PREFACE PART I

This book arises from the Masters' course ART AND DESIGN RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES, offered by Konstfack's Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, with myself as course leader and tutor, in May 2006. The present publication is the initiative of that first intake of students and has been put together by these brave pioneers, namely *Ninna Berger, Jenny Bergström, Kira Carpelan, Eva Grinder*, and *Klara Persson*. Having been given some friendly advance warning to expect considerable resistance to a course of this nature, the first of its kind to be offered at Konstfack, it was a pleasure to encounter such a responsive group over several weeks – in fact, the initial five week course produced, at the students' request, a Version 2.0 of the course and then, due to continuing demand, a further exploration of course themes under the guise of a STUDIO FOR RESEARCH COMMUNICATION[1]. In short, a teacher could hardly wish for more enthusiastic, inquiring, good humoured and mutually supportive students. I would like to thank them, both individually and collectively, for their continuing engagement, and I additionally thank, for whole-heartedly supporting the course when it was as still an unproven concept, *Ronald Jones* and *Roland Ljungberg*, respectively Professor and Prefect at the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, and *Ivar Björkman*, President of Konstfack. This publication, then, is a record of art, craft and design investigations accompanied by reflections on practice; it represents a snapshot of ongoing student projects and what is presented in each submission is thus a moment in ongoing processes which will already have evolved significantly by the time this book finds itself open in your hands.

The students signed up on the basis of little else than the following course outline:

What is distinctive about practice-based research in art, craft and design? How can artists and designers develop relevant and compelling research questions? What sources and methods are available for such research? How do interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary inquiries lead to hybrid methodologies? This course analyses the conventions of practice-based research and explores modes of research communication appropriate to the field. It provides an introduction to the methods, tools and techniques of practice-based research in art, craft and design; uses writing exercises exploring questions of style, form, organisation and »voice«; teaches the technical requirements of various search and citation styles; encourages analysis and critique of existing research writing; and discusses the pros and cons of various research methods and their relevance to art, craft and design practice.

It may be helpful to identify several of the course's preliminary assumptions. We started from three basic premises:

× Knowledge is inseparable from the *forms* in which it is communicated to others. This may be through action (e.g. caring), representation (architecture, writing etc.), or conversation (dialogue); the important thing is that *something* is *communicated* to *someone* else.

× Our choice of *forms* (materials, genres) will affect our relationship both to the knowledge that is to be explored (represented, challenged) *and* to our audience.

× The more demands we make of our chosen materials (genres, forms), the more adapted, and therefore appropriate, they will become for our intended purposes.

In the struggle of the practitioner to find a form suited to examining and communicating her own practice, its wider historical contexts and theoretical significance, we discover critical counterpoints to the actual performance of the art, craft or design project. Each author (artist-designer-researcher) adopts the role of critic *in relation to* the project or even *within* the project itself. The shared space of the seminar as well as the more private, meditative space of writing are thus equally important tools for developing and articulating a *critical sensibility* – that is to say, for designing the conditions in which useful, relevant, and ideally inspiring conversation can take place around individual projects, questions and practices, thereby extending practice and theory alike.

This is therefore to position writing as an essential tool for practice-based research. As such, far from being antagonistic to the practical (or »tacit«) knowledge of artists, architects, engineers and designers, writing – critically *and* creatively conceived – assumes an integral role within practice-based research. One important aspect of this concerns the capacity of literary and philosophical writing to influence and extend our way of seeing the world. To explore distinct critical positions towards one's own project, as well as that of other participants in the group, is thus a core element of our methodology. It is to inhabit alternative »ways of looking«.

DRESSING IT UP IN THEORY
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THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF DISCARDED GARMENTS

Author: Ninna Berger

Beginning		End
Material		Material
	Measurement Of Value	
New		Worn Out
In fashion		Line of method
Reject	Action	Object of Desire
		In fashion
Consensus		Consensus

CONSENSUS

Consensus: an unspoken agreement formed in a specific context. Through interpretation and learning social codes, an understanding of framework and consensus occurs. Consensus operates inside every community or subculture as well as at local and national levels, in politics, social organisation and fashion. *How to visualise consensus and its opposite? Uniform and eccentricity? Beige and punk?* One can introduce new trends in a society built on consensus without contradiction if these trends are recognised in the appropriate frames of consensus.

DESIGNING UNIFORMITY

To link clothing and the staging of individuality, raises a question about group identity. As the group recognises the individual and the core of consensus is a contextual agreement, this makes individuality a product (result, agent) of consensus. Emphasising agreement over the pursuit of originality. Brands in fashion focus on target groups, as in any other business. Fashion brands try to define a design that will attract the widest group, targeting broad consensus. This privileges a one-style-fits-all design that favours a similar outlook; originality is sacrificed to group identity.

RECYCLING

An act of recycling can be very specific; old newspapers recycled become the basis of new news. Paper is recycled into paper. Does recycled clothing stay in its designed shape (outlook) as the agency changes? Wearing an item of clothing leaves a body of anonymous marks that reflect a person's relationship to, or treatment of, the garment. These marks stay and are recycled along with the physical material. As the garment is reused, new marks are added and wear and tear continues. Where does it end? For a garment to be recycled a decision to reject has to be made. By investigating discarded garments, an almost archaeological act is carried out – alterations, scent, usage, faded colour, notes in pockets and missing buttons are noted. The material that holds the garment together can still be in good condition and reusable but the signature of design has lost its importance. Most often the faded fashion value give clues of rejection. If a garment can be both old and new, depending on agency, the factor of consensual relation to rejection can be calculated.

RE-CONTEXTUALISING

To position garments as new and trendy is to also define the context of those garments out of fashion, of outdated design – i.e. old clothes. Redesign combines and positions the two contexts. To design within a context of recycling can mean a critique of the new, but this method rather depends on the production of newness for its identity. Instead of a critical opposition, it is an exploration of the discarded and rejected. As the new relates to consensus in fashion, so too does the rejected. This relates to recycled material and existing designs, and also concerns the role of the designer.

THE LASTS

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AUTHORSHIP & DESIGN

With a stated framework and a foundation of used techniques, the story of design involves a plot made up as particular rules are followed. Since re-purposing discarded or recycled clothing is an old tradition, it is the method and context that define what I call Restructional Clothing. Restruction (as I coin the term) relates to deconstruction as well as reconstruction and includes (in fashion) the signature of design, newness in relation to oldness, poetic and unique but also duplicable – garments based on discarded and rejected clothing.

REFLECTION ON METHOD

Considerations of consensus, recycling and re-contextualising as well as social (democratic) values and individuality (garments can be altered by the wearer) affect method. The logic of the selected (already discarded) garment is used either disturbed or as a frame. A cut and paste technique is applied as the method makes the silhouette recognisable. The design reveals itself because of the act of rejection and not despite it. Thinking, practical action (construction), result, analysis, alternation and correction is undertaken in relation to the hidden history and marks of time on the discarded garments. Positioned in a fashion context, the redesigned reject can become an object of desire. The signature of design holds a promise of actuality and stands here for a manufactured confusion of old versus new.

I'm one day too late. I lie and say that I got the days mixed up. That I am from an art school seems to make that lie true. I've put on my happy smiling face on the way into the building and that always helps. The lady that is obviously the boss for the day tells me, bothered, to wait in the cafeteria. The corridor is painted in some shade of yellow and there is a trail in the plastic carpet from all the feet that have been walking back and forth. Everything is worn down.

I'm thinking of buying a coffee but I have a banana in my black bag so I eat it. The lunch menu on the wall says lasagne and meat pie. After some minutes a small, thin old man greets me. He is in charge of the conveyer belt. He doesn't ask me what I want but seems to know. He guides me through the building, passing rooms filled with clothes, into the big hall. He is smiling and sweet. My father is a car mechanic so I know the type.

The conveyer belt is moving slowly, they've slowed it down for me. It can stop whenever I want.

> 1 <

The girl beside me has a tribal tattoo on her lower back; her training trousers allow me to see it. She is chewing gum and looking at her mobile phone. She is the one who makes sure all the clothes stay on the belt. If garments fall down she picks them up slowly, not looking at the pieces but throwing them back. Sometimes when the piles get too big she evens them out. The construction of the conveyer belt with its lift arrangement seems illogical and not fitted to the surroundings.

I take off my black woollen coat and put it underneath the only window. Outside the sun is shining and there was a hint of spring in the air.

It's a quarter past eleven. I'm told to stand where the first conveyer belt ends and the other starts. The clothes fall from the first one maybe a meter, onto the next one. The second conveyer belt goes 90 degrees from the first one and is angled up towards a gathering point. It doesn't work. The position of my body makes it difficult to look through the clothes. I change place. Climbing a small ladder onto a narrow platform where the girl is standing. A man drags big carts to the lift and the cart goes up and tips the clothes onto the first conveyer belt. The motion is slow so that the clothes fall down in large portioned sections.

> 2 <

I start digging through the mass of garments. I only want black pieces. I tell the girl this and she answers by shrugging her shoulders. We don't talk but she stops the belt sometimes when a lot of black passes by. I pull the cloth wherever I see something black, throwing it back if there is too big prints or if the garment is of a too small size. By touching the textile I feel the synthetics and don't mind pulling. I reject trousers.

Looking over my shoulder I get eye contact with the small man and he asks me how it's going.

I smile and try to look as excited as I can. I need some kind of plastic bag to put the clothes in.

The first cart goes back down on the floor, empty. The man puts another one in the lift. I have started a small pile of my own on the platform floor. After the second cart goes down empty the pile has grown significantly. I climb down the ladder. On the thin iron bars a tie with Christmas print hangs and also a scarf with anonymous logo print. On the floor buns of rolled socks lie scattered among big clusters of dust. I put my pile on a waist-high platform and start sorting. Behind me against the wall a line of carts stand labelled Recycle.

Not knowing for how long they are letting me stay or how many pieces I will find, I divide the pile in

> 3 <

three stacks. One for the things I know I can use, one for the things I might be able to use and one for the things I don't really want. Some pieces I throw back on the conveyer belt.

I climb back.

Making the call to the sorting central. I explain that the shape or outlook of the clothing doesn't matter. As long as the colour is right I would be happy for anything. She tells me about the rejects. Clothes we don't want here. The garments that cant be sold. We set a date and I ask her what it would cost. She tells me, I can hear her smiling, she doesn't expect money for those kinds of pieces.

I climb back. The carts are going up, unload and then down.

Realising the quantity of blackness I get pickier about my choices. Only selecting long-sleeved tops and large garments. I put a pair of Levis 501 in a greyish wash aside, maybe they will fit me. My nose is starting to itch. I can feel the dust on my face. Another black pile is growing beside me. The small man is waving his hand with a green plastic bag. He's made a construction with thin plastic bags inside of the green coarse and stiffly woven plastic bag. He tells me about

how it works and how I best pack the clothing. He compliments me on the good plan of bringing a small cart. I smile and continue. I need rubber bands to tie the bags together.

The girl is looking at the clock hanging above the window. There are a few minutes left until twelve o'clock and I ask her if its time for lunch.

The massive amounts of clothing passing me by are in all shapes and colours, with brand names and without. Nothing is ripped, dirty or in unwearable condition. Lots of polyester trousers, shirts in all shapes, colours and patterns, jackets, hoodies, skirts, jeans, vests, weird looking pieces, beige zip jackets, but mostly tops in stretch material. Knitted sweaters with strange patterns, lace, cotton, viscose, buttons, seams, lots of seams. Not long ago these garments were for sale in stores, on hangers, folded in neat stacks, on shelves. Bought, worn, thrown out. Bought, worn, thrown out. Bought, worn, thrown out. Bought again.

The lunch break is about to start, the small man has brought rubber band. I start to say my goodbyes in case I would be finished packing before they're back. I realise they only have half an hour of lunch and keep quiet. Everyone leaves the hall, the machines are switched off.

I go through the things left on the conveyer belt and climb down.

Almost feeling overwhelmed by the amount of black I don't mind sorting everything at once. The three stacks are now a mass of garments I know I can use. I look at the pieces again before folding them and putting them in the plastic bag. Filling the first inner bag I lift it into the green bag and put it on the cart. To pack the clothes even more I press it together with my bodyweight by pressing it with my knees. It fills just about half of the green bag. Feeling the weight by pulling the cart I realise that the cart is weak. I have a stronger cart at my studio.

I go to the toilet, there are three notes posted, not to wash feet in the sink, not to throw sanitary objects in the toilet and not to bring toilet paper home.

There is an aura of cigarette fumes around the girl as she retakes her position. The electricity is switched on, making a humming sound. The belt starts moving, I continue.

When the clothes have past the conveyer belt and reached the gathering point they are packed and pressed together in big white bales. Metal bands hold the bales together. Further down the

hall I can, from the platform, see the bales going from the floor, on top of each other in row after row. They are ready to be shipped.

I strap the green bag down tightly. The cart is overloaded. I make a joke about it breaking on the way home. I try to get some dust off my black sweater and trousers, blowing air through my nose. The small man is asking me as I put on my outerwear if I found what I was looking for.

On my way out I try to find the bossy woman but she is somewhere still having lunch. I drag the cart through the corridor past the cafeteria. It's cold outside but the hint of spring has grown. There is a building site opposite the central, new houses. As a truck passes me by on the dried dirt road I hold my head down not to get the following wave of swirling sand in my face. I look down on my coat, it looks like I've been rolled in fibre and textile-dust, completely covered. The cart's handle is a bit too low for my height and the weight makes my arm feel like boiled spaghetti.

I sit on the back-support of a bench, waiting for the tram, I eat my other banana. A man bicycles onto the platform over the tracks. He passes behind me. Two men walk past. There is no one else around. I don't look straight at them but I can hear them

> 6 <

> 7 <

talking about girls, about Anna who the older man is going to fuck. I look even more away.

The tram rolls in and I struggle a bit lifting the cart over the two steps. Having to change trains the younger man of the two asks me as he's entering a door further down if I need assistance. I don't have my smiling face on anymore. Eyes follow me and my heavy cart as I find a place to sit.

Getting a bit worried that the cart actually will break I ask the bus driver to lower the front.

I place the cart just inside the door of my studio and work with other things for the rest of the day.

I place the green bag on the floor and open it, taking out the first inner bag. Looking carefully at every piece, how its cut, estimating the material amount, planning lightly how to use it, putting it either in the stretch material group or the woven fabric group. I take out the second bag and sit down on the floor. Wearing only black I start to melt into the growing piles. The amount of unpacked clothes seems to be much larger than the volume of the green bag. As my thoughts wander the two piles mix together, I let it be. A scent is growing as the slow unpacking takes place. It doesn't smell bad or good. It's curious. A blend of the smell of

dust, washing powder, hands after holding coins, unrecognisable perfumes, bodies, storage and something more. I stand up leaving the heap of clothing on the floor. The scent has filled the room and I start to work.

I wear the grey jeans.

CASE STUDIE: FEAR OF GLOBAL WARMING

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[fig. 2]

APOCALYPTIC FORECAST WALLPAPER

APOCALYPTIC FORECAST WALLPAPER is a collection of wallpaper comprising two patterns, MELTING GREENLAND [fig. 1] and GLOBAL TEMPERATURE CHANGE [fig.2] and one motif-wallpaper named LAST GENERATION. [fig. 3]

The pattern MELTING GREENLAND has borrowed the looks of a diagram and the dry aesthetics of statistics, but it is not a conventional diagram. It can be interpreted by the viewer but can also be viewed simply as a decorative pattern. The system of this pattern is that different colours represent the shape of Greenland today, in fifty years and in one hundred years. Reading the diagram, one learns that the size of Greenland will be reduced by almost 70% within 100 years.

Apocalypse is a word usually denoting »the end of the world«; the Greek origin of the word, however, means ›unveiling‹.

The pattern GLOBAL TEMPERATURE CHANGE is created by diagrams presented in the report of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change on temperature changes from 2007. By repeating the diagrams, a continuous increase of temperature is illustrated. In addition, the aesthetics of statistics are used to communicate how the pattern should be interpreted. The range of colours and the forms are directly borrowed from the original diagrams. In this case the title of the wallpaper and the wallpaper itself demonstrates the matter clearly and no digits or explaining texts are added.

Author: Jenny Bergström

[fig. 1]

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established in 1988 by two United Nations' organizations – the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – to evaluate the risk of human-generated climate change.

The motif-wallpaper LAST GENERATION is named after the Fred Pearce book from 2007 with the same title. The aim was to create an image that radiates disaster, beauty, fear and calm at the same time – an image that can be looked at from different angles and which will hopefully change according to the ideas of the viewer.

[fig. 3]

These products can all be described as aestheticising disaster. By making harmonic patterns out of disturbing data and blending apocalyptic forecasts into calming images, the aim is to communicate an ambivalent feeling and create an experience that requires interpretation.

Statistics are often used as an expression of facts and truth. What you see in a diagram is based on digits and measurable data and is therefore rarely questioned. Graphics usually strive to show a simplified or at least more pedagogical picture of a given issue, to create understandable models of a complex reality. As *Edward R. Tufte* remarks: »*The world is complex, dynamic, multidimensional; the paper is static, flat. How are we to represent the rich visual world of experience and measure-ment on mere flat land?*«[1]

What happens when a diagram is released from its context, without statistics and explanatory texts to guide the viewer in interpreting the information? It will ask more of the receiver and encourage her or him to reflect upon the image and what it communicates. It will create questions rather then deliver answers. And what happens when we bring the aesthetics of statistics into our homes with new media? Maybe this can be seen as an attempt to embrace the danger, to invite it into our private homes and learn to live with it. It can also be seen as a sort of therapeutic act in order to deal with abstract threats that run the risk of paralysing us. Or a way to develop a new relationship with statistical information, to look at it thorough new eyes.

» *If it takes control of your body and soul, embrace it. If it makes you cry and or leave you wondering why, don't turn around, face it.*«[2]

TURN OFF THE LIGHT

TURN OFF THE LIGHT is an illustration of the abstract results of our actions. The shape is demolished by the heat from the lamp and the lamp »cries« as a symbol of a crying world. It's an attempt to make an abstract fear graspable.

In order to save the shape from destruction you need to either turn of the light or use a low energy lamp that doesn't give off as much heat as a normal light bulb.

It encourages us to change of behaviour and takes down the huge task to save our planet to a very concrete level, and makes it more graspable.

[fig.4]

[fig.5]

[fig.6]

THIS IS THE AIR WE BREATHE…

THIS IS THE AIR WE BREATHE… provides instant feedback on your actions in the city. A slow but direct response on pollution. People passing every day by car will be reminded of how they effect the urban environment. [fig.6]

In the city we are used to being approached by information from almost all directions. The commercialised urban environment consists of messages, constantly fighting for our attention, loud and/or with rapidly moving images. THIS IS THE AIR WE BREATHE… uses another method in order to communicate. It demands time from the receiver and it does not deliver a straight answer.

Air Pollution is a chemical, physical or biological agent that modifies the natural characteristics of the atmosphere.

THE SOUND OF GLOBAL WARMING

THE SOUND OF GLOBAL WARMING is made by melting ice, wind, traffic and electricity. This product has been made in collaboration with *Stefan Johansson*[fig.7], student at the Dramatic Institute in Stockholm. The sound is mainly made from our own recordings, some sounds from archives has been added.

NOTES FROM OUR FIRST MEETING:
× *A sounds that mediates complexity*
× *Holism*
× *Beauty and fear, attraction and fear*

A sound can be used to create a room, an effective tool to create an atmosphere, a way to link the different aspects of the project together in one product

POSSIBLE SOUND SOURCES:
× *experts on Global Warming talking about it*
× *people talking about their fears of Global Warming*
× *sources of Global warming*
× *results of Global Warming*
× *media reports on Global Warming*

Global warming is the observed increase in the average temperature of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans over recent decades, and how it is predicted to continue.

[fig.7]   *Photo by Agnete Bretan*

The sound is an attempt to represent the complex reality. By using and playing with the attraction that often accompanies fear, an atmosphere can be created that mediates a feeling of uncertainty between a threat-ening and soothing experience. The sound consists of recordings from two predicted results of global warming (melting ice and wind), and two assumed sources of global warming (traffic and electricity). The aim has been to create a sound that at first seems to be randomly composed by noise, and sounds the sources of which are difficult to identify. After a while the listener notices a pattern and maybe associates with the actual origin – ice, wind, electricity and traffic. The system transforms into a pattern and a rhythm. The sound goes through an evolution and when it has almost arrived at its goal – harmonic, organized, calming, graspable – it starts over again. The sound can be seen as a metaphor for fear itself. The feeling of not knowing the rules, not seeing the pattern. The fear of not being in control of things, the fear of the unpredictable and disorganised.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Global warming is topical and widely-discussed. Fear can take many different shapes; depending on the circumstances fear can be abstract or graspable, constructive or destructive, it can make us take action but it can also paralyse us. How should I, as a designer, highlight global warming and its attendant fears without paralysing people or making them afraid in a destructive way?

Björn-Ola Linnér (senior lecturer and head of the Department for Climate Research at Linköping University, Sweden) claims in the online edition of Svenska Dagbladet (2006-11-15), that »exaggerated claims in the important debate on global warming might damage the reliability of the climate threat.«

›Climate chock‹ was the alarming headline of a Swedish tabloid paper, warning of a decrease of heat in the Gulf Stream which would result in severe cold in Sweden. The Swedish radio program ›Efter tolv‹ predicted »The earth and its inhabitants are facing environmental disasters which will eliminate us.« The former vice president of the US, *Al Gore*, claims that »we need to take action now since in ten years it will be too late.«

There is a risk that these apocalyptic messages have the opposite effect. We can not afford a setback caused by overuse of gloomy predictions.

He writes that the environmental movement over forty years has made recurring warnings of disasters and ecological collapses, predictions that, when not fulfilled, provide ammunition to critical voices. Björn-Ola refers to *Kerstin Anér* who during the Seventies pointed out the risk of apocalyptical forecasts. She claimed that these doom-laden predictions run a risk of being worn out and making people passive because they feel powerless. He continues: »*We don't need to use an apocalyptic tone. The issue is important in any case. The uncertainty about the consequences of human manipulation of the complex climate system is serious enough to motivate us.*« [3]

Why does the media approach this topic this way? Is it because of fear of not getting attention or not getting the message through? That people will stop listening if the message is too complex, consists of too many layers or asks too many questions? » *The complex pictorial language is always demanding and provoking. And it's this certain complexity which the modern man tend to be frightened by, the fact that the experience sticks with you, that you are not done with it.* « [4]

Is it possible to communicate the importance of awareness about global warming without using visions of horror, without underestimating peoples ability to think and without telling people what they should feel or fear? Can design be a way to communicate the importance of this issue? Alarming reports can be read and pictures can be seen every day in newspapers. One could say that there is an information overload and people thus tend to reject it. The fear of global warming runs the risk of becoming paralysing rather than energizing. Can the same picture attract more attention if presented in new media as the complex issue it is?

Fear has always played a central role in societies. It helps us make decisions in our daily life. It tells us when to cross the street and how to drive our car. It also plays an essential role in confirming standards and values; different cultures have different rules about fear. Fear can therefore be seen as a social construction. Fear is also individual, and different people from various backgrounds and experiences are afraid of different things. Class, gender and generation are also aspects to be considered.

By asking questions like when, where and of what are we most often afraid, I have come to the conclusion that fear is often linked to what we don't understand, abstract things, and things or events that are unpredictable. To situations where values are vague or shifting. If this is the case situations and things opposed to these would generate comfort. Things we do understand, situations when we can predict what will happen to some extent and when values are fixed, when we know the rules.

Fear cannot be designed away. Products can raise questions about fear. Questions such as: What are we afraid of and why? Is there a gap between the level of fear and the actual threat? Is this a constructive or destructive fear? Can I do something about the source of the fear? Fear and the »rules« about fear might be possible to use for a designer to draw attention to a topic or a phenomenon. What kind of approach do I want to have in my design work?

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EMBRACE THE DANGER
LEARN ABOUT THE DANGERS
INVITE THE DANGER
ENJOY THE DANGER
QUESTION THE FEAR
USE THE RULES OF FEAR

Working as a designer includes a certain amount of power. Products can be regarded as a sort of media by which the designer will have an impact on behaviour, thoughts and lifestyle to a greater or lesser extent. It is possible to raise questions through design and this fact can be used or ignored by the designer. I prefer to acknowledge this fact and work with that in mind.

FOOTNOTES:
1: *Tufte, Edward R*, ENVISIONING INFORMATION, Cheshire, Graphics Press, 1990
2: From Lyrics by *Kings of Convenience*
3: http://www.svd.se/dynamiskt/brännpunkt/did_14065478.asp (25 January 2007/originally in Swedish)
4: *Andersson, Roy*, VÅR TIDS RÄDSLA FÖR ALLVAR, Filmkonst nr.33, Göteborgs filmfestival, en filmkonstbublikation, 1995 (originally in Swedish)

forgetting

forgetting

forgetting

CU

CU

CU

performing

performing

MS

MS

INVESTIGATING THE SPACE OF ENUNCIATING

—

Gaze / Frame / Shot / Angle

» What we cannot speak of we must pass over in silence. «
Ludwig Wittgenstein

ignoring?

returning (with fear?)

forgetting? ignoring?

returning

performing

ignoring

performing

forgetting?

MS

MS

MS

MS

MS

MS

MS

MS

ECU

ECU

ECU

performing

performing

performing

performing

performing

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performing

performing

ECU

ECU

ECU

ECU

ECU

ECU

ECU

ECU

forgetting?   ignoring   returning?   ignoring

MS   MS   MS   MS

performing   performing   performing   performing   performing   performing   performing   performing

MS   MS   MS   MS   MS   MS   MS   MS

avoiding   ignoring   returning   ignoring   returning   performing   performing   performing   pe

MS   MS   MS   MS   MS   MS   MS   MS   MS

forgetting   ignoring   ignoring   returning   performing   performing   performing   performing   fo

CU   CU   CU   CU   CU   CU   CU   CU
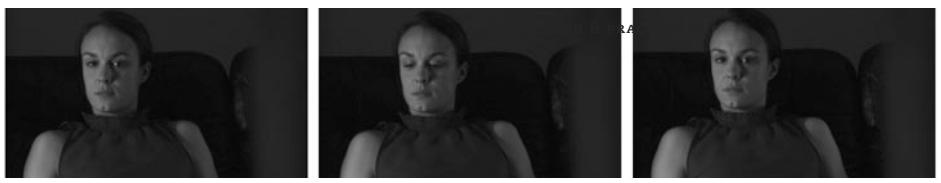
performing   performing   performing   performing   forgetting?

24   MS   25   MS   MS   MS   MS
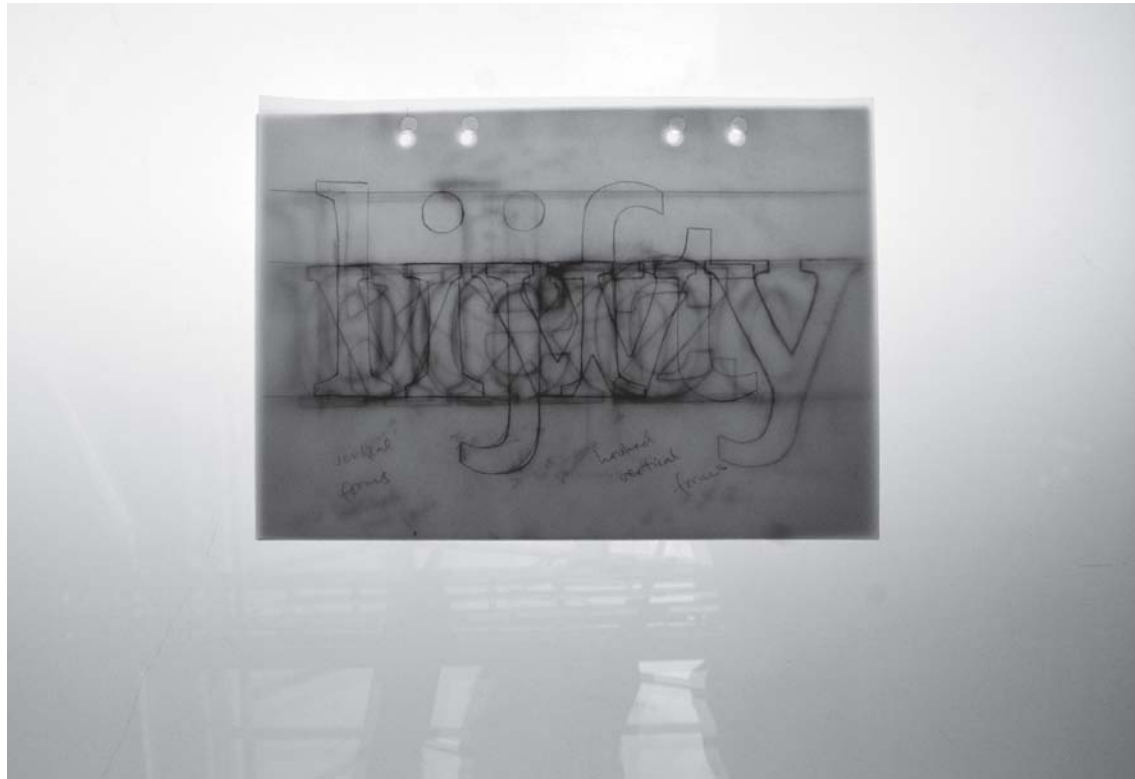
returning   avoiding   returning

MS   MS   MS

performing   performing   performing   performing   performing   performing   performing   performing

CU   CU   CU   CU   CU   CU   CU   CU

performing   performing   performing   performing   performing   performing   performing   performing

MS   MS   MS   MS   MS   MS   MS   MS

performing   performing   performing

MS   MS   MS

THE LAST FONT
—
THE RHETORICS OF EGYPTIAN TYPEFACES

Author: Eva Grinder

INTRODUCTION

Before photography, complex layouts and various advertising techniques, typographic forms were developed, expanded and often flamboyantly decorated in order to give commercial messages greater impact following the rapid growth of advertising that accompanied industrialization. The Egyptian (also known as Slab-serif) typefaces were key to this typographic development. Their central role in commercial expression means that they remain an integral part of our visual environment to this day.

However, the Egyptians linger at the outskirts of typography – their close connection to the advertising industry and their sometimes blunt forms and loud expressions are considered ill-suited to conventional book printing, which may explain their low status and the lack of research into this area of communication. This paper will follow the development of the Egyptians through cultural, economic and technical changes in the 19th and 20th centuries, using language and rhetoric theory as the method of examination.

As a part of my research I am designing a typeface based on Egyptian traditions, which will illustrate the paper.

RHETORIC OR TYPOGRAPHY

The introduction of writing separated the speaker from the spoken, according to *Walter Ong* in ORALITY AND LITERACY. By » removing words from the world of sound where they had first had their origin « [1] writing materialised communication. Furthermore, without the presence of an orator, written words are not tied to a place and time, as spoken ones unavoidably are. With the introduction of the printing press this shift in distribution of information continued.

» Print eventually removed the ancient art of (orally based) rhetoric from the centre of the academic education. « [2] But *Eva Brumberger* has identified another sort of rhetoric, and her Ph.D. thesis put forward in 2001 hade the title THE RHETORIC OF TYPOGRAPHY: FIVE EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES OF TYPEFACE PERSONALITY AND ITS EFFECTS ON READERS AND READING. Brumberger tests how different typefaces alter the understanding of text and provide » strong empirical support for the notion that readers ascribe personality attributes to typefaces and to text passages «. [3] Unfortunately, the typefaces investigated are not relevant for this paper, but Brumberger creates a foundation for further research into typographic rhetoric. » Just as we conceive of the reader as an active participant in the reading process, we must conceive of the viewer as an active participant in the viewing process. Similarly, just as prior knowledge, expectations, and experience shape readers' interactions with verbal language, they will shape interactions with visual language. In neither case is the audience simply a passive recipient of presented information. « [4]

Whether intentional or not, there will always be a rhetorical aspect of any intervention between people. » It is impossible to speak a word orally without intonation « [5] Walter Ong writes. Appearance, tone of voice, emphasis and gesture – these are some of the things that in rhetoric terms make up the ethos of the speaker. Looking at the visual manifestations of rhetoric in written communication a new ethos appears, in terms of appearance, tone, emphasis and gesture in the typographic structure. This will, as the body language of a person does for speech, contribute to the understanding and credibility of a text.

The character of the speaker is one of the three components needed in a rhetorical situ-

ation; a speech and a listener are the other two. The emotional reaction that the speech (or printed matter) evokes in the listener/reader are described in terms of pathos, and the content and facts provided in the speech are defined as logos.

Aristotle defines rhetoric as » the faculty of observing in any given case all the available means of persuasion «[6]. The definition puts an emphasis on the uniqueness of every situation, that one speech–or text–cannot use the same means of persuasion as another. Persuasiveness here means to create a coherent whole, to bring the parts together in the way most suited for the context where it will be used. These and many other concepts could be useful in a rhetorical analysis of visual languages as well.

As the amount of printed matter increase, so does visual literacy. We read, interpret, and act according to our interpretations. Walter Ong goes so far as to claim that » more than any other single invention, writing has transformed human consciousness. «[7] Seen that way, it is surprising how little is known about human consciousness' interaction with typography.

06.12.28
METHOD

The first brush stroke of the first letter of my font. The tool I am using initially is a flat brush and ink diluted with lots of water. This brush will give an even stroke width typical for these letter forms, while the watery ink makes it possible for me to draw lots of letters on top of each other, to try out different shapes until I get to my preferred one.

I then trace the outlines of the brush letters with a pencil, and to form words to see if these outlined letters fit together. From there I continue working with pencil on tracing paper, sorting the letters in groups based on their similarities in shape;

OQCGS BPRDJU EFLHIT VAWX MNKZY

oce bdpqg as il ftj nhmur vwyx kz

The next step is to mix lower- and uppercase letters in pairs and adjust them to find a uniform visual language:

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

THE LAST FONT

Friedrich Nietzsche claimed that he was » the last philosopher «, *Friedrich Kittler* has titled *Michael Foucault* » the last historian «, and Kittler himself has been called » the last literary theorist «.[8]
This is not to suggest that philosophy, history or literature would cease to exist, rather that the conditions of how we look at the disciplines have changed. Critically clarifying the conditions of a discipline as they did can only be done by looking at it from the outside, in a late phase of the development, and thus the » end « of the discipline is revealed.

As long as there are no alternative angles to look from, the end of a discipline is invisible. A parallel can be drawn to the history of writing. As long as writing was the only medium in which to store information–before film, record player and computer–the term medium did not exist. Everything that was communicated (except spoken language) was filtered through written letters.

Until the early 19th century written letters, whether cast in lead or cut in wood, originated from handwriting and the shapes that came from the pen or the brush. Print was mainly used for books and newspapers, and typography developed towards a refinement within those media. With industrialization and mass production a new form of writing was needed for billboards, adverts and display windows. The Egyptian typefaces were an answer to this need. In the early 19th

century these fonts appeared, with a geometric expression and large, square serifs. The shapes of the Egyptians mimic those of shop signs painted with a broad brush, a technique which made the lines of the letters monolinear in a way that earlier fonts, stemming from handwriting, never were. » The idea of display typefaces, something unprecedented in typographic history, began to emerge. Typefaces began to have their own voice and became more expressive instead of merely quiet servants of readers. Reading, on the other hand, became a non-linear and active process. «[9] The first documented example of an Egyptian is Antique, by *Vincent Figgins*, 1815.[10]

It became apparent that letterforms were not only containers for meaning, but that the shapes of the words themselves contribute to communication. It was also shown that these shapes can be taken from anywhere, as long as the words are still understood. By revealing the conditions of the discipline, by showing that handwriting is only one origin of typography, the first Egyptian becomes » the last font «.

07.01.12
INSPIRATION

Egyptians have a nice, friendly appearance, despite their sometimes clumsy, heavy shapes. The aim with my font is to keep the friendliness of the Egyptians but to eliminate the heaviness. To start from the completely opposite end of the strict geometry that usually is the origin of Egyptians, I draw plants for an hour a day, focusing on the stems, leafs and joints. I study the in-between shapes, in order to translate them to the counters of the letters. However small these alterations, I think they will contribute greatly to the image of the text.

Thinking this is my own method, I find out that the great 20th century type designer Adrian Frutiger also made parallells to organic forms in his type designs. I am particularly inspired by the lower case n of his beautiful APOLLO, *which has no straight lines at all.*[11]

FAMILY RESEMBLANCE

The typographic development in the early 19th century, and the commercialization of

text that came with it would not have been possible were it not for the recent progress in printing techniques. » The character of groups of typefaces has been largely determined by the technical possibilities of the periods concerned. «[12] Adrian Frutiger makes this claim, and in TYPE SIGN SYMBOL he broadly sketches the development of print:

First there was relief type, a process that » required the design of a resistant form of letter «, since ink bleed made the printing of very thin lines impossible. Intaglio engraving came after that and was prominent in the 17th and 18th centuries. This refined method encouraged experiments with extremely thin lines, and what was to be called » modern style «, including fonts such as BODONI and DIDOT. Third, at the end of the 18th century – and this is where our story starts – came the lithographic drawing. » It suddenly became possible to draw characters on a flat, polished stone – free from engraving tool and file – with a brush, pen, ruler, compasses or freehand. This revolutionary technique brought about a completely new situation for type-design. Punch-cutters, typecasters and printers were also under its influence. An almost unlimited variety of letterforms can be seen in the products of this time. «[13]

Three major forms emerged; Fat face, mixing extremely thin and extremely thick lines; Egyptian, moving towards an equal width of strokes and serifs and increased blackness, and Sans serif, monolinear and extremely simplified.

The naming of these new families is everything but straight forward: » It seems that the sans serifs also competed for the name Egyptian. «[14] During this time the Antique was popular. Napoleon's army had plundered Egypt, and, after the defeat, handed over some findings to England, among them the Rosetta stone. This black slab, covered in writing in three languages, was a part of the huge interest in Egyptian culture, and the type foundries must have seen the commercial value in associating their new releases with this trend.

A refined version of the first Egyptians, called **CLARENDON** (by *Robert Besley*), appeared in 1845 and was intended as a bold font to accompany ordinary text faces in dictionaries. It became very popular and has

been widely copied, today the name signifies a whole group of typefaces with similar characteristics. They are lighter than the first Egyptians, and the serifs are thinner. Some of the letters end with curls, which was a typical characteristic of this time. [15]

Clarendon is still a very popular typeface for commercial use such as for shop signs and logotypes. An investigation of shop signs on a Swedish high street will show range of Clarendon users, from retailers such as Dressmann and Din Sko to fast food restaurants. The font's strong personal character, or ethos, makes any name set in it almost instantly look like a logotype. Another reason for its popularity might be the combination of usability and decorative details. It is easy to like the font – it has strong pathos. The curls that end some of the letters gives it a sympathetic look, cute even, and it was the first favorite font of the author of this text.

07.02.01
SERIFS

My serifs have made quite a journey. They started off being thick and sturdy– I wanted them to make solid outline of the words, which would allow the inside to be more dynamic.

Advised to reshape the serifs to avoid their heaviness slowing down the reading, I make them thinner and give them a more modeled shape, by letting some light in under the bottom serifs. I allow the top serifs to curve slightly upwards. This way I leave the conventional route of the mono-linear Egyptians, which I prefer to recreating historical models.

I then had a meeting with Dutch type authority Gerard Unger at a café in the Old Town of Stockholm. He told me off for having serifs too thin in comparison to the thinnest parts of the letters. This was a problem I was been aware of, but had not yet dealt with. Now I finally decided to make the joints a lot thinner, while the serifs will get slightly thicker again. We move on to talk about sports. Unger advises me to follow a saying attributed to the American baseball player Yogi Berra, when I find it difficult to make up my mind: »If you come to a fork in the road, take it«.

TYPEWRITER

The problem with pinpointing visual language is that it is anything but universal or fixed. It is dependent on human interaction, just like spoken language. However, spoken languages are easier to analyze, since they can be organized in sounds, words and grammar, while components of visual language are hardly ever articulated. There is no possible way of creating a dictionary of visual languages, however mapping out the »grammar« could be a start. Typefaces are only a small part, one of the codes, of the visual messages at work in graphic design. The appearance of typefaces is not fixed either, it alters with the context and surrounding signals.

»Information design is infused with conventional codes, local and global, textual and non textual, which are blended.«[16] SHAPING INFORMATION– THE RHETORIC OF VISUAL CONVENTIONS, written by *Charles Kostelnick* and *Michael Hassett*, presents a theory that is useful for understanding the components of visual communication. Readers and viewers have a lifelong experience of visual information, of which they understand the codes. Some of these codes can to be studied, like musical notation and road signs, while others, such as dress codes for subcultures, are learned by experience.

»Conventional codes are vulnerable because they are social constructions that depend on groups of users learning and practicing them. Like speakers of verbal languages and dialects, users of visual language are members of discourse communities that share similar experiences, needs and expectations.«[17] Discourse communities can be large or small, and everyone is a part of a number of discourse communities; professional, social, regional, or based around special interests.

»Conventions so densely populate our perceptual landscape that it ›neutralises‹ them – that is, we believe they mirror nature, rather than artificially represent it.«[18] An example of a »neutralized« convention is that of writing direction. Readers of this text are all part of a large discourse community that have left-to-right reading as a common convention. The danger, though, when we see conventions as natural, is that we see them as the good way of doing things, rather than conventions for our part of the social world.

To look at typographic rules as a set of visual conventions changes the perspective completely, in a liberating way. If everything is convention, shared by a certain community, then nothing is fixed, for certain or forever. The notion of typography as a set of conventions might make it harder to justify breaking those conventions (one might not be understood), but may at the same time encourage a more dynamic use of those conventions, opening up the possibility of further studies and greater knowledge of the codes and subtleties of graphic languages.

»Though a technology gradually grows old, conventional practices that originated with it often continue.«[19] The layout of typewritten letters initially resembled that of the handwritten ones that preceded them, and early computer documents initially mirrored typewritten ones. The slab-serif COURIER was long used for letters that were meant have a personal appeal, which is interesting, since when the typewriter appeared in the 1870s, typewritten letters were considered impersonal.

The choice of a slab-serif as the typewriter font is not a stylistic one – letters that strike paper through inked fabric demand rugged type forms. Had the letters been thinner, or the serifs pointed, they might have ripped the paper. Mono-spaced, mono-linear, and with thick and sometimes long serifs to fill the gaps between the letters in a word.

07.02.07
MIDO

I have a break and watch an appalling football game–a friendly between Sweden and Egypt, played in Cairo. Suddenly, for no obvious reason, the audience start cheering loudly. Not because of the game, but, as I find out, to greet the Egyptian star striker Mido, who has been substituted and is thanking the crowds for the support. His popularity is overwhelming and his nickname is nice and friendly. Just as I want my font, now called Mido, to be.

STYLE OR SUBSTANCE

With products to sell and photographs not yet in common use to help show off the items, typography had to both grab attention by its form and to communicate content. During the second half of the 19th century,

the solid black forms of the Egyptians and contemporaries eventually failed to compete with letters that were framed, shadowed, internally decorated with flowers, or drawn with 3D-effects. Sometimes all at once. Some forms were taken even further than that, in the oddly named font styles such as the Tuscans, with frilly edges, and the Italiennes, which had reversed proportions: serifs and horizontal lines much fatter than the vertical strokes. The extreme character of these letters makes it hard to disconnect them from the »WILD WEST« where they were first used. The well-documented myths and stories of this time preserve the Italiennes within this context.

It is against this background that the modernist ideal, wishing to get rid of all the excesses of the times preceding it, should be seen. An influential typographic text from this time, by *Beatrice Warde*, states that »printing should be invisible«, that it should be looked through and communicate the meaning of the words without altering the content or being noticed itself. [20]

Responding to these ideas, *Richard A. Lanham* builds an argument around the concept of looking at or through the world in his book The Economics of Attention. »At one end, the through ideal. Minimal awareness of an expressive medium. At the other end, the at ideal. Maximal awareness of how we say what we do, or paint it, or sound it out. In the middle, the daily mixtures. Please note: no point in the spectrum is intrinsically evil or virtuous; it seeks to describe rather than proscribe, to analyze rather than condemn.«[21]

Lanham discusses the effects of design stripped from any form of decoration, of minimalist design with nothing but the essentials remaining. »We feel its absence of ornamentation as intensely ornamental. It occupies, at the same time, the through and at extremes on our spectrum. The two ends of the spectrum seem to be pulled together into a style/substance pun.«[22] »In our most common conversation, style and substance are contending opposites. The more of one, the less of the other.«[23] It makes it easier to go by if the world is structured in opposing pairs. Lanham refers to the educational system of classic rhetoric which »did not present style and substance as contending opposites but as fruitful collaborators.«[24] From a rhetorical perspective, style is not incidental, superficial, or supple-

mentary–it is about how ideas are embodied in language and customized to communicative contexts.

The concept of pure substance is hard to imagine. Style of some kind is unavoidable, and the challenge is to use the most appropriate stylistic language, whether the intention is to be transparent, or to go against conventions. Transparency is a relative concept, depending on the context. The fonts used in the illustrations of this page would have blended in well in a Wild West comic book, while in a research paper the style stands out.

07.02.20
FIGURES

With the lower and upper case characters drawn and digitalized in FontLab, I start drawing the numerals, noticing how much easier this is now that I am familiar with the method. I read in Karen Cheng's DESIGNING TYPE *about the fascinating development of numerals. Before Claude Garamond in the 16th century designed the first numerals specific to a font, printers usually used the same set of numerals for any job. Since Garamond's numerals were intended for use in text, they had ascenders and descenders, and proportions similar to that of lower case letters, only slightly taller:*

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

This was the standard until the 19th century, and the style is today known as » old style figures «. *During the industrial revolution printers created taller figures, more similar to upper case letters. These figures became known as* » modern «:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

With the introduction of mechanical typesetting in the late 1800s » old style numerals were often omitted from typefaces for reasons of economy. « » At the time, text figures were less fashionable, so most fonts included only upper case numerals. «[25] *So fashion had it that the form of larger figures became standard, and still is what we learn at school and consider standard.*

CHANGES IN RESOLUTION

The extreme ornamentation of letterforms at the end of the 19th century caused a backlash and the Egyptian fonts lost popularity during the first decades of the 20th century. At the same time we see interesting developments in other communication media such as the radio, film, and photography, competing for the same attention as the printed word. Along with Modernism, the Sans Serifs caught on. Influenced by these new ideals, a revival of the Egyptians took place in the thirties, this time even more geometrical. The initial idea of these letter forms – total mono-linearity, equally thick serifs, strict geometric forms – was finally used fully. This time the development started in Germany, from where it soon spread, and the fonts, such as MEMPHIS and ROCKWELL, all show similar characteristics.[26]

In England, around the same time, the type designer *Eric Gill* went the completely opposite direction in his development of Egyptians. He started by designing Solus, a font with humanistic proportions, but low contrast between thick and thin lines. The font was designed to be used in books, but will still be called an Egyptian, since the serifs are square and non-bracketed. Solus did not really catch on, but its successor JOANNA did. This is a completely new direction for fonts of this former display family.[27]

A third dominant influence pushed the development of the Egyptians during the 20th century: the introduction of new printing techniques. When Photosetting was developed in the fifties, Adrian Frutiger designed EGYPTIENNE (which is also the author's favourite Egyptian) specifically for this new method of reproduction. Frutiger's subsequent Egyptians–GLYPHA and SERIFA–look mono-linear at first glance, but the lines are subtly altered to optically let more light into the letters. Fine details like this would have been eaten by ink with earlier reproduction techniques.

More influential for the form of Egyptians was the invention of the personal computer, and particularly the primitive laser printers with relatively low resolution out put. Suddenly, reproduction quality regressed. LUCIDA SERIF (by *Holmes* and *Bigelow*), an Egyptian with humanist proportions, was

the first typeface to be designed to cope with this low resolution printing. The slab serifs, which began as aesthetic choice (since the new printing techniques in the early 19th century allowed it), are now used for the opposite reason; that the printing technique cannot reproduce other forms of serifs. *Erik Spiekermann's* OFFICINA SERIF, designed in 1990, was customised to work on low-resolution printers and fax machines. The stroke width is relatively even and the serifs are heavy, to allow printing of small sizes under rough conditions. Another feature of the font is the resemblance to typewritten letterforms, which mimic a familiar visual language for the introduction of this new tool.

LOOKING AHEAD

Untouched by the purity of modernism and other trends, there have always been commercial spheres with a common use of typography. To this day, numerous hairdressers use an Egyptian font for their shop sign, and the same goes for budget stores such as Willy's and Dressmann, as well as tabloid newspapers such as Aftonbladet and News of the World. Seeing how habit controls our visual landscape, fonts of this kind are most likely to keep appearing within these commercial contexts, since the discourse communities that use (or choose not to use) these services understand the codes and associate logotypes and shop signs with certain values. In this paper I have not touched upon the use of color in text, but it is worth noticing that the logotypes for the services above all are combinations of the colors red/black or yellow/black. Bold, sharp and loud.

Typographic debate is often occupied with how thing » should be «, whether to stick to tradition or to break loose from it. But we rarely investigate what is actually happening in daily communication between people. This area of investigation is found in the meeting of typography, rhetoric and language theory.

As the amount of communication grows, so does the need to fill the gap in knowledge of the effects of it. In this paper I have briefly covered a small typographic area. Since our visual landscape is saturated with codes of this kind, further investigation is needed.

07.03.30
LANGUAGE

I continue to draw and extend my typeface to the LATIN-1 *set, which consists of 256 glyphs (=characters, figures, diacritics and marks), supporting the major languages of Europe.* LATIN-1 *is one of many sets of glyphs listed in* THE UNICODE 5.0 STANDARD, *a book (or a paper brick rather) which lists all the glyphs that have so far been given a data code. The aim is that eventually all glyphs from all the languages in the world will be covered by* UNICODE. *In this context my 256 glyphs seem quite modest.*

The UNICODE STANDARD *introduces all groups of languages in the world in dry but beautifully precise words:* » The European scripts are all written from left to right. Many have separate lowercase and uppercase forms of the alphabet. Spaces are used to separate words. «[28]

FOOTNOTES:
1: *Ong,* ORALITY AND LITERACY p.131
2: *Ong,* p.129
3: *Brumberger,* THE RHETORIC OF TYPOGRAPHY: THE PERSONA OF TYPEFACE AND TEXT p.206
4: *Brumberger,* p.207
5: *Ong,* p.102
6: *Aristotle,* RHETORIC, 1.2.1355b
7: *Ong,* p.78
8: *Friedrich Kittler,* GRAMOFON, FILM, SKRIVMASKIN p.28. Parallell drawn by editors *Otto Fischer* and *Thomas Götselius* in the preface of Kittler's MASKINSKRIFTER p.10. For further reading on the subject, see for example Francis Fukuyama, THE END OF HISTORY AND THE LAST MAN.
9: Keith Tam, THE ›REVIVAL‹ OF SLAB-SERIF TYPEFACES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY p.4
10: The exact year of the first Egyptian is under debate: » It is possible that Robert Thorne had already cut the type, taking both the design and the name from sign-writers. « THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF TYPE FACES p.291
11: Frutiger: » When I was designing Meridien, I was concerned to take the stiffness out of the characters and to provide them with an appearance of natural growth. « This font is drawn without any straight lines, to resemble the stems to trees in a forest: »…black and white shapes enter into the dialogue of a complex of complementary forms, to which the eye is accustomed from nature. « TYPE SIGN SYMBOL p.28
12: Adrian Frutiger, TYPE SIGN SYMBOL p.27
13: Frutiger pp.26–27
14: A.F. Johnson, Type designs: their history and development p.157
15: THE ENCYGLOPAEDIA OF TYPE FACES p.295
16: *Kostelnick & Hassett,* SHAPING INFORMATION– THE RHETORIC OF VISUAL CONVENTIONS, p.17
17: *Kostelnick & Hassett* p.24
18: *Kostelnick & Hassett* p.34
19: *Kostelnick & Hassett* p.107
20: *Beatrice Warde's* THE CRYSTAL GOBLET OR PRINTING SHOULD BE INVISIBLE is frequently quoted in typographic litterature.
21: *Richard A. Lanham,* THE ECONOMICS OF ATTENTION, p.159
22: *Lanham,* p.162
23: *Lanham,* p.254
24: *Lanham,* p.254
25: *Karen Cheng,* Designing Type, pp.162–163
26: *Keith Tam's* essay THE ›REVIVAL‹ OF SLAB-SERIF TYPEFACES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, will provide a more in depth analysis of the typographic development of this time. *Ruari McLean's* AN EXAMINATION OF EGYPTIANS IN ALFABETH AND IMAGE, is another good source.
27: This trend of combining the ideals of the Egyptians with humanist proportions was continued in the late 20th century with for example Scala by *Martin Majoor.*
28: THE UNICODE STANDARD p.225

DESIGNING FOR THE CUT

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Somewhere along the line surface got stuck with being superficial. The quality of being on top became regarded as a lack of depth.

Beneath the surface and *on the surface…* I prefer *inside the surface*. A surface is function as well as decoration. I see no question of *either or* when it can be *both and*. The surface has every possibility to be the carrier of expressions at the same time as qualities. It covers solid form, like skin and upholstery, or defines volume, like bladders and tents. It should therefore be discussed as property, not as being *in* or *out* (in fashion terms).

To look upon fabric and patterns as surface indicate that they will embrace something eventually. A pattern in connection to industrial production is built up by a repeated element – a repeat. A repeat repeats itself as instructed until the process runs out of material or is disturbed. A repeat can be based, for example, on construction, material, texture and/or illustration. Running metres are never meant to stay on their roll, they are designed to be cut and applied. The application can be two- or three dimensional, but in either case it is a new format. The question of where you make the cut in a fabric is essential. In this act, the pattern ceases to be endless and becomes an image. Trained to work as a two-dimensional product designer, I am in one aspect a material refiner. I work with target groups and mood-board to create collections for the buyer to choose from. The buyers then decide how the surface is to be used.

Not knowing the cut when designing a surface is to be forced to be unclear. To be aware of the final embrace is to be able to set the frame, to know what to say, to whom and in what voice. If design is communication, surface should be used as a collaborative force, not as a vague argument by itself.

Form changes pattern, pattern changes form.

To work in a site-specific way is to relate your work to a specific site, instead of viewing your work as autonomous. Surface design is never truly autonomous, but occurs in the context of textile and pattern; it is seldom site-specific, but rather application-specific as in, for example, *wallpaper* or *bed linen*. In my practice I have introduced *site-specific* as a criteria for the application. With *site* I mean both *form* and/or *space*. To know the site is to know the cut and by that be able to sharpen the argument. It is a way to explain fabric and patterns as surface, not as addition. To define my work I use the word *site-specific surface design*. It is not necessarily a new area, but I regard it as a genre of its own, a possible hybrid between the concept of site-specificity, two-dimensional product design and visual communication. Sonia Delaunay used the word *simultaneous fabrics* for her practice: *» The cut of the dress is conceived by its creator simultaneously with its decoration. Afterwards, the cut and the decoration appropriate to the form is [sic] printed on the same fabric. The result is the first collaboration between the creator of the model and the creator of the fabric. «*[1]

Five repeats, 150×115-175 centimetre, 28 threads per centimetre. Five patterns to be produced by a digitally-controlled jacquard loom. Five designs tailored to a new textile concept for the underground transport system in Stockholm. Cut to be applied onto the seats and introduced via regular maintenance of the interior of the carriages. One new design every second year. Each seat being an individual component in the format of the whole.

300 dpi is the recommended resolution for an image going to print. 28 threads per centimetre is 71,12 dpi. Reproduced in this publication are all five repeats for the underground transport system in Stockholm, natural size for paper print (not weave). The visual and narrative aspects of the repeats are specific to their original application, never customised to be used like this. The cut and colours are handed over to the graphic designer of the present publication *(Jens Schildt)*. Form changes pattern, pattern changes form.

FOOTNOTES:
1: S 206, THE INFLUENCE OF PAINTING ON FASHION DESIGN IN THE NEW ART OF COLOR– THE WRITINGS OF ROBERT AND SONIA DELAUNAY, The Viking Press, New York, 1978

Author: Klara Persson

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PREFACE PART II

Other key concerns include *communication*, *positioning* and *audience*. Practice-based research in the making disciplines creates a need for new writing practices that investigate through a close engagement with *genre* and *style* related questions of *voice* and *subjectivity*, *point-of-view* and *perspective*, *gender* and *embodiment*, as well as the indivisibility of *meaning* and *materiality*. We therefore explore how elements of literary, critical and philosophical genres of inquiry can contribute to more resonant descriptions, insightful analyses and reflective accounts of art, craft and design practice. Those staking a claim for their practice to be regarded as a form of research – for our purposes, artists, designers, and those working with crafts – are ideally situated to extend the *forms* of critical writing, and thereby its generic assumptions and epistemic implications. At a time when the epistemological foundations of knowledge have been shown to be provisional and open to negotiation, such questions resonate far beyond art, craft and design research itself.

The revival of interest in practice-based research, alongside recent advances in feminist theory, has returned the issue of embodied experience and »situated knowledge« to the research agenda. We are now advised to consider art and design research not as a codified form of academic inquiry but rather as

... a cultural practice that is generated by and through the intersection with other cultural practices and that knowledge can therefore be understood as »situated« ... Situated knowledge is no longer decontextualized and removed from the social and cultural relations in which it is embedded. [2]

We can explore situated knowledge and identify forms of practice that demand more than the formal properties of reason alone by appropriating strategies, methods and concepts from other disciplinary and discursive regimes. Interdisciplinary (and also transdisciplinary) methodologies can supply the pragmatic techniques as well as conceptual innovations required to become not merely better scholars and critics, but also, as I have argued elsewhere, better designers. [3]

This course, perhaps above all, seeks to impart to its students a capacity for good judgment – which I would here define as an ability to recognise the relevant features in a situation, the appropriate combination of relevant factors and patterns, their balance, or lack of balance, and the weight they deserve in a particular context. This » way of seeing « is a skilled performance achieved only after exposure to a range of problems and the types of strategies employed for their resolution. [4] It shares much in common with the Aristotelian notion of *phronesis* (practical wisdom); like phronesis, it is acquired through training and practice, and the development of a given level of skill creates the conditions for still more skilled performances in the future. And as practical wisdom becomes second nature to the phronimos, so good judgment – an essential attribute of a successful designer and researcher – becomes second nature, or so we hope, to the person who can reason in a compelling, relevant and (why not?) entertaining manner.

Alongside communication, finally, research is concerned with *difference* – a state of affairs, a situation, or our relationship to a particular concept, or family of concepts, is changed through undertaking, understanding, or applying research. Within such research, the creation of new metaphors can subvert cultural and aesthetic expectations, unravel expected results, become, in *Gregory Bateson*'s phrase, *the difference that makes the difference.*

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FOOTNOTES:
1: From Autumn 2007, the course is established as an obligatory course unit for all Konstfack Masters students. It now goes under the name RESEARCH AND PRACTICE.
2: See Wolmark and Gates-Stuart (2002) RESEARCH AS CULTURAL PRACTICE in WORKING PAPERS IN ART AND DESIGN. Available online at www.artdes.herts.ac.uk/res2prac/ (accessed 15 May 2006).
3: See, for example: *Rolf Hughes*, THE DROWNING METHOD: ON GIVING AN ACCOUNT IN PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH IN CRITICAL ARCHITECTURE ed. *Jonathan Hill* and *Jane Rendell* (London and NY: Routledge, 2007). Also ROOM WITHIN A VIEW: A CONVERSATION ON WRITING (G) ARCHITECTURE by *Katja Grillner* and *Rolf Hughes* OASE 70 Special issue on Architecture and Literature (ed. *Klaske Havik*, TU Delft Faculty of Architecture, Netherlands, 2006). And GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF ONESELF in *Katja Grillner*, *Per Glembrandt*, *Sven-Olov-Wallenstein* (eds) 01.AKAD – EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH IN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN – Beginnings, AKAD through AxlBooks, Stockholm 2005, pp. 72-77.
4: *Thomas Kuhn*'s analysis of the role of »exemplars« in effective scientific problem-solving illustrates the centrality of reliable judgment, acquired through practice, to scientific inquiry and research. See Thomas Kuhn THE STRUCTURE OF SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTIONS, 1970: pp.187-91

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