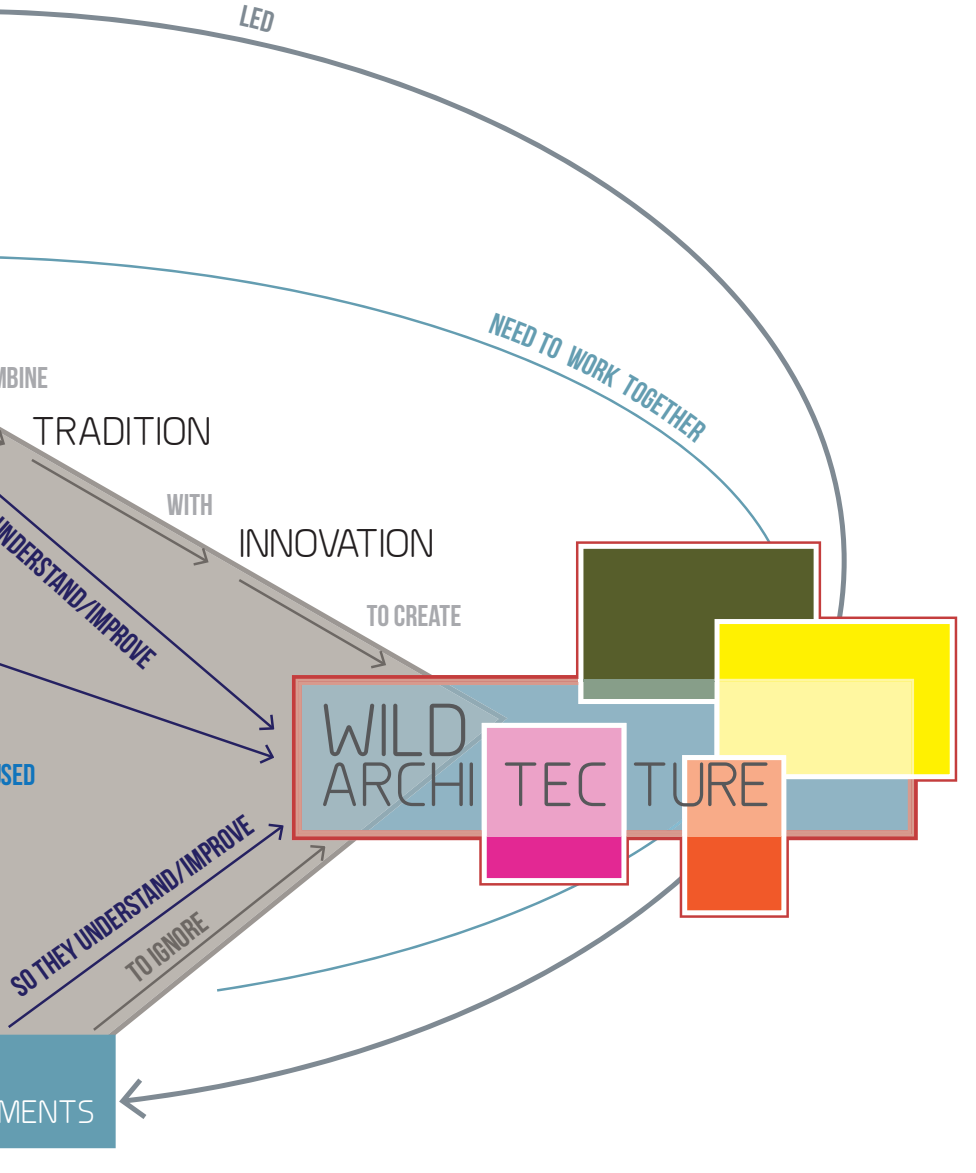


CONCEPT MAP
Ivan Kucina, architect.
Dora Sapunar, 2013.
*Document creator: Gigi Polo

Ivan Kucina
INTERVIEW 1

Dora Sapunar: So to begin I wanted to ask what was your education like, how did the environment shape you as an educator and architect, designer?

Ivan Kucina: I am, I could say, a classically educated architect in the sense of how it was in the old Yugoslavian time – So Technical University, I mean Belgrade University, technical department and it's a technical architecture school. And before I started to study I was not so much interested in architecture as such, as a discipline. It became interesting in the moment ...when I went inside the school and I saw the drawings on the walls and I went to the amphitheater, the auditorium, which was kind of specially designed. It was different than other auditoriums in the same building. And then I liked the atmosphere... the studying. And another thing [that] was important [was] that I felt at that time, when I was very young, I need[ed] some field where I could be creative, where I could express myself. And it was very important. So at that moment this combination, I think, of real space and this very big idea about...creativity, was the main trigger that put me into architecture. And because I didn't know much about architecture when I started to study, I became very curious and I really liked studying it. Especially in...design studio programs like design of architecture. So at the beginning... because I wanted to create something...I was really trying to understand the process of designing, how it goes, and I wanted to make progress in that somehow. At our school, I was good in design studio, it was no problem, but... in my second year I went for the summer school in Delft, in the Netherlands. And there were some Swedes who were running this summer school for two weeks, some professors from Sweden and then I realized [there could be] a completely different approach to design studies. Not design studies, to the process of designing. And somehow I liked it very much, it was more about environment, about people, relations, about the atmosphere of architecture and about how the architecture object communicates with the people. All [of] these things, which in our technical school, we didn't have to do much. So after that moment, I was going every summer outside of Yugoslavia and I was trying to go to workshops and to summer school and I think it influenced me more than my school.

DS: And so students at your school, your peers, did they feel the same way? Did they feel that the education there was too traditional and they tried to find the same thing in other countries?

IK: ... Our school today is very much different than when I was studying because in 2003 we started a big reform so we changed the school a lot and also during these 30 years the school was changing itself so what I'm trying to do at least in my studio that I run in the school is to use this experience. I create programs in such a way that it could absorb these workshop elements into education. So it's not the conventional education that I had, at least in my studio. Some people are different, so they have different studios. What I did, I wrote the program for the first semester in architecture and design. And I wrote a book on that afterwards. And this program I wrote in 2005... it's still going on although I'm not teaching the first year anymore but I was teaching [it] for three years at the beginning. Now they're using my program and my book that I wrote. That, it is one semester, the first semester for the people who don't know anything about architecture. Now I'm working only in the master studio, where the tasks are more complex but here I really... for the first year [students], I completely changed the program from the way I was taught...Before we were learning very abstract universal notions about humanity and some kind of abstract geometry of architecture. And something about function. And [today] they don't do it like that at all. I'm trying to make them compare their real experience of place with the things that they do, so they could feel that when they're doing something they're not doing it from the abstract level but from the level of reality. This is very different from how we were taught. I need to make a lot of effort to understand how to bring back the abstraction to reality.

DS: And do you think that was successful, talking to students? Do you think that they can in the first semester make that shift and go into the real world?

IK: When you look at the results, their designs, what they do, they have three tasks so they have three designs. The first semester they don't know computers yet, so that's a problem, and I want to avoid architecture drawing as a kind of way of creating architecture. So they make a lot of models, they have exercises for which they make fifteen models and three projects within one semester. And the results are great, even after five weeks, you get amazing amazingly good designs, which they didn't have before. What is the problem, then after this first and second semester which are somehow connected when they start to enter the older years they meet these old conventional programs, which are more technical, functional. So because of the pressure of the professors and the studios, which they have, they start to treat this first year as a game. So they don't take it seriously. So all this creativity which they used to have in the first year they start to use it as a kind of... they start to understand it as a warm-up for the more serious things that they do afterwards, which are actually more rigid. But they're not more serious; they're just more rigid, more technical. So when they come again to the Master [degree level], they [have] almost lost this experience from the first year. So you have to reset them again. So that's why this

kind of workshop is really important. And besides the school, I do a lot of workshops outside [of] the school. Abroad. Now I'm tutoring, I always have three or four workshops a year somewhere outside Belgrade. The last one was in Stockholm, in September last year.

DS: I also wanted to ask what is your connection to the School of Missing Studies? And what was the project there? That's something that I found when researching your practice.

IK: It was a workshop project that was done in 2003 until 2007 I think. The grant was from the Trust for Mutual Understanding from New York. I was doing that with a friend who had emigrated from here, Srdjan Jovanovic, who was in New York at that time. He actually initiated the whole program, and then we discussed different series of workshops that we'd have. And the name came out from Bik Van der Pol... I involved my students from... Belgrade into that program, so they had a chance to travel to New York and also to participate in workshops here... [and] we brought some New York artists and architects to Belgrade also... So it was kind of an exchange between Belgrade and New York [and] between different students... At one moment there were students from Pratt working with them, so there were several levels of the projects. One is important, this collaboration between...the students to be part of this moment in New York, which...[does] not [happen] often. The themes were very interesting because the [definition of the] School of Missing Studies from the beginning... was to try to understand the processes of transformation of the cities in transition. That's why we are called that today. We realized very soon that everything is in transition; there is no special territory [and] that Belgrade is transition, but New York is also in transition. So actually, it was just another way of looking at the environment, I think, anywhere in the world. They're explaining the environment in the permanent dynamic, or [through] permanent changes that [are] never stable... We thought that there [were] not enough studies on that, and these studies are always missing because the changes are happening all the time, but you are always late, always missing to understand the changes. And we wanted somehow to [allow] students to become able...to [have an] awareness of the changing, and be able to... intervene into flows, maybe to change the direction of the flows.

DS: So you would say that the role and responsibility of architects in this transitional world would be to, to make an intervention in this? What would be some of their other responsibilities as professional architects?

IK: I think they have many responsibilities. Of course, one of the responsibilities would be to try to understand the world itself, because the environment is in the process of changing. I believe that...the changes are permanent basically, and not some kind of universality. So... you have to learn all the time. You have to be able to research the world in front of ...[you] which is changing. You are not an outsider. You're inside that world, so you have to develop certain kinds of receptors [so] that you can become able to sense what is going on around [you]. And then to know how to study that, how to research that, how to grab the information on what's going on, how to organize this experience that you had, and then how to intervene into that, with the idea that you're doing that for the good for all, [and] not only for yourself. So there is...[an] almost utopian background of that...I believe that architects should do something to improve what's going on to create some kind of positive dynamic within the system. So in order to do that, you have to intervene, especially in those areas which [have] conflicts and which are problematic in a way...

DS: And what would be the role of the public? Because what I found very interesting in a lot of your writing is that you wrote about the uncontrolled building activities in Belgrade. How does that come to terms with the professional architects?

IK: This is a big subject, which we started to study at the end of the nineties... it started as a personal relationship to the transformation we were facing. My environment was changing. And what was kind of specific in that moment, was that I stayed here and most of my friends went away and started working in different schools... but they wanted to keep in touch with Belgrade. So, I became their point of reference, [their] connection to Belgrade... I used that connection to transfer the experience that I got from them to my school environment [in order] to involve students in this process. At one moment we had a large number of students and we started a research project trying to understand personally how our city [had] transformed. From that point, it became a very big issue because then we were also learning through that research. And we had different projects and a lot of lectures abroad about that and we were understanding more and more [about] the whole new discourse that we set up with this, [something] we didn't have in the beginning. And what came out of that... [was] this kind of wild building, ...you can say informal architecture or self-made cities...[This is] typical [not] only for Belgrade but for the Balkans; they're everywhere in the world and in [the] very near future they'll become a major way of habitation. The majority of people will live in that kind of environment...[This] became a very big issue for architects because more than half of the population will live in these kinds of conditions which, if you're an architect [who] wants to make something, you have to deal with this. This kind of environment is automatically part of your interest, because... you're an architect but it's also [because it is a] different environment [and] you need to know a specific way...to learn it and how it works and what are the rules because there's not only chaos behind it. Chaos is if you look at it from the outside, from a plane but if you get in and if you start to study, you start to understand all the rules, which are happening behind that.

By knowing these rules it's helping you to create instruments for you to improve it. This is the thing... it becomes a really important issue for the architect. In that sense, maybe it should become a normal part of architecture, because it's present everywhere in a way...It has the potential to be avant-garde for architecture, because these rules of self-organization, self-building...the way you can participate in creating your own environment...the quality that you can get out of this participation and of your self-creation and the freedom that you can feel within this environment. I think it's something that's very essential for architecture. It could shift the values of architecture into new dimensions, which I think is very necessary in today's world...It started as a curiosity because of the changes that we were facing, but very soon it grew to a new avant-garde instrument of the architecture.

DS: How does this communication between the architect and the people who are doing this come into being? Do you think that future developments in this will be on the level of government? Which maybe doesn't make sense, because it is an informal type of architecture. Or, how do architects and people meet and create something new?

IK: ...[There] are different ways [that architects can] meet people. Some architects are illegally involved in this process. Sometimes they are present, most of the time they are not present...I selected...three new buildings that happened in the last three years, which are illegal... [A] personal experience [that] I had within that project helped me a lot to understand how the whole process could become articulated... The problem with these settlements is that the people who are building them are practically just solving [the] problem[s] that they have at the moment; Very opportunistic...They don't have any environmental awareness. [These buildings do not work] socially or ecologically. They have... a quality, which [has] more potential than what is made... The architects are able to recognize the potential, and help in the improvement of that...their goal would be to work with the people and to add this social and ecological awareness... They can... join the potency of self built workers, or self made houses, and the knowledge of architects, who are able to articulate this quality which is lacking at the moment. That's on the level of the building. But also, on the level of public space, [the architect has] a very important role because... participatory processes are helping communities to identify themselves...[and] also appropriate the space that is not just given to them, but is also made by them. They become a community in the process of making the building, and then in the process of [the] appropriation of that space; in the process of using that space. It is a completely different kind of ethic to what it is today... [How] the government help in this is really to enable this process to happen. To create regulation for these participatory models, and also to promote them as a kind of thing that can really believe in this moment of crisis, a kind of saving belt in a way.

DS: Looking at how this type of building evolved in Belgrade after the nineties, what would you say are some changes that happened in these 20 years and where do you see it going in the future? Do you think that there is a potential for this positive communication between people, architects, and maybe the government?

IK: I think that this is my program. What is really happening is...a complete misunderstanding from all [of] the sides...it's not only Belgrade involved. In Serbia, more than a million buildings are built, in Belgrade, it's 250,000. And in the whole Balkans...although the countries were not connected...they were divided by wars, they were enemies, they were in conflict... there was the same process going on...also in Croatia. Also in Albania, especially in Bulgaria [and] in Romania...and I think the number is...more than 3 or 5 million new houses built in the 15 years. [This is] something that is [often] ignored by most of the architects and planners...In 2003...the new master plan for Belgrade... actually completely ignored the illegal settlements in the periphery of the city...after the master plan, they brought the first legalization law. They had to put it into the master plan, so they just changed the colors of the zones that they had previously marked as a kind of housing. They had to invent a new color for illegal housing... in order for them to be legalized. Since 2003...they [have] had three laws of legalization. In each law, they were trying to minimize the demand that they had, and the last law from 2009, [said] you don't need an architecture project anymore, the project was done...making plans of it... you just need some kind of geometer who will mark the position of the house within your registered plot, and [a] property lease, and [then you need] to register it. [The cost was] 100 euros, at this moment in Serbia, to be put into a list saying that you are legal... The government [was] not doing anything to improve the condition of the illegal settlements and they stopped. Since 2009...it's become a criminal act again, so people are not doing it anymore. In 1993, it stopped being a criminal act...this is very important. In 2009, it's now back to being a criminal act, and the only thing the government is interested in...is to create this lease so [that] these people can start paying taxes [since] they are not paying taxes for the building. They can get more money for their budget...this money won't [be] put back into improving the infrastructure of these settlements, not at all. So people know that, and they aren't interested in paying taxes. They are interested in [having] a legal property so that... could become the basis for some kind of loan. But, since there is an economic crisis and nobody takes any more loans, they are too expensive, and most of the people actually have satisfied their need for houses. They don't need anymore houses. They need to maybe to finish them, but since the crisis, they don't have money to do that. Everything is postponed basically, and nobody has yet legalized...At this moment, and in the last, I mean 20 years, it [has become] all about technical issues and financial issues. It's not about really making something

quality there. And I think people continue because there is no political awareness of these things. Most of the politicians, or most of the people in the government are aware of this living space as a resource. They are treating that as a commodity, and with that thinking, they are [getting] only in [these] kinds of financial questions and transactions.

DS: Where would you put the responsibility for the next step? Is it the role of the architects to figure out the strategies?
IK: ...The improvement will not come from the governmental side. It will not come from the side of the people who are living there because they like the knowledge, so it has to come from the expert side...The problem is [that] most of the architects here are not interested in that and they don't know how to do that, so... I think in the end it will stay unanswered. What I want to do... in the moment where I can act, [is to] use this possibility to [make] some improvements and I am doing that. Now we [have been] working on this project for 7 months since last year, when I managed to connect several workshops and different students from different schools with the big urban festival... We started to do some activities in the public space and this year we are starting...a project, which is financed by Goethe Institute in Belgrade, which is called Urban Incubator. [This] is also focused on this territory in Savamala, they will bring some residential projects, like people from Berlin or Zurich, or Hamburg, to work with the people of Savamala, artists and architects...I am doing my project there which is called School of Urban Practices. I am taking [my students] out of school, we will have a workshop space there in one of the buildings and we will work with the tenants from that building [to] create their common spaces in the courtyard and also in the basement. This is the project we are going to proceed [with]. I tried also, to create [the] possibility to work in these illegal settlements, but...I need some financing to be able to do that.

INTERVIEW 2

DS: Wild cities are an issue in many countries. Do you maybe know of examples where intervention in these spaces was successful on a larger scale?
IK: Yes, I think in Latin America, they have very successful projects and very good projects. I was recently watching the presentation of the Sao Paolo Municipality and the City Co. and the project they that did with Favelas [has] a very interesting approach. In Chile the projects like Elemental, Alejandro Aravena and these kinds of things...are really doing well. In India they are doing very interesting projects; Slumdwellers International [for example] In Africa they are starting, but they aren't doing the whole settlement. They are doing these small interventions within the settlements creating... public facilities for libraries [and] schools... There are several people who are also bringing students and staying [for around] 6 weeks in some of the slums, to work with the locals on designing and building the small facility. And I had a chance to do a similar thing, in South Africa, in Johannesburg... with a friend who is working there. But we couldn't gather the students because it's too expensive for students here to go there...the plane ticket is €1000. They need some financing to stay, although they've managed to make some accommodations [for] food and everything...[but] they need at least €2000 to invest. It's too much money.

DS: Architects are definitely important here, but what other disciplines do you think can help out? What else can be used to help these processes?
IK: There has to be a transdisciplinary approach, any other discipline I would say. It's very interesting, we need another type of school for that, like transdisciplinary schools, so they could have educated experts from different skills that could contribute to these things. Also... I've started to work in one private university here in Belgrade on a Master's course. It's the Faculty of Media and Communications, so it has nothing to do with architecture and urbanism. It's a Masters course on digital media. I created a course called "City Mapping"... in the first semester they do some kind of thematic mapping of one of the quarters of Belgrade and in the second they [work on] mental maps of the same quarters. It was very interesting because the students were coming from incredibly different areas. Some were journalists, some were costume designers, Spanish majors, one was a judge...there were a few graphic designers...musicians. But what is interesting is, I had to start to explain to them the structure of the city. What is the city, you know? For people who aren't really connected to it professionally, for people who are living in the city, for most of them, the city is just kind of like a supermarket. They are passing consumers and they are just taking what they need momentarily and they don't think about it basically. It's something that is just there and they don't understand the structure of the city, how the city works, what you can do within the city. They aren't thinking about that at all. It's a background, like some kind of infrastructure of a computer that you don't know how it works, you just use the monitor. So they're...really just using the city as a surface with tools that they need to move and to work. It was very...challenging to drag them into the story of a city [with] the complexity [and] the dynamics that exist in a city. [It was difficult to explain] how [one could] actually... create anything, not really [how to] build something, but even if you walk through the city, you're creating your personal world to it. That way you observe what the city could be. It was...almost an artistic experience or an artistic practice. I think [students] need some kind of education before they could help in the process, but

I also think this process needs these kinds of people. [T]hey would try to bring their own point of view into the development...[and] when the architects and urban planners are doing [this], it becomes too technically defined by the instruments they are using...Sometimes these instruments make [damage]... the way you see the things and how...things can be developed. You need everyone...[including]...the people who are living there [to] participate in the process [and] to create their own space, anybody can participate.

DS: Would say that now that there are these developments, different programs, projects, and workshops it is an environ-ment that can be beneficial for future development? Do you feel that in the Balkans there are many different steps leading towards this?
IK: ...I know a lot of people from the Balkan area who are working on that and they are working in an individual way, but I wouldn't say that there is kind of a global Balkan awareness of these things.

DS: I feel there is a bigger awareness of these projects outside of the Balkans than there is in actual the countries in the Balkans.
IK: I completely agree with you, these things that I was doing were initiated from the outside, not from the inside. I was also curious, why is it happening like that? I had my small explanation with that, but there is a problem with the Balkans...I think the book, Maria Todorova – Imagining the Balkans is very important to understand this kind of view of the Balkans, which is accepted by both sides... The outside world, the more developed world than the Balkan world...[accepts that] the Balkan [world] is always kind of wild and irregular... For us, it is the West, which is more organized and progressive and [from which] the whole knowledge comes from... The West was always the role model for the Balkans and the Balkans was always kind of divided between these kinds of orientations towards these modernization processes [and]...traditional things that were tying it to the past. Which was mythologized, it was not the real past, [rather] it was the idea of what was happening in the past. It was never orientated enough to what was already happening in...everyday reality. It was always between the future that you have to reach, and the past that was not real. It was just used as a kind of [an] anchor so as not to fly away...so the past was something that was giving it a kind of foundation for what was going on. But it was an invented foundation. It was not a real one. And then the future was always coming from the West in Europe, so you actually lose...contact with the everyday...reality. All [of] the tools...were [being] used to create...illusionary things, so the progress or the traditions [were] accepted in the West and in the Balkans as such. Nobody tried to develop the Balkans with its own identity, which is turbulent. You have to accept the chaos as such, as an identity, and to create the tools within the conditions that you have...I am also trying to initiate this kind of new awareness – "Okay, now we have the Balkans, let's try to do with it what we can do." There is a specific identity, a specific knowledge that we need to have to improve it. Not just to import the things from the outside. It's not a nationalistic ideology, it's a kind of you can say, [a] regional kind of idea. This region has a specific way of modernization, a specific way of tradition, and... we need to study [this, in order] to understand...how to deal with it. Which is interesting because it's more connected to Latin America than to Europe actually.

DS: How would you explain these interests from outside? Why are others so interested in the Balkans?
IK: It's...explained by the Maria Todorova division; this organized world needs some kind of illusion of freedom, and for them, the Balkans is this illusion of craziness and wildness, freedom, irrationality. Because of this system of repression, they call this psychogeographical therapy...when you have to accept some rules, you are also in the same way suppressing into your own subconscious all the conflicts with the rules that you have...your subconscious becomes a conflicted area, and for most of Europe, the Balkans is that conflicted area. It's the subconscious of Europe. This is [the idea of] Maria Todorova... As a subconscious, it is always the place of craziness. In the same way [that] you're interested in your subconscious sometimes in your life, in the Western world, you become interested in the subconscious of the whole Western world, which is the Balkans. But the Balkans is not only that, ...that's why it's important to create some kind of Balkan identity to get into dialogue with what's coming from Europe, [and] not to accept that role as a subconscious only. In my [limited] power, ...I'm just an academic and a designer and trying to learn something, I have friends and we are trying to build up the network...of this urban report...Over the last three years, [we have been] trying to work on this identity [and] this transformation that we were [experiencing] in all of these countries. I'm organizing a Balkan architecture conference in April, which is a very official event. As part of the Union of International of Architects, which is the highest institutional organization in the world of architecture, it is situated in Paris. It has this regional division [and] we have region 2, which is Eastern Europe and the Middle East. We had that meeting in Belgrade and...under the patronage of that, we have the Balkan architecture conference that I wrote the program for. It's a one day conference where we will have some people from the Balkans...speak about the actual conditions, to meet the...complex reality of the Balkans and to create some kind of attitude towards it. I had this idea about [the] Balkan architecture network, so I started a Facebook group first. I was traveling last year [and] I was invited [to give a lecture] for Architecture Week... [and I was] one of the organizers of the architecture week in Belgrade. So, somehow I was connecting all these things and...we don't have

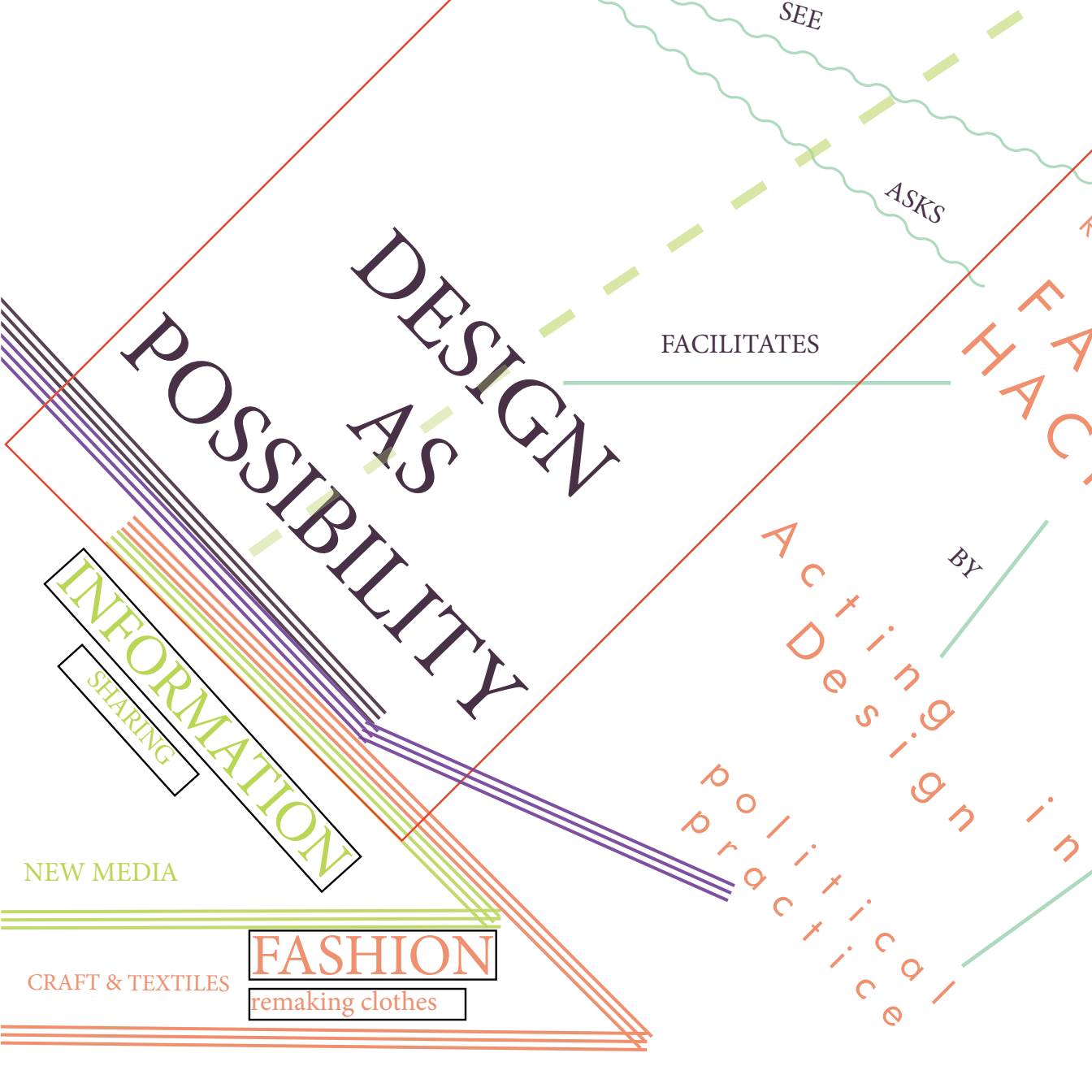
any information on what is happening in these countries,...we aren't exchanging anything. So I said okay, I'll make a Facebook group, it doesn't cost anything, it's easy, I don't want to supervise it, I will not edit it, just let the information flow...It grew up to 560 people without any promotion. It was just growing by itself, you know how these Facebook groups work. It was the basis now for this conference I want to initiate, to create the real platform, which would be the Balkan architecture network. An Internet hub that we can really put all [of] these connections into more serious communication and collaboration...not only [through] information in the posts. So it's something that I can work on. It's not a lot, but I'm trying to understand this, because I feel it is very important. It's important not in the sense of getting the power, but in the sense of identifying your own potential.

DS: Absolutely and processes like these can only happen if you have people coming from their disciplines and working on what they can do. Because just looking at, there's the government and no one is powerful enough to do anything, that would just get you nowhere. But through these projects I feel it's the best way to actually achieve something. Hopefully.

IK: This is why I understood the power of the project and the collaboration with my friends who went during the nineties. Now I'm just trying to progress it [further], create a bigger space for it, [and] create a whole network out of that. I want to involve all these people that I know and people that would eventually come into that. I don't want it to be [just] mine. I can initiate something...but there should be more parallel initiatives.

DS: In your email, you talked about the book about John Cage, how does that relate in any way to your practice and way of thinking?

IK: We are talking about research and urban transformation and teaching, but I am also a practicing architect, designer, whatever, and sometimes I feel like I have parallel lives, although everyday I am doing different things, you know. Today I had to deal with design as well because I will be exhibiting in Milan Design Week in April [and] there is a kind of Serbian Governmental project called Creative Space of Serbia where they wanted to promote furniture designers. I was doing furniture design 20 years ago, and then I had the big break and last year I started to do it again because I was committed. After this, first they invited me, they put me in immediately... They sponsored that and now I'm doing one. The theme that we got from the curator was a storage box, ...I was dealing with...very practical things. I'm also trying to understand how this connection [between] these kinds of product design...from the furniture design, [to] architecture design, even graphic design, [and] exhibition design. These are all the jobs that I used to do. [T]hey are coming because in the nineties here, you had to accept any kind of offer to earn the money basically. It was a matter of survival. The nineties was very difficult in Belgrade because...the whole country was under economic sanctions, so there was nothing in the shops, nothing in the banks...there were people who were just building. Actually it was a completely austere time...there was a parallel grey economy, so if you had an offer from that grey economy, which actually made possible all this illegal building, you had to take it. You had to live on something. Because the salaries were so low, you couldn't survive on it. Basically, that was the age when I finished the faculty work, in the beginning of the nineties. I learned all these things by doing them for money. At the same time, I had this commercial architectural approach, so I had to do product design also. It's not an excuse, it's something also that I like to do, but sometimes I feel it like a part of the thing. When I see my name in these kinds of selections of Serbian designers, and at the same time completely [attached to] alternative urban research, on this project that we do in Savamala, like NGO School of Urban Practice, it seemed like two different people. Actually, ...for me, it's very easy to move from one thing to another. I don't feel this division at all in my head. For me it's just a matter of scale. I think in these relational systems, it's always the structure which is incomplete that has to work somehow, that has some kind of dynamic. It's always the necessity of the others to be there, to be able to finish something, and to tell me what they want. I don't imagine in my head. I only imagine when I have the order to do [so]. I can imagine a lot of things, but I'm not this kind of dreamy architect that can have...the whole world in my head and just project [these dreams] into reality. I'm doing it in the reality...I have developed some kind of criteria for creating designs and the way I'm doing it in this book is more related to that. I have the [same criteria] in doing designs that I have in doing...urban research...It's not so obvious. It's something about non-importance of the object. I'm in product design, but for me, the object is not important. It's the radiation of the object, which I'm trying to [show]...but in order to get radiation, the object needs to be present. But it's not important that [the object is] present. The more important thing is its power to radiate. So how do you create something that will radiate? This is what John Cage did a lot. I also did study very early [on], all [of] the ideas about Zen because my own sensibility took me into that. I don't find it too...different than working with the people. It's the same thing. I mean, whatever you do, you are just kind of, communicating in a certain way with the environment. The environment consists of people, of things, of senses, of thoughts, [and] the things that you'd imagine you can make...it's all one thing. I think in this book...everything of this is compressed in where the heart beats. This is the thing.


SEE
ASKS
DESIGN AS POSSIBILITY
FACILITATES
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Acting Design in political practice
INFORMATION
SHARING
NEW MEDIA
FASHION
remaking clothes
CRAFT & TEXTILES

"...I look at abilities, skills, and I look at what it means not to buy fashionable clothes but to be fashion-*able*."

Otto von Busch:
Remaking Roads To Agency

by KAMALA MURALI.
Kamala Murali was born and brought up in Chennai, India. She holds a Diploma in Textile Design, with a specific interest in crafts and sustainability. She is now a graduate student in the MA Design Studies program at Parsons.

In a world that reserves being fashionable for the few lucky ones, Otto von Busch is pushing the envelope of design from within, and from the bottom-up, to firmly ask that the privilege of being fashion-able be taken back. There is an optimistic quality to his practice that sees design as having innumerous possibilities, and fashion as having room enough to allow him to critically examine its political nature. This same expansiveness is reflected in his persona for, Otto von Busch is many things – fashion artist, designer, crafter, theorist, post-doctoral researcher at the Business and Design Lab at the School of Design & Craft at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, as well as Assistant Professor in Integrated Design at Parsons The New School for Design in New York.

That said von Busch has chosen to situate his practice very much in the midst of fashion. His research

approaches fashion from a myriad of perspectives – some which grew out of personal experiences, and others that expose fashion and its practices for having the potential to expand and incorporate a sense of the everyday. His work stems from a critical engagement and questioning of current fashion practices, delving into fashion's close proximity to the political. There is an underlying thread that runs through von Busch's design practice that is crucial for what design's role can be for the future and this is it: to fight for some, and in his case, many kinds of social justice. The themes he traverses through in his doctoral thesis, his research and his projects speak of fashion design's ability to be critical, to be political, to be accessible to everyone, to be hack-able, to make people able, to be situated in the everyday and to be just.

This paper explores von Busch's framing of his design practice as an open, explorative platform that rearranges relations of power between those that produce and those that consume within the field of fashion, allowing fashion to remain a celebration of identity yet be generous enough to include the abilities of individuals in shaping their identity on their own terms. His practice can be seen as facilitating instances of "dissensus," as defined by Keshavarz and Maze, within the fashion realm that open up spaces in which individuals can reclaim their sense of agency. 1 Thus, his practice can be regarded as a precedent in the emerging understanding of design as a practice that shapes the future of human relationships, for its engagement with social injustices in the fashion realm is insightful, critical and more importantly, possible.

THE EMERGENCE OF A PRACTICE

Possibly as a first encounter with injustice on a small scale, von Busch learnt that sewing his own clothes gave him a sense of personal identity in school. He quickly learnt that what one wore could solicit judgment from peers. The experience of using his abilities to create something that had meaning in his world grew out of his inability to purchase clothing. He saw that in his ability to make his own clothing lay the power to create a position in the world of his own making. Yet, that "authentic" world can be established through a variety of approaches to fashion, something he describes in his appraisal of 'punk:'

> What makes punk 'punk'? Perhaps it is that you are a poor twenty-year old teenager who has all the time to hang out at these kinds of concerts or these kinds of things. And you invest your time on this authentic scene. And that's the authenticity of punk. And then you have other designers who say, I sell punk for you who don't have the time for this but actually work. So you actually bypass, you buy the Vivienne Westwood and you feel you are punk even though you didn't spend all the time that the real punks did who didn't have any money. I think the interesting part is [to ask:] what is this negotiation about? ...I don't think I will have an answer about it. I think it is more about what different ways we could employ designers to talk about exclusivity while still being inclusive. How do we negotiate there?2

At every turn, his research underlines the ability to negotiate the power relations that exist within the fashion system to create a little room for self-expression. This self-expression articulates itself through harnessing one's capabilities to position themselves in the world on their own making. This call for grass-roots agency challenges the institutions of power that dictate fashion from the top down.

During his time in the military service, von Busch became engaged with the writings and political work

of Thoreau, Gandhi and Martin Luther King. The civil disobedience movements that Gandhi led in India and Martin Luther King led in the United States as facets of their political practices helped to shape von Busch's idea of acting in design, as opposed to on or about design.3 Gandhi's salt march in 1930 in India underlined the value of creating change from within to gain independence under imperialist rule by practicing one's own production of salt. In addition to this, Gandhi also advocated spinning cotton and weaving one's own clothes. King's sit-ins at luncheonettes, protesting against apartheid in the southern states of the United States also taught von Busch the implications and potential of civil disobedience and its function as a tactic of resistance to the norm.

The political movements of both Gandhi and Martin Luther King taught von Busch that here was an approach that could facilitate a dialogue that would enable this negotiation between the power relations in fashion to take place. Challenging the constructs of fashion from within was a way to go beyond undermining the hierarchies of power in order to open up a debate that stemmed from the bottom up, and from within. The civil disobedience movements in various parts of the world informed von Busch that fashion design, being a hierarchical entity did indeed have a political side that was worth engaging in to protest social injustices as manifested in the politics of identity.

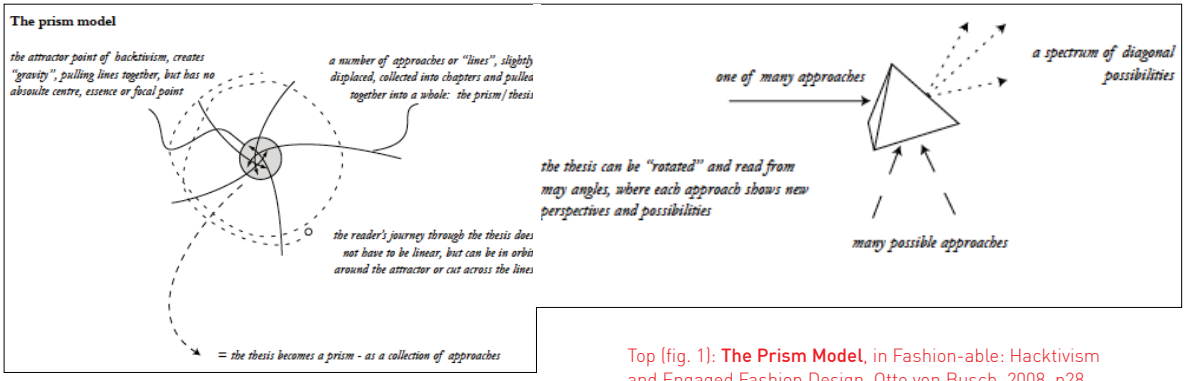
In addition to studying civil disobedience, studying craft taught von Busch of the individualistic nature of making, one largely limited to the domestic environment within the everyday. A year of carpentry followed by textile design came after his stint with craft production. Years later, at university, he found that this understanding of craft as being linked to the everyday would clash with his study of art history that focused on the larger contexts of art, contexts that centered around popular and influential artists and their work. This duality between the everyday and the larger realm would then present themselves as two opposites.

While these ideas about civil disobedience and the value of the everyday were formulating in his mind, his first encounter with new media would spark off what would come to form the basis of his practice.4 During the dot-com boom in 1999, von Busch began to pursue a Bachelors degree in programming. He speaks of a particular course that introduced him to the Internet, open-source programming and information sharing; it was called "physical and virtual design."5 At the same time, he was also sewing and remaking his own clothes, which drew interest from people. Suddenly, he was able to translate the concept of information sharing into his ideas about how to share ways of remaking clothes. He started to compile a series of PDFs on how to transform, step by step, a pair of pants. Otto von Busch recounts, "I think that was my craft encounter with new media...[that] opened up exactly what I wanted to do with civil disobedience. This was the tool for me to educate my user. And that was really [when] the hacktivist framing ... just came together."6

As his microcosm of craft and fashion remaking met the possibilities within the macrocosm of information sharing, and combined with civil disobedience as a tactic of political protest against injustice, his ideas of being inside design emerged. His questioning of the passive nature of consumers of fashion led him to explore the idea of independence in a world that dictates fashion rather than encourage appropriations of it. Otto von Busch began to ask: What does it mean for a designer to empower their user rather than disenfranchise them by dictating fashion? This led his research to focus on the abilities and

skills of fashion consumers that could enable them to become "fashion-able."7 Acting in design then refers to the idea of tapping into the stream of fashion, using one's abilities to craft and make one's own fashion, thus fostering independence of the self. He also refers to this as 'hacktivism.' Acting in design or being fashion-able allows for you to construct your everyday by doing something using your abilities, which will further enrich your world. He writes:

> ...What is design that is in the everyday? Design is not about making grand connections but what does it mean for you to be able to do something? And especially in my research I look at abilities, skills and I look at what it means not to buy fashionable clothes but to be fashion-able.8



Top (fig. 1): **The Prism Model**, in Fashion-able: Hacktivism and Engaged Fashion Design, Otto von Busch, 2008. p28.

ON HACKTIVISM

In von Busch's thesis, "Fashion-able: Hacktivism and Engaged Fashion Design," a prism becomes emblematic of his research practice (Figure 1).9 He outlines this prismatic model of research as underlining the collections of approaches that can enable fashion consumers to adopt an active role within the realm of fashion. While the concept of hacktivism exists at the center of the prism, the approaches to it are open, allowing access to it through many ways. Just as a ray of light that hits a prism is refracted in numerous directions, a single approach to "hacking" into the fashion system can also project a variety of possibilities. This is also what makes the idea of hacktivism appropriate as a tool for activism within fashion as it allows for active interpretation and transformation according to the participant. There is never a right answer.10

How does design activism differ from von Busch's hacktivism? In Abstract Hacktivism, he explores the politics of emergent computer network technologies and its relation to contemporary strategies of activism. He defines hactivism, in this context of fashion, as concerning "construction rather than deconstruction or destruction."11

On the other hand, "design activism" as Markussen writes "has a political potential to disrupt or subvert existing systems of power and authority, thereby raising critical awareness of ways of living, working and consuming."12 The two are complementary

but different. While design activism rests on the act of disruption, von Busch's hacktivism takes the opposite course, which is that it does not undermine the system but constructively challenges it from within. In his research on design, he emphasizes wanting to deepen design through engagement and participation, discarding the academic tradition that encourages "detached criticality" and "analytical distance."13

In terms of re-contextualizing the power relations in fashion, his research enables new possibilities for engaging with fashion design on a local, self-driven scale. It encourages the nurturing of one's own capability within fashion that further emancipates the individual from top-down institutions of power.

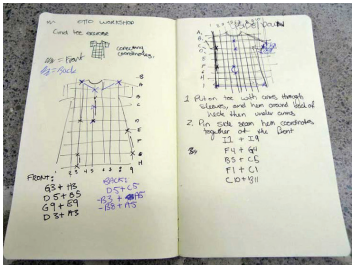
Current deconstruction practices within fashion, such as 'reuse' or 'recycle' practices by fashion designer Martin Margiela and others remain enclosed within the realm belonging to the high-end designer.14 They reconfigure discarded garments into objects of high status to be sold as 'upcycle' products. By contrast, fashion hacking attempts to deconstruct the code of fashion and make it accessible to anyone interested in reappropriating it for themselves by reengineering the design process. Distinct in method and outcome, fashion hacking distances itself from the current de-construction practice that remains an "in-house" process (which von Busch likens to a secret laboratory).5 In this manner, the systemic reappraisal of the process of fashion design-ing into a process that creates a non-linear, open source method allows for empowerment – allowing participants of fashion to create their own fashion instead of being dictated by high-end brands and top designers.

Otto von Busch explains the idea of fashion hacking shapeshifting the codes of fashion.16 He speaks of fashion as a medium that exists in the passage between the imagination and the real, the former dealing with the possible and the latter reflecting the actual.17 The imagination is an extension of reality, and in order to operate within the reality of the fashion industry, the tools that hacking provides tools to aid in the manipulation of the system in order to tap into what von Busch calls the spiritual technologies of fashion. Drawing a parallel to the spiritual shaman's animal attire as transformative of his abilities to transcend one world for another, von Busch says of fashion that it is forever shape-shifting – allowing us to transform from one reality to another by discarding the skin that separates us from the world.18 He reasons that the process of shapeshifting reveals the mythic properties of fashion, bringing out fashion's ability to be social. Here is where the idea of fashion as integral to one's social identity plays a key role in its facility of allowing one to shapeshift. He calls on "fashionistas" to shapeshift between the realms of the imagination and the real so as to empower the self.19

In relation to the passive consumer, von Busch's research also investigates a self-instituting approach in order to question how autonomous one can be within fashion. He builds on philosopher Cornelius Castoriadi's concepts of "autonomy" and "heteronomy" as ideas that can be applied to this approach to fashion.20 Castoriadis relates fashion to a regime of "instituted heteronomy" in which consumers attribute "imaginaries to some extra-social authority" (such as God, tradition, ancestors).21 In contrast, "autonomy is the act of explicit self-institution."22 As this concept underlies the practi-cing of democracy, von Busch calls for fashion to be democratically autonomous as well, producing a break with the established "dictations" of the

industry, allowing fashion to be an effective freedom that results in self-reflection.23

The economist Amartya Sen's "capabilities approach" provides the framework through which von Busch constructs the possibility of allowing a consumer to go beyond the commodity and look at what he or she can do or be.24 Sen argues that we ourselves are commodities because of our belief that commodities



Top (fig. 2): **Fashion Fianchettos,** Otto von Busch and others, 2009. Photographs: Otto von Busch Website

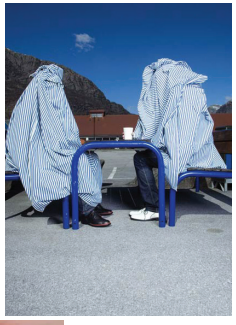
transfer their meanings onto us, allowing us to be fashionable. Yet, what is of more interest, he argues, is "what the person succeeds in doing with the commodities and characteristics at his or her command."25 This creates a fashion-ability that opens up possibilities to be self-reflective and socially engaged, giving the user the freedom and capability "to do and be something."26 It also faces social injustices of the fashion system by undermining its undemocratic character and allowing autonomy from within.

Otto von Busch's "Fashion Fianchettos" project in 2010 used the idea of the "code" as a means of facilitating consumer autonomy through the dissemination of fashion knowledge (Figure 2).27 Otto von Busch explains that 'fianchetto' (flanking) refers to a move in hypermodern chess games in which the player uses the flanks of the board as a tactic to control the center.28 In this project, the 64 squares on a chessboard served as a grid that was projected onto large t-shirts that allowed participants to drape fabric in the manner in which chess pieces are played during the game. The code followed the mathematical structuring of chess, but more importantly, was used as a way for participants to create their own fashion and disseminate it through social media. The code then embodies the methods and flows of producing and consuming fashion. It draws on the ways in which fashion comes into being and materializes as a construct of the self. As von Busch writes on his website,"The project was in itself a code, a praxis, a shapeshifting formula of distributed magic, a spell of trans-formation, a journey of draping through social media."29

In April 2006, von Busch began another hactivist project in a local shoe factory called Dale Skofabrikk in Dale, Norway. The Dale Sko Shoe Hack project

was an experiment to negotiate new processes and relationships through the exploration of collaborative interventions, or hacks, into the post-industrial processes of shoe production. The aim of the project was to open up the linear machine processes of production, thus "hacking the "software" of the production line through choice of designs, materials, processes, methods."30 The participants included the factory craftsmen and women and six Norwegian fashion designers, who created new dialogues within design that were spontaneous and explorative.

In the Dale Sko Hack booklet, produced as a result of the workshop, von Busch asks if the role of the designer can be reorganized so as to enable them to work with production at the local scale. This could "outline the foundation for social change in production."32 He argues that this reorganization could result in a new mode of production for fashion that enables designers to exist within their global markets yet utilize the crafts skills at the local level in collaboration with producers.



Top (fig. 3): **The Dale Sko Hack**, Otto von Busch and others, 2006. Photographs: Bent Rene Synnevåg

The idea of the shoe hack was to "challenge the technical innovation through operational misuse (Figure 3)."31

The reappropriation of the fashion process through hacking created new ways of production and new social relations that reversed the role of the designer from creator to facilitator. It brought the local producer (the factory craftsperson) closer to their consumer. In addition to facilitating new interactions through hacking into the production process, it is also important to note that this project focused on the spontaneous development of a new aesthetic within fashion – a renewed sense of autonomy that reexamines the idea of time involved in production. This project showed that self-production could result in greater agency

and this has the potential to be a new aesthetic of fashion.

In light of von Busch's idea of hacktivism, both the Fashion Fianchettos and the Dale Sko Hack projects argued for a re-negotiation of the aesthetics of fashion production and consumption that is new, exciting and intended to make one self-aware. In this manner, von Busch's work seeks to negotiate these power relations so as to empower the user, designer, and consumer through ways that create new exclusivities. He asks: "... how do we plug into the aesthetics of our time and make that type of aesthetic accessible, or possible for people, participants to engage with in a sense, except buying?"33

Otto von Busch subscribes to Ranciere's view of aesthetics as "what is sensible to our senses, what our senses are trained to perceive."34 This then is political as aesthetics is determined by class structure. For example the bourgeoisie are trained aesthetically to opera while the lower classes are not. The idea of aesthetics is located very much in the political and social milieu, exactly where fashion itself plays out. Hacktivism is then a political intervention into the existing system of fashion in order to create new exclusivities, new relations for allowing fashion and design to be socially inclusive and politically just.

There is a specific emphasis on identity politics in von Busch's project called Neighborhoodies – Courageous Community Colours, Blazing Bling and Defiant Delight (Figure 4). This was a collaborative student project done at the London School of Fashion at the Center for Sustainable Fashion. The project explored the neighborhood in relation to identity through the expression of a wearable garment, the hoodie. The hoodie has both a global reach but is also very much an expression of local culture. As von Busch puts it, the hoodie has been "caught in the line of fire of identity politics...an average street-style garment, the canvas on which social conflicts and criminal stigmata are drawn, but also where local pride and reconciliation can be brought about..."35 The project sought to investigate fashion as a local experience, asking who one is in relation to their habitat. The students were asked to reflect on their neighborhoods through the design of a hoodie. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus is featured in von Busch's writing on this project.36 The habitus is in constant inter-connection with the environment, placing the individual in relations to other individuals, social groups and cultures, and in close relation to the material surroundings, as a structure of the mind, a "matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions."37 In relation to this project, von Busch writes that the "habitus seems to frame a problematic identity."38

The hoodie has emerged from its days of representing a "sports team or even sub-cultural pride" to being a garment associated with crime.39 In linking the hoodie to one's habitus, von Busch explores the idea of Bauman's "liquid modernity" and it's influence on global fashion.40 Bauman writes that we live in fear of trying to keep up with constant change; and in the context of globalization, some localities are beginning to resist the tides of consumerism. The habitus then emerges as having a sense of local pride. In the same light, the project sought to ponder about whether a sense of dress, or of fashion, that was once local, could be reclaimed from the flood of globalization.

The hoodie project can be seen to fit under the category of political design, which is an emerging paradigm of design. Markussen writes that political

design happens when the object and processes of design activism are used to create "spaces of contest."41 The project, in its use of the hoodie as an object opened up spaces that allowed the students to confront their neighborhoods and discover their own pride of place. It created the setting for such an interaction that resulted in changing the relationships of the students to their local neighborhoods. In this manner, the hoodie revealed new information as well as contested "existing configurations and conditions of society and urban space."42

In von Busch's design practice, the ideas of dissensus and of the political are very much apparent. Keshavarz and Maze's definition of dissensus is that "dissensus is not the opposite of consensus, but, rather, a process concerned with the potential emergence of new political formations."43 There is a touch of optimism in this definition that is perceptible in von Busch's practice that must be addressed. It lies in the following part of their definition – "[Dissensus] ...is a process concerned with the potential emergence of new political formations."44

The potential for new political formations within fashion resurfaces in von Busch's projects, whether in his engagement with an object (the hoodie) or a process (shoe production), in fashion. Otto von Busch is building a new politics of fashion at the very heart of his practice in keeping with the ideas of political theorist Chantal Mouffe. She writes,

> The political cannot be restricted to a certain type of institution, or envisaged as constituting a specific sphere or level of society. It must be conceived as a dimension that is inherent to every human society that determines our very ontological condition. Such a view of the political is profoundly at odds with liberal thought...this is particularly evident in its incomprehension of political movements, which is seen as the expression of the so-called 'masses'. Since they cannot be apprehended in individualistic terms, these movements are usually relegated to the pathological or deemed to be the expression of irrational forces.45

This idea of the individual as a political entity within fashion is an interesting approach to take to challenge social injustice. His workshops and research stem from the understanding that the way forward for a just society is through the creation of spaces in which voices of dissensus are aired and become valuable opportunities to challenge social inequity in fashion. Not only does von Busch address fashion's proximity to the self, but he also re-examines the passivity that disallows fashion to be a vehicle of social change. Otto von Busch is in accord with Keshavarz and Maze, who explain dissensus as "allow[ing] for "actively re-distributing the sensible order, those participating in dissensus-oriented design could thereby also intervene in the political order. An intervention, interruption or break in the realm of materiality and sensibility can thus institute a new aesthetical regime, other forms of politics to come."46

By contrast, consensus breeds disenfranchisement as voices that speak out against the conformed order are deemed antagonistic. In Markussen's interview with Mouffe, she says, "For me, there is democracy as long as there is conflict, and if existing arrangements can be contested."47 Hacktivism is articulated through spaces that contest the hierarchical systems of power in

fashion. Although advocating that these spaces have the potential to make one fashion-able, they also prompt the idea that dissensus can foster the creation of new ways of making, living and consuming.

In explaining hacktivism, von Busch says "To me, I think the important thing is...to use the energy within the system. So that's what I think hacking is all about. [Y]ou that you reconnect the powers that are in there and you are not trying to stop the power."48

oriented around dissensus, could intervene within an existing or established sensible order."50

Otto von Busch says:

> If power in fashion is still powerful in our society how can it address injustices? Or how can it address issues of power or exclusion? And the intervention itself is about finding the power of fashion and then re-circuiting it to address issues about society, about politics, about justice...critical issues of our time.51

Top (fig. 4): **Neighborhoodies – Courageous Community Colours, Blazing Bling and Defiant Delight**, London College of Fashion, CSA, and Otto von Busch, 2010. Photographs: Shiba, Matthew J. Humphries & Nicol Viziolo.

He supports the notion that situating oneself within a system to change it is beneficial to bringing fashion closer to society instead of it being locked into the "funnel of consumerism."49 This approach is towards the notion that interventions within systems of consensus can bring about greater agency for the powerless. As Keshavarz and Maze argue,"...other approaches, such as those

DESIGN AS...

What then does von Busch advocate as the role of the designer? He sees designers as expanding their roles within the fashion discipline. He argues for an abandonment of the traditional method of fashion design that positions the designer as creator only for the elite. He asks designers to act as translators who disseminate design knowledge to consumers, facilitate workshops and events that remodel the social and political relations as well as reappropriate systems of fashion production through making.

He believes the traditional practice of fashion has to be changed to make for new ways for fashion to interact with all levels of society. He says of traditional design that,

> It is extremely narrow. I think we really need to challenge that and find other ways for fashion designers to help people with their dressed identity than what we are doing right now. To me, design then is an expansion of what traditional fashion design is and how it can be applied in other things and what we can learn from other design disciplines in that sense.52

CONCLUSION

The beauty of Otto von Busch's practice is that it explores various ideas, disciplines and experiences and thus remains open ended. It can be approached from a variety of different angles, and read in different lights. It picks up sociological ideas and drops them into the sphere of fashion practices. It highlights ideas of social sustainability and filters them through the gaps of consumerism. It delves into the realm of the mythical to extract ideas on materiality. It even resurfaces ideas on craft and making, and posits them into the contemporary scene of production and consumption. In this manner, he builds his practice from a critical engagement and questioning of the dynamics of fashion, informing the current stream of its practices through non-traditional approaches to fashion such as his idea of hacktivism. The emphasis is a re-examination of how we can start to be socially, ethically and humanely just, for he writes, "Turn passive believers into engaged users; leave no hands idle."53

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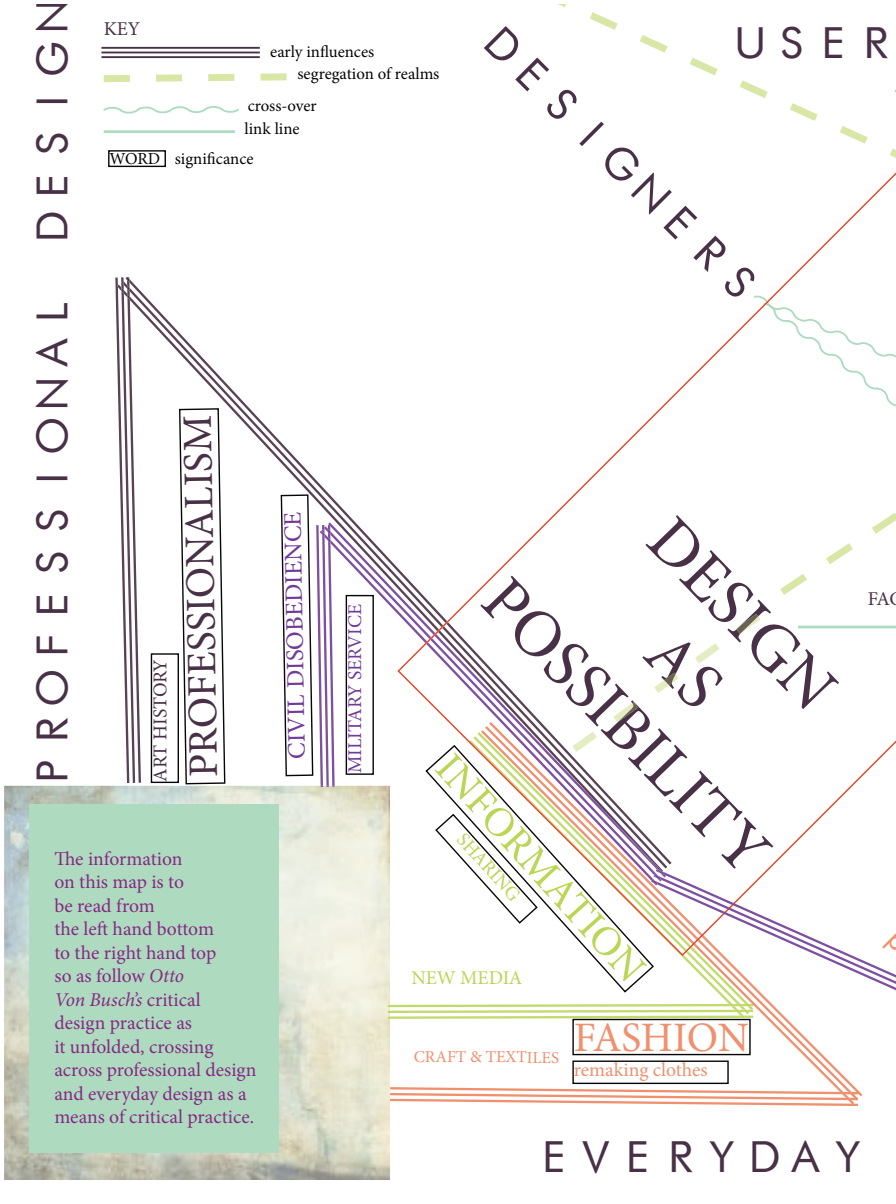
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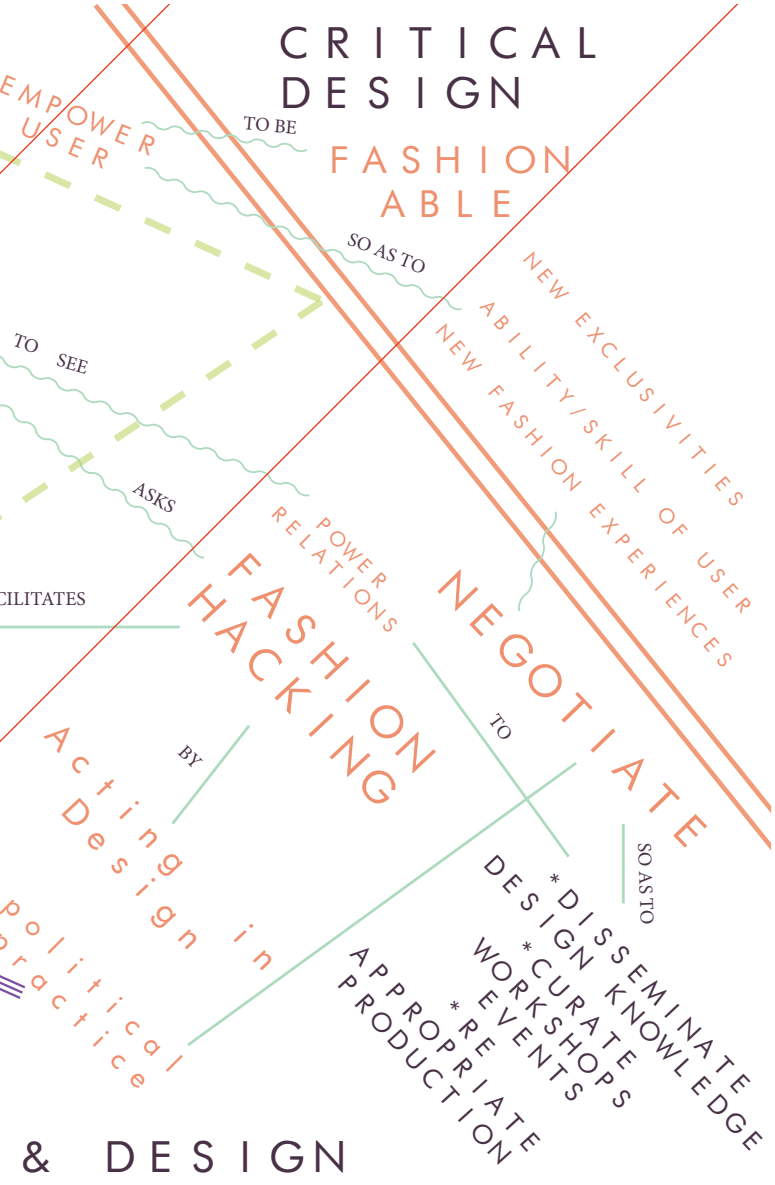
The information on this map is to be read from the left hand bottom to the right hand top so as follow *Otto Von Busch's* critical design practice as it unfolded, crossing across professional design and everyday design as a means of critical practice.



CONCEPT MAP
Otto von Bush, fashion designer.
Kamala Murali, 2013.

Otto Von Bush
INTERVIEW 1

Kamala Murali: You speak of design research as being able to flourish if one were to act in design as opposed to on or about design. Could you tell me a little about what it means to act in design?
Otto Von Busch: Well, first of all we can say that, perhaps, traditional sort of art tries to look at design from the outside. That is, perhaps, the banal version of that. In my background, I studied crafts first after I did my military service which I had to do when I was nineteen... Then I studied carpentry for a year. Then I studied textile design for a year and then I started university. I started studying art history. And so I realized, of course, that what a different perspective it was having been from art history, looking from the outside. From many perspectives, you could say, from one side in art history you look at the fantastic stars, you look at the pyramids and then Rembrandt, and you do not at all look at the small practitioners. So you have a totally different context, on making. And while crafts as I studied before is almost banal, almost like domestic, something you do to not at all have a position in world history, something you do very much about your everyday. And what I tried to say was what is design that is in the everyday? Design that is not about making grand connections but what does it mean for you to be able to do something. And especially in my research I look at abilities, skills and I look at what does it mean not to buy fashionable clothes but to be fashion-able. And perhaps one way to look at this being inside, perhaps, also comes from the fact that I was reading a lot about civil disobedience... especially in my military service, I was younger, I was really fascinated by the practices of Thoreau, of Gandhi, of Martin Luther King and how they inserted political practice into the everyday. The sit-ins of black people at these white luncheonettes in the south states of the United States and how they opposed the apartheid by turning these spaces into non-segregated luncheons by actually being there. Or take for example, Gandhi's salt march, in 1930, opposing the British taxes. He went to do his own salt on the seaside, which was "the first,"... the independent salt. The salt that was not imperialist. If the British had 8% imperialist taxes on something, he said well this is independent salt. This is an embodiment of Indian independency. And of course, Gandhi also made his own clothes with his spinning wheel. And I think it's really interesting.

So what does it mean to act inside design from a position of independence and turn the dependencies of design around?
If OVB: I'm a designer, and you have a problem, you come to me and I solve your problem. But at the same time, I take away your possibilities to solve your own problem. The whole idea is that I'm going to solve the problem for you. That's why you pay me to do your design. So I actually disempower you by designing your work. And I'm really interested in that...So what does it mean as a designer to empower your user rather than disempower them by actually splitting up between the user and designer. So to act inside design would mean that I disseminate the knowledge of design into your life and into your everyday to foster your independence, rather than you being dependent on me.

That relationship really fascinated me. Rather than looking from the outside on design and trying to look at what it means to be a designer, how do you position yourself within the history of design and all these things, to really being inside to seeing what are the power relations... between us and what does it mean to be a designer that tries to liberate the user somehow.

KM: Was there any particular point of time that you started to see this difference – that you could act in design rather than on or about design. Would you say there was a particular time or event, something that brought this on?
OVB: I think I had these ideas for a while but from this resistance, this civil disobedience perspective. But I think really my encounter with new media, early Wikipedia, early open source programming, around 1999...the dotcom boom. I was studying, it was a program called "physical and virtual design." I was taking a Bachelors in that and suddenly... from this craft background and also from art history, I was introduced to programming. I had been programming on an old Commodore 64 before, it was then that I really encountered the Internet... this sort of open source, sharing of knowledge and these sorts of things. And suddenly I had been sewing my clothes and remaking my clothes and people had been asking me, "How do you do that?" and "Was it complicated?" and "Wow." And I said, I should make it open-source methods. I should disseminate it just like you do with open source code. So just around the turn of the century, around 2000, I started doing these small cookbooks. I started doing PDFs of how to simply transform a pair of pants, step by step, going through how you recycle one piece of garment into something else. And I think that was my craft encounter with new media and I realized this opened up exactly what I wanted to do with civil disobedience. This was the tool for me to educate my user. And that was really when the hacktivist framing came together.

KM: How would you describe your research process for your thesis?
OVB: Some designers want to optimize some things. I start with a certain material and I want to come out with something...I want to try the best way to interact with something – I want to find the

best way to fix a screwdriver into something or hammer a nail into something. But to me I felt that fashion is not functional. It's like a big myth system. It's complex. It's ridiculous that I try to find an optimal way. Almost no one is talking about practicing empowerment in fashion. Why should I try to define something here? It's that I should try to produce as many possibilities as possible... so anyone who is interested in this, my thesis could come out with as many things as possible. I really wanted to focus my thesis on this possibility making. I must try to bring in as many metaphors, as many types of things about this as possible. I'm not going to show that this is the best way to talk about it...so it is better for me to talk about through fan-fiction, liberation theology, etc. I could of course stop with one metaphor, say hacking, and it is only about hacking. But I felt it is better bringing about 4-5 metaphors to bring out more about this process than if I only look at things through the same point.

So I didn't want it to be a question and an answer. I wanted it to be a thesis that could be read from many different angles and then be projected in many more different angles. I really wanted it to be a thesis that would raise many more questions or trigger more ideas about what a designer could do than come up with a best practice in a very narrow sense. Could my thesis help build around their practices, try other ways and look at my examples as possible ways to build their practices?

KM: How do you view your profession? Do you see a distinction between it and your lifestyle?
OVB: Time wise I think everyone brings their work home today. So yes, in that sense, definitely. I think most designers, actually, somehow...you are invested in your work somehow. But I think also of course, we all carry different values and for me, as I wrote in the beginning of my thesis, I think a lot of my work is trying to deal with the things I grew up with in a sense. When my parents moved around a lot, I felt that I was judged by my clothes and I felt by making my own clothes, my creativity could find a place for me in the world, that my parents couldn't consume for me to have. If you're coming from a background where your parents are not rich enough to support you in an environment where the other kids are very rich, you have to find other ways to compensate. And for me, I [found] something in me that managed to compensate. I managed to sew my things and later I started playing role-playing games. I started a band with friends and I felt that by being able to do things, I could position myself in the world, on my own terms, that was on the terms of consumerism, or what could be bought.

And I think a lot of my research is exactly about that. There was a great article in the New York Magazine about how we live our lives as if we are in high school. It was an interesting article because it said [that] in high school we think we've grown up and we feel we are responsible for our lives somehow. At the same time, we are not. We are totally dependent on our parents, and all these other things around. So the article said that...kids were popular in high school because of what they consume, they continue that lifestyle. They feel that that is the acknowledgement they get for being popular in high school. Those that play in the football team they feel the same things that – masculinity and competition, are the same things that sustain them through their lives. You can take whatever you want out of that. But I still think that that's why I've come back to choose today to ask what is the connection between fashion and justice...social justice. What does it mean for people...those who don't have the means to fashion... and how can I as a designer work to facilitate another type of position in the world? And through clothes, the medium that I work with?

So when talking about everyday life or lifestyle, in my life and my practice, of course there are values in my life that are very important and they very much shine through in my practice.

There are some friends here in Gothenburg who grew up in very, sort of, poor conditions...coming from a working class background and a very political environment...very socialist, communist, ideological environment – they grew up with that and that is what they live and express. I am not from those kinds of backgrounds. I'm not an ideological person...I'm not trying to sustain communism or something through my practice. But I sort of feel the empowerment – of being able to do something with your hands, you are able to do something with your world. That is the experience that I had and I wanted to help people who are interested in that to have that experience.

KM: In the Dale Sko Shoe Hack Booklet, you mention that hacking in the context of the project relates to "reclaiming the modes of production, taking back initiative and control of an alienated production process..." How do you view the concept of 'Slow-Fashion' as put forward by Kate Fletcher and if it fits into or with your idea of hacktivism? If you see a parallel?
OVB: Both. I mean if we see that slow fashion is an umbrella of more concerned ways of consuming and looking at fashion, then it might correspond. But I do think there is a little difference... from my perspective, for example, this shoe hack and so on... it's very much about the appropriation of production and other ways of producing that. It's not primarily about slowness but about ownership, about who owns the process. Who has power and who doesn't? I think slow fashion has a tendency to still talk about fashion, it's just a little slower. And what I'm trying to look at is another power relation.

As designers, you're also educated to think of production almost like you press a print button on a computer. Production is something like a black box that you don't really know anything about, but as long as it comes out looking like the file you had on the screen, then it's ok. And I wanted to turn that around and say that if we hack into production, we can start messing around with what it means to physically produce things. So slow fashion I would say is about trying to implement other consumer values and slow down the process. And I'm trying to look at something else I think.

At the same time I think one of the main problems with slow fashion is that it's usually established people that talk about it, in the sense that, if you are already rich, then it's fine to not change your clothes very often. – you inherit the clothes of your father and mother. If you are poor, you don't want to inherit your father or mother's clothes. You want to become someone else, you want to come up. I mean I think that's why fashion is so intimately connected with the liberal society, that you can become someone else. And I think slow fashion is a luxury for those who can afford luxury and are interested in luxury. Because not everyone is interested in luxury from a slow perspective. A lot of... emerging markets, teenagers, those who actually consume a lot of fashion, cheap fashion, they look for something else rather than slowness. So my approach then would be for these types of consumers - teenagers, people who feel they need fashion, what would it mean to foster other relationships with fashion rather than try to slow it down. Can you foster these other abilities? Can you find other ways to remake clothes, make events, workshops, to facilitate education somehow? And you as a designer would be the one who curates these types of events rather than produce objects that are slowly consumed.

Of course Kate Fletcher is knowledgeable, she knows this difference but I think we make a little mistake with slow fashion because I think we are too easily connected to the idea that "we make fewer clothes and everything will be fine." I'm not too sure about that.

KM: How do the contrasting concepts of collaborative production and ownership exist side by side with fashion's demand of elite production and consumption?

OVB: [Laughs] Well, I think that is the tricky question. I guess the simple answer is to say – What is exclusivity? I mean we will say that fashion is normally exclusive concerning money or price, for example. Or who is invited? Who comes to the catwalk? Who has the slim body to fit into the clothes? So what is the key exclusion mechanism that produces the exclusivity? I think another way to turn it around is to ask – What other values can be exclusive? So you could say, for example that having the time to sit and sew your own clothes... is another form of exclusivity. Having the attention of the designer, to work close to the designer, to have something specifically made for you, that might also be exclusivity. Then again we can say if I go to my tailor it's a certain form of exclusivity when I get something tailor fit but it doesn't have the fashion- ability of being exclusive, of being something that has the myths of Paris. And I think that's exactly where the negotiation starts – What makes punk 'punk'? Perhaps it is that you are a poor twenty-year old teenager who has all the time to hang out at these kinds of concerts or these kinds of things. And you invest your time on this authentic scene. And that's the authenticity of punk. And then you have other designers who say, I sell punk for you who don't have the time for this but actually work. So you actually bypass, you buy the Vivienne Westwood or... and you feel you are punk even though you didn't spend all the time that the real punks did who didn't have any money. I think the interesting part is what is this negotiation about and I don't think I will have an answer about it. I think it is more about what different ways we could employ designers to talk about exclusivity while still being inclusive. How do we negotiate there? I've been trying to work with participation in different ways, trying to disseminate methods. But I guess there are a zillion other ways, I just hope that people pick up these other ways. Because a lot of fashion designers are locked up in the catwalk, red carpet way of producing fashion. Exclusivity means that it is expensive. So its one little step that I'm trying to explore but it's the trickiest question. Can it be fashion if it's inclusive? If it's for everyone, no. I mean I think its basic human behavior that we imitate people that we look up to. If your sibling runs or sings better than you, when you are smaller, then you want to be as good as they are. And fashion is there to offer us that little advantage, tries to sell that very human, basic trait of "Oh I should have these sneakers so I can run faster just like my brother" or I buy this guitar so I can play just a little better. I think that basic behavior is all what fashion is about. But can it then be about being more inclusive? So can you as a fashion designer sell those other exclusivities rather than selling the object that makes you run faster, sell the workshop where you make this or the training where you become able of some sort?

KM: Would a conflict emerge if everyone were to take part in production and consumption of fashion? Wouldn't designers face an identity crisis?

OVB: My basic answer usually is that being able to design, being able to do things is like being able to speak Latin. It doesn't mean we're all going to speak Latin to each other. But you might understand things in society that you wouldn't have understood if you didn't speak Latin. Some language skills, some skills we have, we don't employ them all the time. We're not all going to become designers, we're not all going to spend our time making clothes or making whatever. But, for example, we do have a choice we didn't have before. If I learn to fix my

bicycle, I can choose, if it breaks, to give it to my mechanic or I can do it myself. And if I'm rich today and I want to bike in half an hour I give it to my mechanic. I prioritize. If I have time and I want to teach my daughter how to fix a bike then that's being able in a different way. And I use it for another social reason.

My experience in my workshops is that, for example, when we worked with Giana Gonzalez, who does these hacking couture workshops...demystifying what Gucci is. They look at what Gucci is – the details and special materials, special equestrian details, horse details, specific colors of green and red. And then they brought their own second-hand clothes and we "Gucci-fied" them, looking at this code and people made their own fake Guccis. And you can say well, they were originals because people actually used the code of Gucci that they had found out themselves. Is it really a copy or not? But what happened in this process was that the people who participated were saying, "Wow, Gucci is so cool! – Someone really spent time on this. If I had the money I would spend [it] on Gucci." So I think if you learn the craft of looking at your bicycle, [and see] that this is a great bicycle that I could not make myself. Then I would go to the mechanic to get some things done. I would buy a high quality bike because I see the difference. I think we're talking about two different modes of production. We're looking at two different modes of knowledge. If I learn the basics, I also learn the details. I learn to see quality differently and I learnt to prioritize what I can do and what I cannot do. I think if I know something about bicycles or design I have a more honest relationship, with a designer or bike mechanic because I really know what he does. I don't feel ripped off. I don't feel like I'm a victim to his knowledge. But I sincerely appreciate the knowledge that he or she has. I have trouble seeing this as a threat situation; bad designers are threatened by good users, but a good designer will not be threatened by sharing the knowledge. I have a very hard time seeing that.

KM: I remember you talking to me about how your research is asking if we can have new exclusivities. Instead of people relying on designers to provide their own exclusivity, for people to be able to find new exclusivities in terms of 'time' and their own ability to produce fashion. So my question is this: Where do you place aesthetics? And how you see it as informing your work?

OVB: To me, you can put that in two levels of aesthetics. One is an aesthetics of dependence in the sense that, to me it has always been interesting in that the projects that I do are still related somehow to fashion...the aesthetics of fashion is that someone has to speak back to fashion. So all these manuals and things, they come from a time that is the peaking fashion of its time, in a sense. Its not that I'm trying to come out and do sort of classics or something that is very eternal or slow fashion or anything like that. Fashion is a part of the zeitgeist and the aesthetics of its time is what I'm trying to interpret – to make people open or more engaged. So aesthetics in that sense is of course important and my idea is sort of how do we plug into the aesthetics of our time and make that type of aesthetic accessible, or possible for people, participants to engage with in a sense, except buying.

But, on the other hand, you can say that aesthetics, the French philosopher Ranciere, I mean he's speaking about aesthetics as going back to the root of aesthetics where it means what is sensible to our senses, what our senses are trained to perceive. And to him, then it is a political question. The bourgeoisie is training to enjoy opera and perceive the qualities of certain aesthetic expressions and the lower working classes are not trained to that. So who is trained to perceive what qualities is a matter of class, it's a matter of politics. Aesthetics in that sense is a highly contested and political thing, according to Ranciere. And I think that is also an interesting way to talk about fashion. So when we talk about who actually has access to fashion, is that is the aesthetics of fashion, who is both trained to see and can access it? I think then of course we are in the matter of discussions of class, discussions about ethnicity, discussions about marginality, who is really included and who is not. So the aesthetics of fashion is still very extensive. The aesthetics of fashion meaning who can sense the differences, the qualities, and all these sorts of things.

It is still a very class thing. For example, if you go to FIT or actually even Parsons, it's possible to find in the Parsons archive, the old Chanel clothes, actually from the lifetime of Coco Chanel, they are very heavy. Almost like a piece of armor in a sense. But at the same time they are very...you can touch them and feel that this is really something else that we can touch and feel today. I actually haven't been in a Chanel store lately but after I touched the real old thing, but I'm just thinking that touching that difference too, you're actually touching class. You're touching politics. Who can access qualities like this?

For instance, we spoke about this last time – clothes that you can inherit, clothes that grow beautiful by time, that age beautifully, create the time now for these things. That is also a matter of class because if you can spend $1000 on your shoes, then they may last you a long time, they may age beautifully, your children might actually inherit them. But the sneakers you buy for $20 are never going to get as beautiful as they were when you first got them. So you know, the aesthetic quality of aging beautifully is also a matter of politics. A lot of qualities, a lot of the aesthetic qualities of fashion is still very, sort of, connected to class and issues about inclusivity, who is included and who is not. You have an aesthetics of

time, and you have an aesthetics of who can access it – who has the possibility to see and touch and feel the differences of material, of skill and craft. Does it make sense?

KM: Yes it really does! We were discussing Ranciere in class last week...

OVB: But I'll really say that I think it's really interesting to discuss the aesthetics of fashion from that perspective...who is trained? Who can see and how do you... There's a lot of discussion about the old punk movement...how the '70s were the early peak of consumerist society and how that generation of punk in England, at the time of faction, the time of unemployment, of huge segregation of British society. They came from saying 'there's no future for us' and they created their own culture out of this position...this feeling that they cannot access society on the terms that society promotes itself. So in the time of consumerism, the whole idea was to judge yourself with what you can buy, what you can access to reinventing yourself with a villa and a car...all these things that became accessible with mass production and consumerist society... and then there is this generation that suddenly realizes that they are actually going to poorer than their parents and that they will not have access to all these things they were promised. And suddenly they start creating their own DIY culture. They try to both distance themselves from the perceived qualities of the old society and redefine their position in the world which is definitely a matter of aesthetics in a very, sort of, Ranciere-ish way.

K: Do you see your work as being a political intervention in the stream of fashion?

OVB: To me, I would definitely say so. To me, that is exactly what my perspective on hacking and these sort of things is. You critically engage and try to break open and break into the system that you are dealing with. And to me that is exactly what an intervention is about. An intervention is not sort of primarily understanding of distance, writing a critique or being critical of things and try to affect it from a distance, but the whole idea is that the intervention...the needle stick or acupuncture or whatever people want to call it...to me I usually try to use this metaphor of short circuiting...that you are trying to break into the electric circuit. To me I think the important thing is that to use the energy within the system so that's what I think hacking is all about is that you reconnect the powers that are in there and you are not trying to stop the power. So for example, in fashion criticism, you would say 'no, fashion is wrong, fashion is bad, its all a hoax'...No, [I say] there are some values in there that we need to keep the power on. But we need to re-circuit them into addressing other things. So if power in fashion is still powerful in our society how can it address injustices? Or how can it address issues of power or exclusion? And the intervention itself is about finding the power of fashion and then re-circuiting it to address issues about society, about politics, about justice...critical issues of our time. That's what I'm trying to get and so yes, it is an intervention.

KM: I was going through the Neighbourhoodies project, which I found fascinating, where you invited people to reflect on their neighborhood through the use of the hoodie. This is a technical question but how did you involve a particular community in this sort of participatory project? Do you first look at the community and say we want to look at the locality around it or first look at the fashion garment, the hoodie and link it to the community? From which angle do you start?

OVB: Well, luckily I didn't have to care about that because it was a student project. The students have to care about that. I made a very simple pattern. Like you can see on the website, that out from the square that you print the image on, you cut and make a hoodie out of it. So the question to the students was, "When you go to your neighborhood in London where you live, what image do you want to project about your relationship to your neighborhood? Are you proud of it? Is it like bling - is it something that you want to be seen in that you are from the neighborhood? Or is it more that you want to blend in – like a camouflage, like a chameleon, like you want to blend in and disappear? What is your relationship to this neighborhood? And I also talked to some students asking is it you who make these patterns? Is it someone else who makes these patterns? Can there be other traces from your neighborhood? Could you explore the background of a neighborhood? the riots of different parts of London? The ethnicity of London? One of the students I know, I forgot her name, she made a pattern together with a primary school class that made a hoodie and so on. Most of the students took photos and made a collage of some sort that corresponded to their neighborhood and the feeling they had about the neighborhood. But the idea was to get the students to reflect about their neighborhood, to make a site-specific hoodie. And then have a photograph taken of themselves in this hoodie in the neighborhood. So I guess my fascination with this was what is a site-specific clothing? What is a hoodie that actually speaks about your neighborhood rather than being something mass produced that can be worn anywhere on the planet and makes sense anywhere on the planet, but something that is actually extremely local that speaks about your relationship to your neighborhood.

KM: I was reading your essay titled "Fashion Hacking is Shapeshifting" and it seems that the concepts of transformation and shapeshifting, within the realm of fashion, seem to play a huge role in terms of your ideals. So why do you think it's important to emphasize on the local and on locality as opposed to adopting

a uniform global second skin or sorts? Why an emphasis on the local?

OVB: First off, as I wish to say, the shapeshifting text has a shamanistic, religious undertone. It's a very speculative piece. But I'm really interested in this type of [mythology]...We have always dreamt and been fascinated with it. A lot of mythology is [fueled with] these shapeshifting characters. The characters that are in between: half lion-half eagle, half snake-half goat, all these mythical animals that you cannot really define – half ghost. I think fashion is very much about exactly that. You talk about the local, I think we can say that it is basic human desire to change, to have the possibility to change into something else. For every mistake we make, every situation we have that we don't agree with or don't want to be in, we want to change. We hope that we can change. We want to move on. If you were having a tough time in school, you just want to leave it. You want to become someone else. You don't want to remember your old self that wasn't good in school, you go somewhere else...I move to NY and become a painter.

But at the same time, this happens on a very very local level. It's about you, it's about your dreams, it's about your internal relations, it's about your social group. It's also about what you lost, that I became someone else. I moved somewhere else. I met these famous people. At the same time, you long ... to [be with] the friends you had that didn't care about success, that were just there for you. And I think shapeshifting has exactly this paradox – on one hand we want to change, and at the same time we don't want to change, which is very basic. Because I think fashion is exactly there. You find this garment hanging in the shop and its like "Wow! That garment is so much me and how I want to be! How could the designer know that I want to have that look? That looks exactly like that film star, at the same time there is something about my father or something about my past," because of course it's still you. You're not buying something that is far beyond yourself. You're buying something that is slightly yourself with a little addition. There is something there about both letting go and still preserving some element that you are happy with; that you feel is your 'style'. So that is the locality that is the shapeshifting that is both mystical, goes into the beyond, into the ether but something that is very grounded. A classical example is when you go and find a new garment but it still resonates with the rest of what you have in your wardrobe. You have to wear it together with something that you already have. If you are getting a new pair of pants, it is extremely rare that you get a totally new wardrobe. Even if you move to NY from Sweden, I would bring a few garments and if I would buy new garments, they would somehow resonate with what I have. I'm not getting a total new style. I'm not becoming a totally new person. There is always something anchoring us. If it's our wardrobe, if it's our history.

KM: Are you concerned with actively spreading this awareness of empowering one's own agency to produce their fashion?

OVB: Of course I try to reach other people. But not everyone is going to do it because not everyone wants to...not everyone needs to do it. And some people have asked me, does everyone need to sew their own clothes and these sorts of things. No, no...I mean just because you know the language, just because you learn Latin or something doesn't mean everyone needs to speak Latin. It's a skill you have and you can actualize it when you need it. If you know Latin you can apply it when you look at plants, when you learn about the body parts and their Latin names. You learn some of the Roman languages it might be helpful. But it is not something that you need all the time, but it unlocks certain aspects of society that I think is the same thing with the skill of fashion. Even me or my most devoted fans, they are not going to remake all their things, but hopefully they are going to have the skill to see things and they are going to have the skill to possibly apply it when they need to. Just like learning Latin, it may open some vistas for thought and ideas and history or whatever. But they are definitely not going to speak Latin all the time or sew all the time. But I think it is something that could be important for a lot of people to know. And to me, I feel that especially among teenagers or young people that might feel very dependent on fashion or dependent on their image in relation to other people and how they dress, I think it is important for them to feel that there are alternative ways to define yourself, help build your character, cultivate your skills. I would be very happy if I would reach more young people and students than right now.

If you look at the Scandinavian countries... we still have a lot of craft in school. I've been teaching in Turkey, my wife is Turkish, and they hardly have it at all. Craft is something your grandmother is doing. Very few of the boys have ever touched a sewing machine, while in Sweden most of the kids have used a sewing machine. I do think there is definitely possibility to reach more people, and young students. Perhaps in a sense you could say that from a sustainability perspective about the world, a part of the education of the citizen is to know something about crafts, to know something about how things are made and what you can do and repair and these other things. Just like reading and writing and all these other things that you learn in school, geography, whatever, feeling that with your hands you can actually change the world. I think that is of real importance.

KM: To understand what effect hacking has, how has it been received in high fashion circles when they hear of these projects where people are starting to look at fashion differently?

OVB: The usual response is of course, as you said before, that they feel threatened. From one point it's because they have not understood what I have just said. But also, of course, within the design field there

is such a prestige and people feel so insecure. Everyone stands on an unstable ground. So I think that is why they also feel so threatened by users doing things. I think there is a tendency over the last ten-fifteen years now that more digital tools have become common. Everyone can take fairly good photographs today. Almost everyone can make a movie. People can make their own Photoshop, InDesign whatever, so there is a narrowing market where the prestige of the designer is actually shrinking. Well there's a paradox there because designers are 'Oooh, fantastic design! Wow' But there is also a flattening because more and more people become designers. So yes, in high fashion a lot of people have been feeling threatened and feeling that I don't pay the respect they should earn or something like that and that hackers are threatening their position.

KM: What do you see as the future of fashion?
OVB: I think we can learn a lot from the music industry. I think there's something about fast fashion that is so cheap and so accessible that it's not worth as much anymore; There's an inflation in fashion. In the same sense as perhaps recorded music - we stream music, we have music in the elevator, our phones are filled with music, we don't know what to do with all the gigabytes of music on our phones. I think the same thing happens with fashion too. Slowly, slowly we are losing the value of cheap garments. I think, just as...there is a shift towards concerts, [there could be] a shift towards other types of markets where fashion could work, or where we could earn money on music. I think fashion needs to think about that. We are approaching a situation where we are just fed up, or soon we're going to be... not fed up, but its not going to be worth as much. So we would look for other types of experiences to buy, together with fashion - If that is working closer to the designer, going to concerts in a sense, like catwalks... other ways of engaging with fashion design other than only buying the CD or the MP3 song.

I think it's ingenious what H&M is doing, they're starting their own recycling service. At least here in Sweden, they started now... you go back to H&M and you get a little discount if you buy new clothes and leave your clothes at H&M. They do this because they're a little sustainable but also they realize that the problem for them [is that]... I am not buying my clothes at H&M is because my wardrobe is full. It's in their interest to empty my wardrobe. Of course they want me to bring garments to them in order to get rid of garments. I think we will see more and more of those kinds of inventions where fashion is going to become a circulation of goods, its going to become other types of consumption, other types of values that enters the system because just buying clothes off the hanger does not work much longer, in the same sense that it does right now.

SYLLABUS

Spring 2013

DESIGN PRACTICES & PARADIGMS

CRN 7341 – PGHT 5652-A
Tuesdays, 12:10 to 2 pm
2 W 13th St., Room 1100

Instructor: Susan Yelavich, Director, Masters in Design Studies; Associate Professor, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons The New School for Design
yelavics@newschool.edu

What does the scope, structure and content of practice reveal about the state of design and ambitions of design today? This course will be structured around a series of case studies of modes of practice that range from the poetic and experimental, to the normative, to interdisciplinary hybrids and socially engaged collectives. Students will examine the philosophical premises of different conceptions of practice through the course readings. And they will compare different approaches to production, collaboration, and authorship, through observations and interviews. Each student will be paired with a particular studio, firm or collaborative in order to produce their final paper: a profile and contextual analysis of a particular practice and its implications for the professions and the future.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Proficiency in primary research and interviewing.
- Conversancy with different modes of design practice.
- Ability to produce a concept map of a design practice.
- Experience in collaborative research.
- Ability to contextualize design within related modes of thought, i.e. philosophy, sociology, anthropology, history, and aesthetics.
- An awareness of the pitfalls of hagiography.
- Ability to write a critically constructive profile of a living designer.

ASSIGNMENTS

1) Interview questions	Weeks 3 & 5
2) Annotated bibliography	Week 7
3) Sketch map	Week 8
4) Concept map / paper draft*	Week 10
5) 12-page paper (w. map)	Week 14
6) Oral presentations	Weeks 13, 14 & 15

*Paper and map should contextualize practice within at least 3 of the 5 realms:

1) The history of design / object-making, i.e. if you were working with a graphic designer you might consider the relationship of his/her practice to other modes of communication in different periods of time, such as scrolls, manuscripts, books, diaries, letters, websites.
2) Political events which made the practice possible, i.e. the Civil Rights movement, the end of the Cold War, the Arab Spring, feminist movement.
3) Ideological framework of the practice, i.e., designer as author, collaborator, interpreter/curator, team member, participant in the creative commons, researcher, critic, ethnographer, anthropologist, activist.
4) Aesthetic ideologies, i.e., baroque, classical, organic, modernist, postmodernist, alter-modernist.
5) Relationship to ideas from other modes of thought, i.e., philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychology.

CLASSES AND READINGS

Week 1
Introduction to Design Practices
Cross, Nigel. Design Thinking: Understanding How Designers Think and Work. Oxford/New York: Berg, 2011, 3-30.

Julier, Guy. The Culture of Design. London: Sage Publications, 2000, 1-64.

DeWitt, Kate, Harry Gassel and Jen Lee. "Without Protocol: Interview with Babak Radboy, August 15, 2011" and "Working It: Interview with Michael Rock, August 30, 2011," in Super-Models, GDNYC, Spring/Summer 2012.

Week 2
Shifting Paradigms
Dubberly, Hugh, "Design in the Age of Biology: Shifting from Mechanical-Object Ethos to an Organic-Systems Ethos," 1-12.
http://www.dubberly.com/articles/design-in-the-age-of-biology.html

Bello, Paula. Goodscapes: Global Design Processes. Jyvaskyla, Finland: Gummerus Printing, 2008, 29-40.

Caplan, Ralph. By Design: Why there are no locks on the bathroom doors in the Hotel Louis XIV and other object lessons. New York: Fairchild Publications, 1982, 152-166.

Kvale, Steinar and Svend Brinkman. InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing. (2nd Edition) Los Angeles/London/ New Delhi/Singapore: Sage Publications, Inc., 2009, 45, 47-50,102-103, 134-135.

Week 3

Social/Situational Design

Keshavarz, Mahmoud and Ramia Mazé, "Design and Dissensus: Framing & staging participation in design research." Design Philosophy Papers, Jan. 2013, 14 pages.

Ericson, Magnus, and Ramia Mazé, eds. "Tactics of (De) signing Social Interactions" and "Interview with Yanki Lee." In Design Act: Socially and politically engaged design today – critical roles and emerging tactics, 115-120, 208-226. Sternberg Press, 2011.

Sennett, Richard. Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012, 3-31, 199-220.

Brooks, Sarah. "Part I: Design for Social Innovation: An Interview With Ezio Manzini." Shareable.net blog, July 26, 2011. http://www.shareable.net/blog/design-for-social-innovation-an-interview-with-ezio-manzini

Week 4

Case Study: William Morrish, architect, urban designer

Bender, Thomas. The Unfinished City: New York and the Metropolitan Idea. New York: The New Press, 2002, 219-238.

Morrish, William R. "After the Storm: Rebuilding Cities upon a Reflexive Landscape." Social Research, New School for Social Research, Fall 2008, 20 pages.
Muschamp, Herbert. "Two for the Roads: A Vision of Urban Design." New York Times, Feb. 13, 1994.
University of Toronto, Daniel Public Lectures: William Morrish.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-VTXwafxHo
Cohen, Michael, William Morrish, Anushay Anjum, Lisa Guaqueta. UN-Habitat, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, Medium Term Strategic and Institutional Plan, Focus Area 2: Participatory Planning, Management and Governance, Strategy Paper, Draft December 25, 2008, Part II, 1-33.

Week 5

Critical Design

Dunne, Anthony and Fiona Raby. "Designer as Author." In Design Noir: The Secretive Life of Electronic Objects. London: August/Birkhauser, 2001, 58-65.

Dunne, Anthony. Hertzian Tales. Cambridge, Mass./London, England: The MIT Press, 2005, 43-67.

Franzato, Carlo. "Design as Speculation." Design Philosophy Papers, no. 1, 2011, 10 pages.

Dilnot Clive. "The Critical in Design (Part One)." Journal of Writing in Creative Practice, no. 1 (2008): 177-189.

Hunt, Jamer. "Just Re-do It: Tactical Formlessness and Everyday Consumption." In Strangely Familiar: Design and Everyday Life, ed. Andrew Blauvelt. Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2003, 56-71.

Week 6

Case Study: George Nelson, architect, designer, writer

Eisenbrand, Jochen. "George Nelson: Architect, Writer, Designer, Teacher." Exhibition brochure, Yale School of Architecture Gallery, 2012, 6 pages.

Nelson, George. "The Future of the Object." In George Nelson Design, 134-150. New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1979.

Nelson, George. "A Problem of Design: How to Kill People." Camera 3, CBS, Fall 1960.

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Harwood, John. "The Wound Man: George Nelson on the "End of Architecture."
Grey Room 32, Spring 2008, 90-115.
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Yelavich, Susan. "The Prescience of George Nelson." Forthcoming in Constructs Yale Architecture, Feb. 2013.

Week 7
Design and Ethics
Dilnot, Clive. "Ethics? Design?" In The Archeworks Papers, no. 1, ed. Stanley Tigerman, 15-53. Chicago: Archeworks, 2005.

Tai, Earl. "A Case for Distributive Justice in Design." In Design Studies: A Reader, eds. Hazel Clark and David Brody, 454-458. Oxford/New York: Berg 2009.

Dilnot, Clive. "The Idea of the Gift." In The Idea of Design: A Design Issues Reader, eds. Victor Margolin and Richard Buchanan, 144-155. Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1995.

Week 8
Case Study: How to be an Outsider—Christopher Robbins, activist
Nussbaum, Bruce. "Is Humanitarian Design the New Imperialism." Fast Company, Co-Design, March 2011.
http://www.fastcodesign.com/1661859/is-humanitarian-design-the-new-imperialism

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Week 9
Case Study: Dan Friedman, communication designer
Friedman, Dan. "Life, Style, and Advocacy" [1990]. In Design Culture: An Anthology of Writing from the AIGA Journal of Graphic Design, eds. Steven Heller and Marie Finamore, New York: Allworth Press, 1997, 151-154.

Lupton, Ellen. "Memoriam: Dan Friedman, 1945-1995." Statements, the Journal of the American Center for Design, (Fall 1995-Winter 1996): 17-18.

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Margolin, Victor. "Review of Dan Friedman: Radical Modernism."
First published in Émigré, 34 (1995): 5 pages.

Week 10
Do-It-Yourself (DIY) and Agency

Atkinson, Paul. "Do it yourself: democracy and design." Journal of Design History, no. 19: 1-10.

Beegan, Gerry and Paul Atkinson. "Professionalism, Amateurism and the Boundaries of Design." Journal of Design History, no. 21: 305-313.

Navarro, Marco. "Repairing Cities, 1, 2, 3, 4." http://www.ymag.it/schede.asp?id=7681 http://www.ymag.it/schede.asp?id=9029 http://www.ymag.it/schede.asp?id=9066 http://www.ymag.it/schede.asp?id=9097

Gelber, Steven, M. "Do-It-Yourself: Constructing, Repairing and Maintaining Domestic Masculinity," American Quarterly, no. 49 (March 1997): 66-112.
Almquist, Julka and Julia Lupton. "Affording Meaning: Design-Oriented Research from the Humanities and Social Sciences." Design Issues, no. 26 (Winter 2010): 3-14.

Week 11
Case Study: Peter Lloyd Jones, design scientist
Popp T. "An Architect Walks Into the Lab." The Pennsylvania Gazette, 30-39.
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Caccavale, Elio and Michael Reiss. "Miracles, monsters and disturbances." In Creative Encounters: New Conversations in Science, Education and the Arts, 48-63. London: Wellcome Trust, 2008.

Week 12
Aesthetics
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Markussen, Thomas, "The Disruptive Aesthetics of Design Activism: Enacting Design Between Art and Politics." Design Issues, no. 29 (Winter 2013): 38-50.

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Kester, Grant H. "Aesthetics After the End of Art: An Interview with Susan Buck-Morss." Art Journal, no. 65 (Spring 1997): 38-46.

Week 13
Student Presentations
Guest critic: Professor Jilly Traganou, ADHT, Parsons

Week 14
Student Presentations
Guest critic: Profeessor William Morrish, SDS, Parsons

Week 15
Student Presentations
Guest critic: Professor Patricia Bierne, SCE, Parsons

Designer: Niberca Polo | Co-editors: Hayley Arsenault, Divia Padayahee, Kamal Murali.
Instructor: Susan Yelavich, Associate Professor, Director, MA Design Studies Program, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons The New School for Design.

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