

ACADEMIC ABSTRACTS

Food for Astronauts

Report

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Published in Japan. 2012.

Your XL-2

Your Extraordinary Life part 2.

New perspectives on sustainability

Abstract

This paper is the continuation of an endeavor called Your-Extraordinary-Life series, an attempt to read design for sustainability under a key that articulates communication design and art.

The Your-Extraordinary-Life series, is a collection of 7 videos (with a maximum length of 1 minute each) aiming at showing the extraordinariness of our ordinary lives, this to raise awareness on our environment hoping to seed in viewers a reminder that make them more aware of their surroundings and thus, or their/our role in the planet/society.

The sparking point of an initial academic paper on this, was a video called From Ushuaia to la Quiaca in which images from the Aurora Borealis is taken with the background of an Aurora-Austral singer: Gustavo Santaolalla. That video allowed us to work on visual connections and global responsibility.

The Your-Extraordinary-Life series was tested by means of a survey, and outcomes shown that if invited, (by means of art/design) people were willing to be more aware of their surroundings and reflect upon it.

In this new stage Your XL-2 we aim at measuring until which point an audiovisual labour can last in people's mind and invite them to act, accordingly.

Published in Brazil. ISSD 2011.

From Hubs to Habitats

Sensitive communication and indigenous knowledge in the pursuit of urban quality of life

Abstract

According to some aboriginal communities, there are hubs around which habitats are built, e.g. an African artist makes a sculpture of a pregnant woman and a member of the tribe, while passing by, leaves a feather on it, another leaves a leaf, another a piece of intestine etc., each one goes adding something to the mud of it and thus it becomes not only an object but a gravity centre for the community (Rosa 2007).

What could contemporary cities learn from these ancient but disdained ways? Is it possible to extrapolate such knowledge using the linkage art-design-architecture to create and recreate meaningful habitats where communication brings about well being? Could traditional knowledge penetrate the collective imaginary so that shifts towards more sustainable ways of communicating start to emerge?

The aim of this paper is to offer a background regarding the sacredness of communication and its possible connections to design. This, by highlighting the communication ways of the indigenous community living around El Dorado lake in Colombia.

Possible ways of applying the knowledge embedded in these practices are suggested by exposing examples from a range of public interventions worldwide.

Published in Shanghai. Cumulus conference. 2011

Radical Zero

The pertinence of mental design

Abstract

Sustainability asks for memory. But, in the midst of contemporary speediness how to stop and bring back: ancient knowledge, good practices and experiences that could be pillars to reach more sustainable cities? How to keep updated without memory when as post-modern humankind we need to make a defragmentation of our mind everyday in order to absorb more information and be proficient with information exchanges? Video-art may be an answer.

Based on the concept of zero, the paper moves from the void and uncertainty that such zero may comprise, to the positive space where uncertainty stands as a metaphor for action. The topic will be unfolded by exposing the relevance of audiovisual works as enduring/continuing mementos born in the interstice art-architecture-design.

Three cases are exposed to attest that in a swiftness era, video and new platforms such as YouTube and public art have a great role to play on young

consumers/producers/designers. Platforms leaving no trace in the environment, but a real imprint in peoples mind.

On a second level, the intention is to set up a discussion regarding material culture in a non infinite resources world whereas zero becomes an on-going starting point, an invitation to act HERE and NOW with the power of memorable technology.

Published in India. Lens conference, Bangalore 2010.

Creativity in Black and White

Abstract

Photographic-collection portraying urban bottom-up creativity as a crucial element within the dynamics of contemporary cities.

It displays invisible worlds able to suggest scenarios in which people re-consider lifestyles facing shortages at all levels (material, moral, ethic, aesthetic). A positive approach based on humankind's creativity traced in Jerusalem, Bogota, Istanbul, Palermo.

Starting from a Photographic collection, this paper reflects on diffuse creativity: a creativity emerging from social defeat processes which actors overcome in a rather bizarre way based in the art of self-arranging. The manuscript reports a Ph.D. research aiming at giving visibility to creative practices in the urban realm: Enhancing Sustainable Behaviors by means of innovative communication Strategies. The paper portrays three study case cities, which expose three main actors (Bottom up-Creative Communities-Top down). As conclusion it shows Design possibilities to help citizens admitting bizarre/incongruent behaviors which are sustainable by helping re-dimensioning, reorganizing and suspending mainstream conditions in everyday-lives.

Published in Ireland IFHE (2008) and Wuxi, China (2011) Re-written as Sustainability in Black and White.

Illegally Sweet

Abstract

This paper aims at firstly, clarify, make a difference and explain why is it that Coca is not cocaine and that as such, this plant has lots to tell regarding consumer citizenship in third world countries, although not only there. Secondly, to develop the following idea: sustainable consumption, in order to go really global, should -also- address the thin border between legal and illegal, or better, we should tackle the topic of drugs consumption and the fact that third world countries produce much of what developed countries consume.

Our aim then, is working on the following questions:

1. How can we help choosing sustainable lifestyles, which overcome the borders between what's legal (in northern countries) and what's not in the South?
2. Could legalization bring about any kind of social sustainability?
3. Would all this fit into the long-term global goals for sustainable development?

Paper presented in Berlin. PERL conference 2012.

<https://eng.inn.no/project-sites/living-responsibly/publications>

Fulgurar bestiarius

"Deep in the Garden, as dusk falls, old gramophones spin glittering sounds whilst clicking insects cast vast moving shadows. Haunting whistles rise and fall and sparkling flowers dance to their own tune

Take a journey through a magical world as the Botanic Gardens famous Glasshouses are transformed into a fascinating nocturnal trail of unusual and immersive installations."

Power Plant in Edingburg press release - GroundWork Agency

Abstract

In the realm of design for sustainability, new and more efficient efforts to convey its significance are continuously being created; nonetheless the effect in the actual everyday life and behaviors of citizens is vague. Having that communication concern in mind, the paper moves along two ideas: one starting from attainableutopias.uk projects envision: a new kind of metadesign that integrates whatever makes people happy with processes that also nurture the environment, which help us reaching a wider meaning of what could design for sustainability be. Second idea is that public design is able not only to convey the message but to make people experience well-being beyond the interventions and by these means leave in the public a feeling, and more important a reflection that lasts on the long term run.

In those lines, it is necessary to look at the intermittent signals that crop up from a merge of creativity, a top down one coming from professional creatives mixed with a bottom up one, coming from people themselves. To assess these premises some study cases are reviewed.

Published in Brazil. ISSD Conference. 2009

Wunderkammern

Abstract

Small, Local, Open, Connected call it SLOC, there is where according to sustainability experts (Manzini 2009) the dynamics of cities are or should be moving towards. Now, this paper starts by describing the big, global, closed and disconnected reality of a contemporary urban landscape that has been invaded by dazzling glass-buildings. This, contrasted with other architectures that are only visible when we look at the city grounds and its shadows where promising ways of living crop up.

Our quest here is to attempt arriving at a stage where those extreme poles meet, and from there, try to assess if those are keen to merge.

The work is based on a photographic exercise and subsequent collection named: USE

(evoking Multiplicities Uncertain States of Europe but including also Bogota.) and stimulated by the fluid thought of Z. Bauman, followed by some examples focusing on architecture presenting in particular the case of a German Magazine:

Der Wedding a publication of, as their editors describe it: Alltagskultur, or the culture of the everyday.

Paper accompanying the Wunderkammern series photographic work.

PLAYING L-EGO

A creative joining of fakes, fools, feelings and food in a fluid flexible world

"We need local centers of creative economies based on talented people, coming either from higher levels of education or from less restrictions on immigration; financing in the form of public R&D investment and by private venture capital and a culture of creativity stemming from a rich cultural life and from a social structure that focuses on equality"

Pekka Himanen (Finish PhD, artist and Philosopher)
At the Creative Capital Conference.
Amsterdam 2005.

Abstract

Maybe in the near future, there will be unbeatable ID identifiers at borders and airports, maybe not; maybe mobile phones will be tele-transportation gadgets, maybe not; maybe men are going to settle on Venus, Mars or Pluto maybe not. However, despite foreseen and unforeseen changing factors, one thing is for sure: citizens of the planet will be moving.

Moving to do, to be or better, to become. Success of the human race seems to depend on how migratory populations settle and move again, in their dynamics, in how those will fulfill their basic and not so basic needs, in how they will build up their identities

on the road, and in how they will get interconnected with other identities on that road. In short it will all depend on how flexible they might glide into the flow.

This paper exposes possible junctions of life quality based on the everyday moving assemblage of features which migrant folks are experiencing while arriving to new milieus having to perform a high deal of creativity in order to re-create their identities; migrant folks bringing along a whole load of knowledge, practices and valuable aims, but also a load of fears and lacks that make their journeys a risky task. How do they face these daily challenges? How do they improve their surroundings and daily lives?. How these creative moving populations should act to build up not a future, but an urgent present? Tasks that make part of what could be named as: self design.

The aim is not just to portray the migratory move facing the challenge of, as Giddens and Beck state: self-identity, a designing necessity building up self meaning and its incidence in the also moving Design world, but to ask, as Designers: what do we do for the world?

Señales De Humo

Intro

Existe vida inteligente en la tierra?

En el capítulo 5 de su libro *Un Punto Azul Pálido* Carl Sagan, físico, astrólogo y comunicador científico, nos invita a imaginar que seres extraterrestres navegan el cosmos tratando de encontrar vida inteligente. A un cierto punto llegan a la Tierra y dicen, Sagan:

"Cuando tomamos imágenes con un metro de resolución o mayor definición aún, descubrimos que las líneas rectas entrecruzadas que presentan ciudades y las líneas rectas más largas que las conectan con otros centros urbanos están llenas de unos seres aerodinámicos y multicolores, de pocos metros de largo, que avanzan educadamente uno detrás de otro en lenta, larga y ordenada procesión. Son muy pacientes. Una corriente de seres se detiene en los ángulos rectos, a fin de permitir que otra corriente pueda seguir adelante. Periódicamente les es devuelto el favor. De noche encienden dos luces potentes en su parte delantera para poder ver por donde van. Algunos, una privilegiada minoría, se retiran a unas pequeñas casas para pasar la noche, una vez finalizada la jornada laboral. No obstante, la mayoría de ellos no tienen techo y duermen en las calles.

Por fin! Hemos hallado la fuente de toda esa tecnología de forma de vida predominante sobre el planeta. Evidentemente, las calles de las ciudades y las carreteras de la campiña, han sido construidas a su beneficio. Podríamos pensar que estamos empezando a comprender realmente la vida en la Tierra. Y quizá tengamos razón.

Si solamente pudiéramos mejorar un poco el grado de definición, descubriríamos que existen unos minúsculos parásitos que entran y salen a menudo de los organismos

dominantes. Al parecer deben [] jugar un papel importante, porque el organismo dominante inmóvil se pone en marcha justo después de ser reinfestado por un parásito, y vuelve a pararse instantes antes de que el parásito sea expulsado. Esto sí que resulta enigmático. Pero nadie dijo que la vida en la Tierra fuera fácil de entender."

Movilidad, un factor fundamental para entender cómo el cambio climático sigue sobre ruedas, acelerando y es causa fundamental del demasiado nombrado calentamiento global. Ahora, los automóviles con su significativa contribución al efecto invernadero: no-van-a-desaparecer, ni siquiera van a ser reemplazados por, por ejemplo, el carro eléctrico (para esto ver un documental/denuncia llamado: Who Killed the Electric Car). La industria del petróleo aunque precedera es fuerte, vende, compra, manipula. Así que, cómo lidiar con las movilidad en las ciudades? Esos rápidos centros humanos en los cuales se construye la: civilización?, qué ejemplos hay de movilidad alternativa? Existirán soluciones que no necesiten una complicada infraestructura, tecnología de punta, altos presupuestos etc., para hacer la vida humana, y aquella de la atmósfera más vivibles?

UFOs

Unidentified Future Objects

A suggestion on civilization brought from creative bottom-up instances

Abstract

"If an alien from outer space were asked why on Earth cities exist, he or she would no doubt answer that its inhabitants use those to move around, mainly to practice the art of shopping"

BAS DE LEEW

Head of the integrated resource management unit

UNEP

Constraints at all levels from time and space to tolerance and creativity affect contemporary cities/citizens.

Within this urban ambit where material and immaterial resources are limited, the aim of this paper is to give account of the promising value that a bunch of subjects and their bizarre objects, (whose value at this point of time, and space is almost invisible) can be taken to other layers of society; subjects who by chance more than by choice, don't go performing the art of shopping on planet Earth.

The paper describes who these dwellers are, focusing on the solving technologies/artefacts that these dwellers invent and re-invent on everyday basis and that come from non-conventional tactics backed mainly on their primal creativity.

Published as part of the Changing the Change proceedings. Turin 2008.