

MADE  
IN CHINA  
DESIGNED  
IN CALIFORNIA  
CRITICISED  
IN EUROPE

*Amsterdam Design Manifesto*

PRODUCT DESIGN  
GRAPHIC DESIGN  
INTERACTION DESIGN  
INTERIOR DESIGN  
LIGHTING DESIGN  
FASHION DESIGN  
SERVICE DESIGN  
MEDIA DESIGN  
GAME DESIGN  
EXPERIENCE DESIGN  
SOCIAL DESIGN  
WEB DESIGN  
USER EXPERIENCE DESIGN  
URBAN DESIGN  
SOUND DESIGN  
INDUSTRIAL DESIGN  
TEXTILE DESIGN  
EXHIBITION DESIGN  
FOOD DESIGN  
BEHAVIOUR DESIGN  
PROTEST DESIGN  
INTERFACE DESIGN  
BIO DESIGN  
INFORMATION DESIGN  
SOFTWARE DESIGN  
SPATIAL DESIGN  
MOTION GRAPHIC DESIGN  
TYPE DESIGN  
COMMUNICATION DESIGN  
VISUAL DESIGN  
ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN  
GENDER DESIGN  
PRIVACY DESIGN  
SPACE TRAVEL DESIGN  
CRITICAL DESIGN  
INCLUSIVE DESIGN  
TRANSFORMATION DESIGN  
ETHICAL DESIGN  
LANDSCAPE DESIGN  
STRATEGIC DESIGN  
SELF DESIGN  
ORGANISATION DESIGN  
SUSTAINABLE DESIGN  
PROCESS DESIGN  
RELATIONAL DESIGN  
DESIGN THINKING  
DILEMMA-DRIVEN DESIGN  
EXCLUSIVE DESIGN  
ENGINEERING DESIGN  
MOLECULAR DESIGN  
GENETIC DESIGN  
INTERACTION DESIGN  
PACKAGING DESIGN  
GENERIC DESIGN  
TOTAL DESIGN

*We are a  
designing  
species*

Victor Margolin

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Geert Lovink

*making is reflecting*

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Luke Munn  
Max Bruinsma  
Miriam Rasch

*The design  
discipline  
has fallen  
apart*

# MADE IN CHINA DESIGNED IN CALIFORNIA CRITICISED IN EUROPE

**AMSTERDAM  
DESIGN  
MANIFESTO  
@DROOG 2019**

**EVERYTHING  
CAN AND WILL BE  
DESIGNED**

**ANYTHING  
CAN BE LABELED  
DESIGN**

Made In China, Designed in California, Criticised in Europe  
Amsterdam Design Manifesto

This Manifesto is a collaboration between The Institute of  
Network Cultures and The Image Society, part of the @Droog  
project 2019.

ISBN 978-90-826346-0-0 / NUR 656

Published by The Image Society 2019

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# INTRO

When everything is destined to be designed, design disappears into the everyday. We simply don't see it anymore because it's everywhere. This is the vanishing act of design. At this moment design registers its redundancy: our products, environments and services have been comprehensively improved. Everything has been designed to perfection and is under a permanent upgrade regime. Within such a paradigm, design is enmeshed with the capitalist logic of reproduction. But this does not come without conflicts, struggles and tensions. Chief among these is the situation of design in a planetary procession toward decay. Our dispense culture prompts a yearning for longevity. The computational compulsion to delete brings alive a desire to retrieve objects, ideas and experiences that refuse obsolescence. Society is growing more aware of sustainability and alert to the depletion of this world. For the ambitious designer, it's time to take the next step: designing the future as a collective relation attuned to life.

# I, YOU, WE PARTICIPATE BUT THEY PROFIT.

Atelier Populaire

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# DESIGN THINKING IS NOT ABOUT DESIGN.

*Speaking Truth  
to the Platform*

**DESIGN CHANGES  
FROM A DISCIPLINE  
INTO A BELIEF**

*Design my Lucid Dreams*

# 01

*Design has gone viral*

## The Design Discipline FROM CRAFT TO INCANTATION

*We simply don't see it anymore because  
it's everywhere.*

Design is an incantation. Design becomes a chant, a mantra, an invocation sprinkled across disciplines in hopes that it will work its magic. The simple beginnings of graphic design have proliferated into design thinking, design research and design methods. Product design has been joined by transformation design, exclusive design and dilemma-driven design. Design technology strives to control the implementation and operation of technical systems and practices. The question with all of this “design” is no longer what it is but what it even means. To identify and transform the problem, that is the problem of design.

We are designing the world, from the grand metropolis all the way down to the humble kitchen mug. Design schools pop up everywhere, and while a growing number of professions evaporate as a result of automation, mechanization and digitization, *bullshit jobs*, as David Graeber termed them, are emerging all around, not the least in design.

According to Graeber, about three-quarters of all jobs in Western society consist of meaningless pastime; they do not contribute in any way to a better world. The creative sector is a beehive of bullshit jobs, in which everything goes down within a fashionably artistic matrix of brainstorm sessions and concept development by way of hackathons, expert meetings, sales pitches and prototypes. Co-working spaces are the endpoint of labour before the algorithm takes command.

*Design schools pop up everywhere!*

The termination of design as a distinct discipline was heralded when Design Thinking started conquering the world as therapeutic management strategy. Design was transformed in two ways. On the one hand, it became a formulaic process, driven by technology. At the same time, it radically expanded its scope, becoming holistic and even healing. Design Thinking is seen as a way to “creatively” solve problems by putting humans center stage as “users.” This places the process on rails, a fixed trajectory of defining, building and testing, all the way from prototype through to final product. Invariably the result is a technical solution. Such a model limits

reflection to the pragmatic – and paradigmatic – procedural steps: making is reflecting. God forbid that our reflection leaves us empty handed.

# DESIGN SUFFERS FROM INFLATION, BECOMING ABSORBED INTO ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING.

*designer and consumer merge.*

Design, meanwhile, has been moving away from concrete applications in objects and industry towards immaterial and virtual outcomes for quite some time. In the process it has acquired a rather vague demeanor – a surprising turn for a discipline once famed for its hands-on, can-do, pragmatic character. Design Thinking is a case in point. Design Thinking is not about design, but about management depleted of aesthetics, a managerial practice geared

at unpicking the fatally entangled processes of businesses and industry. Over time this practice evolves from a focus on objects to become a way of working, a way of life, of thinking. But, unlike ideology critique, design thinking is a process that dispenses with the moment of critique. Design changes from a discipline into a belief, whose followers can perform miracles by transforming any mundane situation or thought into something special and exclusive. Bathe your product three times in the fount of design, and it emerges as something more luxurious and lucrative. We've moved from discipline to discourse, from discourse to ideology, and from ideology to pure faith — accompanied, of course, by our hallowed business models and revenue prospects.

At the same time, design has become a venting vehicle for the masses. Design is replacing a pack of verbs: cooking becomes food design, leading becomes management design, organizing becomes process design, maturing becomes self-design. Incrementally, design starts to define a new societal order, ushering in the design society with designer babies and designer drugs. The design society is not content with a focus on innovation and capitalism anymore, but infiltrates every nook and cranny of the public and private realms, from climate change to wellbeing, from social intercourse to self-assessment. Automation has afforded the affluent citizen of the Western world both more space to shop and more time to exercise their creative chops. Here,

designer and consumer merge. The ubiquity of software has meant that suddenly everyone is a designer. How hard can it be? The discipline has been democratized from cross-discipline to anti-discipline. But what have we lost, now that craft doesn't count anymore and design has become a lubricant for any social process imaginable? Design suffers from inflation, becoming absorbed into anything and everything.

*We've moved from  
discipline to discourse,  
from discourse to  
ideology, and from  
ideology to pure faith.*

Now that design increasingly infiltrates neighboring fields of activity, to the point where even work ethics have become a design issue, we can take stock. Design has become the glaze to touch up our society's moldy spores. In cheering up a fouled environment, design also adds a new attitude, an artistic impulse, a creative boost. Design is the saviour, the silver bullet. In a saturated market, design becomes an economic stimulant, revitalizing obsolete consumer products, mind-numbing jobs and discarded ideas. Design acts as an ecosystem, producing a precariously dynamic balance between capital and consumption. Or at least until something can no longer be altered and sold as new, and the cycle grinds to a definitive deadlock.

Autonomy – electing to be isolated and unfettered – is cultivated in Dutch artistic circles, and sold internationally as critical practice. Yet in the Netherlands, hardly any professional art is being made without substantial government involvement. In many cases, a plan for producing an artwork is proposed to a funding committee, resulting in “socially engaged, autonomous artworks,” which can never really be independent. Rather, this practice of “public art” results in government-approved, and therefore impotent, critique that flies in the face of the paradigmatic “autonomy” art should cherish according to official dogma. Hans van Houwelingen – a truly independent artist in public space – aptly summarized the paradox: “One wants the art one doesn’t want, and vice-versa: one doesn’t want the art one wants.”

*Design is not art, according to artists.*

We all know that art has never been autonomous. There have always been clients. Both art and design were – and still are – made to a large extent on commission. Art is meant to provide meaning and reflection in museums, galleries and art fairs. Design, on the other hand, is made by the industry to be sold in shops, online or offline. But these outlets, be they gallery or shop, have grown ever more alike in the past decades. Museums increasingly have become environments in which we shop for emotional impressions and art paraphernalia. Galleries have entered into competition with the retail sector, racking up substantially higher visitor numbers. Biennials have seamlessly merged with city promotion,

and art fairs, of course, have been markets all along. Both design and art have become ensnared in a straitjacket of regulations and control, including monitoring of target audiences and marketing targets. As a result, their outlets have become increasingly difficult to distinguish from each other.

*Art and design are battling*

In the age of mechanical reproduction, art too has become reproducible. Today artworks are emulated and cloned, editioned and versioned, just like design. The era of originality and exclusivity belongs to the past. As a digital object, art can be uploaded and downloaded. Released into the networked wild, images become poor facsimiles, used and abused; copies are indistinguishable from originals. In this merciless online environment, concepts are snatched up and quickly commodified. Art has become a marketable product as any other. In sum: art and design are now all but identical. In their own way, design and art both struggle with this tumultuous late-neoliberal condition, amongst rising tensions between people and systems and other dilemmas triggered by the digital revolution. We are witnessing a theatrical competition between all creative disciplines and media, which are looking more and more alike, shaped as they all are by the forces of digitization and medialization, disciplined by the merging of software tools and distribution channels which they all use. Traffic on the platforms thickens. Art and design are battling for the same seconds of attention – the global currency of the 21st century.

THE VISIBLE  
WORLD IS  
NO LONGER  
A REALITY  
AND THE  
UNSEEN  
WORLD IS  
NO LONGER  
A DREAM.

William Butler Yeats

*We're the united  
colors of design*

# 02

## Glitch & Glamour IMAGES WITHOUT AESTHETICS

Does the bombardment of images we undergo on a daily basis influence the aesthetics of design? An imageless society is unthinkable today, regardless of what you might think of its contents. The visual avalanche thunders on, unrelenting. Nevertheless, the universe of images needs liberation. By cheerfully stripping everything of its meaning, Dada freed art and life when both had sunk into utter meaninglessness in the trenches of World War One. In the same way, the current wave of design will free itself from visual culture, which increasingly overlaps with the internet. Clean up your archives! Trash all subscriptions, channels, profiles and accounts. Nothing lost and a world to gain!

Forget visualization and discover theory. That is the mantra of a growing number of professional designers. There is more conversation, discussion, writing, reading and listening than ever before amongst designers. The liberation of the aesthetic image, spawned in the past century, has been analyzed in detail. For the general public, it resulted in the Great Common Perception: the meme. Provided with a caption and a category, every image can be incorporated into the sprawling fun house of memeland, becoming a cartoon, a caricature, a joke. We're done with it, as much as we are done with the cabal of artistic and financial experts, who have snatched pilfered images from the public domain, online or offline, and locked them up in global stock archives where they can only be seen through bars. Watermarked and barricaded behind paywalls, images become pay to view. To combat such commodification and commercialization, new aesthetics needs free space – most of all headspace. The sweeping visual culture has grinded our perceptual skills to a pulp.

We need to recalibrate the image and our eyes, before we allow visibility to once again regain its in-your-face prominence. Such a retraining of perception will require a digital detox on a mass scale, which for sure doesn't appear on any horizon we're looking at. For the foreseeable future the status of the image will only further descend into the sea of noise. Sensation now takes command in the realm of perception. We live in a society of feelings, not

visions. Feelings now occupy the territory of control. Algorithmic machines modulate how we sense environments. Data extraction machines exploit and financialize our response to the world. Indeed, how we respond to situations is primary in the engineering of pre-emption. To anticipate is to control.

# FORGET VISUALIZATION AND DISCOVER THEORY

*images become pay to view.*

The 21st century image is purely technical. Seeing has become mediated by the universal lens: the smartphone. We swipe, "like," and move on, annihilating the gaze and any real aesthetic judgement. At the same time, the resolution of the image is often better than we can see with the naked eye.

# THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY IMAGE IS PURELY TECHNICAL

Zooming in, the molecular image becomes all-encompassing, megapixels unfurling to reveal entire worlds. Roving through these luminous RGB grids, we lose any critical distance. The technical and digital challenge is to develop the visual in ever more dynamic and unimaginable directions. Fast networks and advanced technologies reinforce the tendency of the image to gain prominence beyond the physical. Generated by sensor chips and enhanced through machine learning, each depiction is more spectacular and seductive than the last. In today's visual culture, images are more real than real. There is nothing beyond the image. After Virginia Woolf: "Nothing seems real, unless I post it."

*new aesthetics needs free space*

*images are more real than real*  
Still, the real can't be discarded so easily. A longing for matter, beyond the immaterial and somnambulist reality of the new, empty image, drives current image makers to 3D software packages and printers. Maker labs, equipped with the latest techno tools, pop up everywhere, in schools, libraries, and neighbourhoods. These are the workshops of the crafted

# AESTHETICS WITHOUT ETHICS ARE COSMETICS

Ulay

image of the future. In this post-digital stage, we once again add objects to the physical realm, broadening our world and returning design to its haptic origins. Designers exchange knowledge, share tools, and collectively develop a mentality appropriate to this new social design.

Outside the maker spaces and fab labs, designers roam the land in a quest for authentic and crafts-based processes for growing food and other products. This seems to be a direct response to the heavy-handed discipline of design, which perpetuates the consumer industry. Another example of the new craving for craft is the design hacking of the technically complex objects that surround us. From smartphones to Apple Watches, smart key finders and digital assistants, all gadgets are being dissected to critically probe their design. It won't be long until designers will follow up such analytical exercises with a radically altered view, which may once again stir up our design-filled brains.

# WE LIVE IN A SOCIETY OF FEELINGS, NOT VISIONS.

The outlines of a novel post-digital craft slowly appear, even in experiments that do not surpass the level of preliminary probing. The fluid, round and distorted aesthetics of the 21st century sharply contrast with the rigid, serial formal language of Modernism, which has ingrained itself within design

*we see lumbering, torn, layered  
unfinished images*

for decades. We know that new social meanings become apparent first in art and design. Just as Piet Mondriaan, in his quadrangular way, once sensed a budding world of systems, today's fluid and hybrid post-digital aesthetics mimics the liquid social cohesion of the network society, in which individuals coagulate before swiftly detaching. Offset against smoothly rendered floating forms that look like elastic cells and cylinders, we see lumbering, torn, layered, unfinished images, with cut-off limbs, bent perspectives and distorted landscapes. It is precisely the imperfection of these glitches that gestures to a new style, a new aesthetic, challenging our fragmented imagination anew.

*New craving  
for craft  
is the  
DESIGN  
HACKING  
of technically  
complex objects.*

# FORM FOLLOWS CODE

*Fight  
Organized  
Dis-  
traction*

**WE LIKE, SWIPE AND SHARE  
OURSELVES TO EXHAUSTION.**

# 03

## The System World STOP FOLLOWING START LEADING

In some respects, our current society is reminiscent of the tragic fate of the late-socialist societies of the former Eastern Bloc, China and Cuba, even though they were based on an ideology of equality, solidarity, and communality. Paradoxically, the gospel of permanent change and constant renewal has produced a deep sense of stagnation. Stasis seems to characterize our contemporary condition, a situation in which the whole world is watching the same football match or sharing the same video. What are the interests of the great digital powers, whose services enable us to do exactly the same thing as everyone else? How does this monoculture change our lives? We call it “social media,” but how social is it really?

We like, swipe and share ourselves to exhaustion. Who would have thought that one day, the entire world population would be hooked on sharing the same information over and over again on the same internet platform?

# HOW DOES MONO- CULTURE CHANGE OUR LIVES?

How do designers tackle the financialization of society? Or the entanglement of interests, which are often associated with mass manipulating individuals, multinational businesses or dictators? The designer's visual statement, reflecting an individual position in a personal style, has vanished in the default settings of 2D and 3D software, in Photoshop and on Instagram and other production and information platforms. We proudly think we fathom Silicon Valley's

libertarian agendas, but at the same time don't want to be bugged by a bad conscience. Consequently, we give up the impact of design to the digital powers that be. If everything grinds to a halt, designers are called in to disentangle the mess. We employ design to save the world – by maintaining the status quo.

# NUDGING SILICON VALLEY!

*What are the interests of the great digital powers*

Contrarian voices can only come from strong design communities, who dare to break away from the repressive frameworks of capital and the numbing climate of authoritarian politics and business. It's our turn now – forget the workshop, meditation and the process. Communicate! Conquer space, both in the public and private domain! Hackers and designers unite – the new revolutions will take place in the digital realm, via social media. Humans against the systems of control. Stop following, start leading!

*Communicate!*

I  
DESIGN  
U  
DESIGN  
I  
REVOLT  
U  
REVOLT

# 04

## Design goes everywhere CREATIVITY FOR ALL

In the aftermath of the democratization of design, creativity has become hedged in by capital and the market. Emerging first in UK policy circles under Tony Blair, the notion of “the creative industry” gained firm prominence with Richard Florida’s 2002 book *The Creative Class*. But the association of creativity and the consumer market has been a foundation of capitalism since the start: consumption marketed as self-expression. But this creativity was always carefully mediated and managed, becoming a creativity by proxy: the “creative industry” monopolized creativity and consumers followed. Certainly there have always been designers with both cultural motives and cultural knowledge, but their

products were often too exclusive for the market of daily amenities. Or they were watered down by the industry, becoming the decorative icing of one-size-fits-all products. This “treason of the creative class,” to draw upon Julien Benda’s *trahison des clercs*, is echoed by an endless stream of design products, by the gentrification of neighborhoods once built for the lower income classes, and by the retreat of a *laissez faire* government, which leaves art and culture – in other words, creativity – to the market.

# THE MARRIAGE OF CULTURE AND BUSINESS CONFRONTS US WITH THE NEED TO CHALLENGE THE NEW STATUS QUO.

Although the instrumentalization of creativity within neoliberal market models is increasingly coming under attack, the critique is too little, too late. The mar-

riage of culture and business confronts us with the need to challenge the new status quo. The creative industry is always in a hurry. Rapid prototyping has no time for trial and error, let alone for building up a network of trust. Craving a quick profit, creative industry policy is happy to pull tried-and-true methods from the shelves of other domains. Urgency is key. After all, the economic benefit that the cultural sector can bring is time limited. Free enterprise, profitability, and market impact are more important than quality of content.

But although hard to measure in cold cash, quality of content is added value, and the creation of cultural quality is a precondition for making the world a better, more creative place. Rather than just repackaging products, the creativity needed to make services special and successful demands a new approach. A hybrid realm is emerging within the field of design, which we encounter in both the cultural domain and the market. Design is turning into a wondrously inclusive moniker for the most diverse activities and disciplines. The design of our environment, the quality of our food, the structuring and accessibility of our information – all of these are now important design issues, alongside the design of nature, the design of sustainable fashion, and the design of consumer behaviour.

Design has swallowed the world, but its potential for creating a flourishing future remains unexplored. In fact, the world can never be totally subsumed by

design. Nor can the future. In this sense, design is always out of time, caught in a spiral of perpetual catch-up. The world presents to design its greatest asset: untimeliness. In a digital media condition of real-time regimes, the untimely offers to design an occasion to refuse subsumption by technologies of control. The techno-society of capture is only able to exploit that which is measured in time.

# DESIGN HAS SWALLOWED THE WORLD

When design dispenses with techniques of containment the conditions for inventing other worlds are made possible. At this point, design confronts its moment of crisis: how to orchestrate a world beyond calculation, without plan, free of intention? Such questions are alien to design. The future of design requires a strategy of unfaithfulness. Design must become internally promiscuous.

Because profit-oriented practices are often tightly managed, we often think that creativity is only possible under idealistic and unconstrained conditions. You can either have creative freedom or corporate control. Yet this hard binary distinction is obsolete.

Cultural categories are being annulled, rules are becoming discarded and disciplines are losing their frameworks. Increasingly, opposites merge: text and image; left and right; culture and commerce; science and glamour. Even obscure life visions turn out to be dynamic factors in society. Ideally, design takes up a strategic position—right in the midst of this contested terrain. For those who doubt such a middle position is possible, Hollywood has already provided the proof: legendary movies that successfully walk the tightrope between pulp and run-of-the-mill blockbuster. These films epitomize creative works that contain incredible amounts of imagination and reflection while still raking in millions of dollars in revenue. Whether creativity belongs to design for culture or for the market, for marketing and management or for science and art, it is a dynamic field, permanently under construction.

*employ design to save the world*

# CREATIVE FREEDOM OR CORPORATE CONTROL?

THINGS  
ARE GETTING  
BETTER  
ALL THE  
TIME

*Overweight implies the loss of the body  
as a face.*

INTERACTION  
BECOMES  
TRANSACTION

*Reclaim the  
Social*

*Design is the saviour*

05

Praise the Process  
DESIGN AS REAL  
WORLD EXERCISE

*Forget the rest, planet earth is best!*

Just what is it that makes today's design so different, so appealing? We observe that – visually or verbally – designers today refuse to take a position with respect to pressing questions. If Made in China encapsulates some of the thorny issues around labor, environment, and politics, designers obsessively imagine a future Designed in California. Here we enter a pastel-painted neverland that somehow combines the halcyon days of yesteryear with a blinkered hope for tomorrow. Things are getting better all the time. Passion for design is limited to the social effects of new technologies within a process-oriented context. Designers who pretend to be focused

# DESIGN HAS COLONIZED THE COMPUTER AND ITS ASSOCIATED INTERFACES, LEAVING IT NOWHERE TO GO.

on innovation scrutinize the potential and aesthetics of “smart” materials and technologies, delivering their probes as design objects, sometimes as prototypes for the industry, often as speculative design for debate and potentially as sources of inspiration for

an artwork or a commercially marketable product – but mostly just for the heck of it. Designers flock to where “total solutions” are being pursued; an endlessly adaptable society of smart homes, smart cities, smart people, built on algorithms which, for all their self-learning intelligence, can only ever reproduce existing conditions. In this realm, cyclical dynamics might be likened to a hamster wheel: new becomes obsolete, becomes vintage, becomes retro, becomes new. Ad infinitum. Given these conditions, design seems to have become a preliminary stage, a preparatory task striving to make tomorrow look reassuringly like today.

## WHAT’S LEFT TO DO?

Design has colonized the computer and its associated interfaces, leaving it nowhere to go. Our digital surfaces have been iterated, focus-grouped, and A/B tested to death. Computer-mediated communication is finished. Facebook and Instagram have already been visually resolved. It works like it works. What’s left to do? Heated debates over bugs and complications have gone silent. The development of computers and software has reached the point of saturation. We’re done with thinking about the architecture of the digital world: current software standards are doing just fine. Everyone can use and handle the apps, which, together with social media, have become as mundane as amenities like water and electricity. Phenomenal technology has been

reduced to banal infrastructure. The only thing that counts is looking fab on Insta. Everything starts to look the same, with the same gestures and poses, the same camera defaults, tags and filters, published through the same templates. All of this to the detriment of standards for visual communication. The result is a flattening of visual culture that is widely observed, but never addressed. There seem to be no alternatives in sight, not even underground.

In today's design circles, massive effort goes into making prototypes, which due to their unicity are instantly museum-ready. Maybe there's a future for

# EVERYTHING STARTS TO LOOK THE SAME

design there, in the hallowed halls of high culture. But what really counts is the critical experiment with new and sustainable materials in relationship to humans. How do humans relate to their "smart" environment? We are being encapsulated by digital

systems and increasingly struggle to find the exit – if in fact we want to get out at all, and risk losing out on all that comfort and convenience. Some designers are wrestling themselves free of the constraints of the digital straightjacket, reinventing themselves, exploring and meditating, yearning to again touch and feel the materialities behind apparently smart and invisible processes. Slowly, their material exercises give rise to a somewhat ethereal school of makers, but the approach remains technical. Within this mechanical context, designers engage in exercises with an ethical and social awareness, but fail to take collaborative responsibility for serious production on a scale that surpasses that of small crafts.

*Design acts as an ecosystem*

Did designers bring this on themselves by stressing the process as final outcome? Or is this process-centric practice the last-ditch response of the designer, now that design has become mainstream? In the digital universe, everyone is a designer. The professional designer retreats, pondering alternative practices, in a search of a new order, a new quest. How can we turn this retreat around? Is there a way to flip the orientation of professionally trained designers? We say: get social for real! Click the link saying "consequences"! Ignore the standards and platforms, and collaboratively take the wheel of technological development.

*creative industry is always in a hurry*

WHAT IS  
LIFE?  
WHY DOES  
IT DEPEND ON  
CONSUMING  
OTHER  
LIFE?

Douglas Rushkoff

*All-inclusive*

06

*designer and consumer merge.*

## Hooked on Incentives SCHIZOID BATTLES AGAINST CONSUMERISM

Next to food and sleep, design seems to have become a primary existential need. Nothing beats the fun of endlessly surfing the web, of clicking on and on in pursuit of new clothes and knickknacks. We want to keep swiping; we also want the willpower to stop swiping: this is the micro-battle we face each day, a constant wrestle with impulse-control and the temptations of consumer society.

The lure of the “new” feeds our curiosity and incites inexhaustible waves of collective consumption. Hype, trends, ideas, visions, and statements are

generated, copied, and remixed at an ever-increasing speed. Today's "in" is tomorrow's "out"; last week's "no-go" is next week's standard. This is the eternal return of the same. Sustainability and durability no longer guide the profitable production of goods and services. No, the norm is flexibility, transparency, and the ease with which a product can be replaced by some reiteration of the same.

# TODAY'S "IN" IS TOMORROW'S "OUT"

What's on the professional designer's agenda now that everyone has access to digital production technologies and the creative industry is providing the design-prone masses with straightjackets? Each year, hundreds of young designers graduate from professional schools and design academies in the Netherlands. Their task, so they were told, is to generate "value" – to capitalize on their creativity by

turning new ideas into new profit-boosting formats – ideally on a global scale. The *modus operandi* derives from social media. With an audience of millions at our fingertips, innovations can be extracted from the firehose of public comments, shares, and likes, then formalized into an idea with "real value" – a monetizable product or service.

*the market decides  
what to produce*

Nostalgia returns with a vengeance. The 20th century was a paradise of artistic production, a verdant terrain of new ideas, styles, and products. But automation is changing the world and design has to follow suit. The challenge is reinterpretation. Never before have so many identical products been available in ever-changing guises or novel wrappings. A new kind of authorship arises where we mine and amend products from previous eras. Rather than insulating themselves, designers project their fascinations, knowledge, and enterprise onto existing concepts or objects. The 1990s saw the rise of the remix, not only in music, but in deconstructive art, architecture, and design. Frequently, the remix became a bigger hit than the original. Regeneration and adaptation indexes the cultural logic of the 21st century. If exploiting the icons of yesteryear started as a cheap sales trick, it has now grown into a vast and experimental branch of business.

We've awakened to a rude realization: the market decides what to produce. Marketing bureaus guide designers in the direction of sellable stuff. The critical designer is instructed to share ideas and sell them. New economic paradigms – crowdfunding, online money, innovative distribution channels, alternative copyrights – are all trials for providing the free and open model of the internet economy with a financial foundation. Through monetization, they aim to support experimental practices and freedom of thought. But for whom?

Let's face it, design drives the innovation business. The all-encompassing commercialization of society has finally captured the creative sector. However our lives have not necessarily become depleted of culture. In the 21st century we are, once again, on the hunt for cultural value, placed as we are within an open, democratic, profitable, sustainable, digital, and material playing field.

*The Challenge is reinterpretation*

Now that our entire society has been thoroughly designed, the time has come for ambitious maverick designers to search for the cracks in the cultural-economic system. Where are the fracture points in our financial bedrock? Where are the fissures leading to new ways of creating and being? A counter-voice is desperately needed. After the moral bankruptcy of the creative industry, it's up to the design society to fill in the blanks. That doesn't just mean more conventional products, wrapped in an anarchistic re-

tro-punk skin. Resistance is not an Amazon category or a label slapped on to add value. Instead, what is urgently needed is this: the design of a radically different way of living. Growing prosperity has turned the common citizen into a lecherous consumer.

**CAN DESIGN  
REDEEM US FROM OUR  
CONSPICUOUS  
CONSUMPTION  
AND ENTRENCHED  
BUYING  
FIXATIONS?**

*If repetition makes us  
ill, it also heals us.*

*The  
logo  
that  
is  
you!*

DESIGN  
YOUR  
NARRATIVE

07

The Identity Machine  
WILL DESIGNERS  
BECOME  
REDUNDANT?

As a design object, the logo arose at the start of the 20th century and grew into a powerful and clear visual sign, highlighting big multinational businesses with simple and memorable image-words. The first global campaigns using ubiquitously disseminated images in all media available were developed in the 1960s and 1970s. These were the telltale signs of the repetition society, the hallmark of a rising international market ideology. Growing prosperity was glamorously staged as the theatre of eager consumers, who gradually morphed into franchised producers of their own brand identity.

Corporate identity is no longer a mere marketing vehicle for product design – in the past decades, identity has become the product itself. Currently, marketers are the prime developers of encompassing revenue models, which generate products and services by default. Crowdfunding campaigns draw capital from people or businesses, but also create a sympathetic relationship to the product, steering participants towards an identification with the idea or design. This social intervention suspends the distance between maker, buyer, and user of the product and amalgamates product development with marketing. It makes design look like a democratic process.

*Humans pose as products in the media*

In the 21st century, the notion of “image” matures into a comprehensive concept which uses visual storytelling to draw together the identities of sprawling corporations and single individuals. The image-based narrative successfully obscures the business logics, operating expenses, and steel-and-glass headquarters of the corporation. The firm becomes warm and personal, permeating into our everyday activities and individual identities. In this vein, IKEA furnished Paris subway stations with the familiar Klippan couches, without stressing their logo. Apple Store personnel exude the casual image of a lifestyle launch café, effectively downplaying the reality of a warehouse for selling computers. Mark Zuckerberg started out as a student with a “Face Book” targeting the adolescent universe of coeds and dorms, before it grew into the world’s largest social media busi-

ness. Small creative entrepreneurs especially thrive on the proliferation of market strategies. Meanwhile, the identities of a can of Coke and a person have

# POLITICS IS DESIGN

become virtually indistinguishable. Humans pose as products in the media, and proliferate themselves by identifying with the information they tolerate in their digital habitats. Thus, design is generated by default – no designer in sight. The logo is you.

# IT'S A SURPRISINGLY SMALL STEP FROM A CULTURE OF "LIKES" TO A CULTURE OF HATRED.

Politicians are today's pop stars: they fade away. The politician's internet meme has replaced music video clips. For eight years, Obama was the dynamic emblem of the United States of America. With his cool image and his familiar manner of speech, his impressive voice and convincingly sensitive words, he twice won the required votes to govern. His identity was a successful product at the nexus of vision and media savvy. Obama's campaign managers were eager students of product marketing and game strategies, but conversely, the consumer market learned from the successful formulas of the Obama team, discovering the optimal balance of sentiment, vision, and aesthetics.

Of course, politicians have long been selected on the basis of their performance qualities. Yet today, they

are not only assessed on their speeches and acts, but also on their social media behavior. They stage themselves on Facebook and in Insta stories. However, without a thorough knowledge of the nature and functioning of images and texts, this awareness rarely surpasses the level of selfies, cat videos, and mundane "reality" clips. The resulting reception is marked by cynicism and a general distrust of everything and all, especially where it concerns the spread of messages via the media. On the internet, journalistic freedom of speech often leads to dissent in the guise of foul language and fake news, by citizens and politicians alike. It's a surprisingly small step from a culture of "likes" to a culture of hatred. Nevertheless, citizens are well aware of their personal presence in the media, and have learned how to use these tools to their own advantage. Consciously or unconsciously, we all develop our online identity and present ourselves as a brand. Such is the iron cage of the digital.

# DELETE YOUR NARRATIVE

*Fake  
Speak*

**LIVING  
WITH  
LIES**

08

Hidden Technology  
**DESIGNERS REVEAL  
ALGORITHMS**

Facebook is a mighty P.R. company, which uses social media as an advertising platform based on users' search behavior and compulsion to click. Advertising manifests itself without you noticing its pervasive presence. Witness, for example, the 2018 Cambridge Analytica scandal, in which the data mining company spread targeted propaganda in the run up to Brexit and the American 2016 elections. Algorithms designed to nudge consumers are increasingly repurposed to manipulate voters. If nothing else, the Cambridge Analytica manipulation machine confirmed the indistinction between citizens and consumers.

*Destruct the Deep Fakes!*

Which power structures and market strategies lie hidden behind the facades of current online communication? Increasingly, technology decides what we see, how we see it, and why. Meanwhile, technology is hiding in algorithms that choose the videos and memes we like and the products we click on. Because they're invisible, it is all the more mandatory to disclose their architectures of decision and the interests that guide them. Designers are keeping a distance, where they can be instrumental as key visualizers and mediators of the processes involved. But this valorization of the designer as "good cop" must also acknowledge the design decisions that inform the engineering of parametric politics. Designers are also culpable here and can't assume they're handed a "Get out of Jail" free card. So why not exploit this insider knowledge, turn informant, and take revenge on machinic control? Indeed, unless designers betray the system they helped construct, the idea that alternatives might be conjured up really is nothing more than pure fantasy.

We are  
being spied on

People are oiling the economic machine; they make the mechanism run smoothly. Far from being scarce, this human oil is multiplying at great speed: huma-

nity will double in a few decades. Our personal data drives the development of systems. And we are all too willing to share it: how much we earn, which groceries we buy, where we travel, and who we talk to. "The concept of 'deletion' doesn't really exist for FaceBook; efforts to 'delete' are just new data points about how you feel about what you are now trying to hide from view." (@robhorning, 1 March 2019) Our data shows what kind of people we are and to which categories we belong. Thus, populations are sorted and provided with data personas by algorithms. In order to shape our conduct, governments and businesses meticulously track it, collecting all possible data on us. We are being spied on. Cash money dematerializes, electronic gates close and the only way we'll get access to transportation, products and services is by sharing our personal data by means of credit cards, public transport passes or passwords. Soon, we'll have to use our voices, our faces, or fingerprints as laissez passer. Think we're exaggerating? Just have a look at China today.

Technology has pervaded the entire design field, from architecture to interaction design, from fashion to product design, from graphic to gaming design. Both emerging and established designers have to come up with solutions for the privacy problems they are confronted with. We hope that privacy breaches are a design issue, but designers often are mere executors of strategic decisions made well before they were employed. Yet even at the level

of the surface, designers can play a role in enhancing visibility and transparency. Crypto design, for instance, aims at making the complex world of data comprehensible for the majority of us, who have no specialist knowledge of computers and encryption. Design's task, more and more, is to raise the general population's awareness of privacy issues. Design can indeed make complex conditions accessible. Visual designers should therefore engage with the development of technology at an early stage. The aim is a better balance between creativity and technology in the process of design and development. Designers, uncover algorithms! The radical strategy of designers is to design disappearance. This is the strange contradiction that designers with visual sensibilities must now engage: how to design the invisible? That which is beyond inspection? Designing the computational present requires designing the incomputable.

Values become value-added  
**WE CAN'T EXPECT THE  
WORLD  
TO FIX ITSELF JUST BY  
MAKING SOME TOOLS  
AVAILABLE.**

# ARE YOU CONNECTED?

# OUR LIVES SOMETIMES RESEMBLE ONE BIG ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN.

technology decides what we see, how  
we see it and why.

# EVERY COMPANY CLAIMS TO BE FAIR

*The designer as  
solution-messiah  
is born.*

# 09

## The Counter Movement

### DO DESIGNERS STILL HAVE OPINIONS?

Socially engaged designers are known to be passionate people, spirited networkers who barely pause for breathing. The work is done with zeal, a sense of mission occasionally accompanied by a scream. Their fascination and motivation are often expressed as a concern for the injustices of the world in the hope to gain access to the societal discourse through design. Whether through a client brief or a self-initiated project, an ethical and often idealistic agenda is set, creating new work with a critical stance.

*Welcome to the monetization of mindfulness.*

But since taking part in societal discourse has become a worldwide trend, both for governments and businesses and the art and design fields, the reasons for exercising social commitment are growing increasingly opaque. Silicon Valley's development of smartphones and social media are certainly socially innovative, allowing us to connect, to share, to participate. Yet these same tools have also created considerable problems for citizens: phone addiction, depression, and loss of concentration, amongst others. Now, whether motivated by ethical values or stock values, Silicon Valley is producing new tools and gadgets to counter these unwanted side effects. We can reconnect with ourselves and acquire peace of mind by means of spiritual apps, which convert Buddhist rituals into a hugely profitable business. Welcome to the monetization of mindfulness. Climate is another example. Step one: warm up the earth's atmosphere through car production, agribusiness, and strip mining. Step two: create a business out of "saving the earth" from the resulting crisis. Step three: profit.

*it's never too late*

This economic cycle is a market opportunity for design. With the aid of social design, generic problem-solving methods are created and marketed as brainstorm sessions, courses and workshops. "A better environment starts with you!" was a 1990s slogan. Conference brands like What Design Can Do (NL, BR, MX), backed by IKEA, are being built up to bolster a feeling of responsibility for the fate

of planetary life. Climate change is the ultimate problem, and designers are called in to solve it. Now that H&M and Zara exploit their status as tastemakers of our time by providing the market with sustainable products, smaller businesses and private initiatives follow suit in expressing their virtuousness. How can you condemn the consumer industry, now that they've attained environmental consciousness? Every company claims to be fair, to do the right thing, to create positive change. Post-industrial society at large is captivated by good causes. Values become value-added. Exploitation disappears. Please, let's not kid ourselves here.

In the past, design was an aesthetic additive to technological products. Now, design thinking is the instigation of change. We have more than enough chairs, clothes, and stuff in our lives. Instead, with social design we flock to address mutual relationships and innovative ways of thinking. These may not lead directly to solutions, but they do mold people's minds, producing a change in thinking aimed at instigating a more conscientious way of life. Even for indisputable polluters, it's never too late to mend their ways. The economic cycle of socially committed design has come full circle. New generations scrutinize the faults of the previous ones, and there's always something to design. Forever design!

Whether the socially engaged designer forms a personal opinion while designing for good causes

remains an open question. Often, designers follow trends imparted by the policy frameworks of subsidizing institutions for making socially committed work. Thus, the designer's vision becomes heavily biased by the government or related institutions, and visualizing a personal opinion turns into funding fashion. Designers are known for their fine sense of new developments, whether they agree with them or not. Designers survive by being savvy, by adapting their ethical stance as needed. Graphic designers have traditionally been keen on disseminating their own views via their work in the media. But how do citizens, designers, and politicians relate to the media today, now that these media are accessible to anyone?

*Designers survive by being savvy, by adapting their ethical stance as needed.*

We disseminate memes, slogans, and tweets through social media channels – epitomizing the ephemeral online philosophy of the media age. Short, fast messages are media-ripe and endlessly repeated. Increasingly even politics is performed by tweet and meme, in summary combinations of text and image. Memes, par excellence, cater to our desire for consuming ever more simplistic (political) entertainment; drugs for technology addicts. Whether the information they contain is correct or not is irrelevant. But all is not lost – memes can also be used to craft a counter force, as when protest movements recontextualize images, thereby altering their meaning and impact. In Latin American memes are often an expression of left-wing activists. Social movements

like Occupy and Anonymous are also using this medium for their messages.

Up to this point, professional designers have kept clear of producing memes and tweets. In their eyes, such outputs are digital detritus, data-folklore unworthy of their attention. They gave up on Twitter long ago, seeing it as a political venting valve devoid of aesthetics. Designers, in sum, look down upon social media's vernacular. Online marketers, however, who nudge consumers' behavior via algorithms, intensely monitor this "people's language." We can't wait to see a designer with an attitude getting his hands dirty and forging new visual meaning with social media!

*This economic cycle is a market opportunity for design.*

# PROBE AS IT PERFORMS

WE HAVE MORE  
THAN ENOUGH  
CHAIRS, CLOTHES,  
AND STUFF  
IN OUR LIVES

*Everything that we  
formerly electrified,  
we will now  
cognitize.*

Kevin Kelly

IF A MACHINE CAN DO  
MATHEMATICS,  
IS IT THINKING?

Bruce Sterling

10

*I do not want to learn more*

The New Discourse  
MAGIC AND  
STRATEGY AS  
DESIGN FORMULA.

*Design is intent. Design is strategy.  
Design prepares us.*

Design has transformed from discipline into idea – it has become a discourse. This means that design is no longer seen as a professional field with clear competencies and a straightforward output in well-defined products and services. Now, what matters is the story – products are mere illustrations. Design has turned into a magic term for vague, creative, preparatory activities, which we can't assess completely yet. Design is intent. Design is strategy. Design prepares us. Traditionally, design was set off against mass production. A consumer could have one or the other,

but not both. In those days, you bought your daily necessities at cheap Dutch housewares chains like Blokker or HEMA, whose teapots, cutlery and kitchenware were clearly “un-designed.” The design versions of these were considerably more expensive, authored by famous designers and sold in exclusive design stores.

*“the solution, of course, is balance”.*  
Design’s exclusivity, too, has been canceled by the emergence of mega-design chains such as IKEA and H&M, with their permanent sale. Regardless of the joint ventures these chains occasionally undertake with contemporary designers (Hella Jongerius, Walter van Beirendonk, Pinar & Viola for IKEA, and the late Karl Lagerfeld and Viktor & Rolf for H&M), the focus is always on creating a cheap, mass-manufactured product for the masses. Available everywhere for an unbeatable price, design is extended to the hoi polloi. After all, design should be within the reach of everyone.

As a result, design has become mainstream. Everything on the market is sold as “design” these days. Professional designers feel left out in the cold, and are considering other options. They crave new experiences and rituals, meditating on yoga or ruminating on the I Ching, “waking up” in Sam Harris’ Discover Your Mind app or living “a healthier, happier, more well-rested life in just a few minutes a day” with their Headspace app. Such a focus on the inner life of the individual is no accident, but rather

research for their next challenge. When the designer’s expertise is no longer needed because products are designed by software, and they don’t want to contribute any more junk to a saturated market, it’s time to implement plan B: designing inner desires.

*No need for a final product, a vulgar widget.*  
Inner desires require a change in approach. Designers re-emerge as psychologists or therapists of a kind, who observe people’s behavior, experimenting while trying to improve situations. Designers scrutinize how citizens, workers and employers feel, what their needs are, how they act and react, what interests them – all in relation to the company or organization that hires them. The resulting design is a recommendation, a process, a strategy, forged in brainstorm sessions and expert meetings in which design thinking is leading as initiating method. Design Thinking combines design with social intervention by means of rituals. In most cases, the process is turned into an algorithm or app by the commercial commissioners – the product. In the cultural design field, the focus is on process and experience, and material exercises are mainly done as prototyping, to visualize the design of the idea. No need for a final product, a vulgar widget. No, today’s design output is far more subtle, more pervasive, more intangible, created by a designer who combines meditation with mediation.

*No More Narrative*

IF YOU  
DON'T  
KNOW  
WHAT  
TO DO,  
CREATE  
A NEW  
SELF

11

Self-Design  
EGO AS THE NEW  
CHALLENGE  
*Propping up your own personality is an  
economic trend.*

We recognize the 21st century designer as a well-dressed personality who cares for his or her exterior, but cultivates most intensely the inner-self. In response to the tsunami of spiritual apps and gadgets geared at making life more comfortable, designers follow suit. Now that the outer built environment is done, the logical next step is to delve inward. The conscious citizen is done with shopping, leaving room for reflection and contemplation. It is time to redress the balance between body and mind.

Ambitious designers take a good look around them before taking a stand. They train themselves to not

immediately come up with final products and services. Could the end product instead be a process, as a worthy successor to design as experience? After all, we don't seem to need any new products, but we do want to spend our time in a constructive and meaningful way. In a quest for a new professional identity, designers first scrutinize the techno-gadgets we connect to our bodies.

# NOW THAT THE OUTER BUILT ENVIRONMENT IS DONE, THE LOGICAL NEXT STEP IS TO DELVE INWARD.

Today technology inches ever closer to the body, latches onto it through leech-like wearables, or even infiltrates it, reconfiguring it at a cellular level. How will the world look, when we can design a human being even before it's born? Are we ready for a

society characterized by a greater diversity of living arrangements, now that kinship is being defined in ways other than traditional reproductive methods in

# DEALING WITH THE PUMP & DUMP SELF

heterosexual nuclear families? Design may enable us to configure our gender, deciding for ourselves how much man or woman we want to be. Technology will facilitate all of this. How does the human being respond to such radical shifts? To be prepared for the next phase in the human saga, we need to embark on a search for ourselves.

*Being idle is deadly.*

Who are you, and what does it take to be you? These are the questions we ask ourselves, not because we choose to, but because society demands it. We

are constantly challenged to live perfect lives, to emulate the lifestyles we see in the media, in which we are rich, successful, beautiful, and happy. If we are unable to reach these stratospheric expectations, there is a fix for that too: the same media inundate us with offerings and ads to quick start the necessary transformation.

# HUMANS ARE BOTH MASTER AND SLAVE TO THE TECHNICUM.

Douglas Rushkoff

*Self-design takes patience. Trial and error.  
Call and response.*

We are happiness seekers, but we need to first break loose of the social pressures, which confront us with the norms and values associated with human perfection, happiness and beauty. From a design perspective, design should enable people to establish their own personal standards. But how should standards be defined? A governor or urban planner might ask how much individuality a metropolis of millions can endure. An individual might counter: how much conformity do we actually need?

You ponder who you want to be. But, since you're not starting from scratch, it's mainly about changing yourself into a "better you." Humans are vain and bad at restraining themselves – a rather fortunate condition for the self-help market. Propping up your own personality is an economic trend, a veritable industry built by a massive advertising and marketing machine, which promises to fulfill our deepest dreams but is meanwhile designing and shaping those very dreams.

# UPGRADE YOUR SELF!

The self-help trend was a relatively late incursion into the market, promising self-reliance, self-construction and self-absorption. Mix self-help with ample doses of tracking and techno utopianism, and you get the *quantified self* as described by Kevin Kelly in 2007. The quantified self helps you to "realize yourself" by means of monitoring your weight, physical activities, sleep patterns and productivity,

all the while providing the businesses who assist you in realizing yourself with your most intimate data, which they in turn commodify into products you'll buy in your quest for "self-realization." The fanciful methods and ideas for upgrading ourselves, with a diet for a perfect body, tutorials for the transformation of your talents into a successful business, and apps facilitating the intense bliss of new love, could all come under the umbrella of a bold new design field: self-design.

## HUMANITY WILL BECOME EXTINCT. WE NEED TO DESIGN AN ELEGANT ENDING.

Paola Antonelli

*The self-designer experiments with  
future expectations.*

After all, we have a deep-seated urge to create our own stories, to construct our own self-image. Yet as any designer can tell you, creating a story via images is no easy task. The first challenge is audience: every story needs readers, every image needs viewers. Your own story only exists when others "like" it. You have to be active in your own habitat if you crave admiration. Being idle is deadly. Even if your main activity is posting selfies, the care you take in distributing them is crucial for getting the likes you want. Self-design takes practice. Trial and error. Call and response. For not only do you need to design a self-image attractive to your peers, you also need to create an aesthetic ambiance around your personality, filled with seductive ideas, things and experien-

ces. Self-design, therefore, is a vast, never ending quest for the perfect image, an all encompassing design brief that requires the careful configuration of vision, style, convictions, philosophy and demeanor. Are we fooled by this commercial vogue of focusing on yourself? The self-help industry holds up a mirror to us, showing how addicted we are to smartphones, how obese we are, how badly organized we are, how poorly we sleep. At a societal level, we grapple with a growing set of wicked problems: robots and algorithms strip our jobs and exploit our data, leaving a massive population with a precarious existence. Self-help alone will not solve these problems. It will only buttress the illusory conviction that we master ourselves. As a cultural phenomenon, Self-design is a logical step in these individualistic times, in which technology drives the malleability and transformation of humans by increasingly tying them to a plethora of apps, bots, and tools that anchor our relationships with authorities and fellow humans alike. Mediated and managed, this vast technical network will shape our social lives to an ever greater extent.

Yet the true self designer, just like any other member of *Team Human*, as Douglas Rushkoff termed it, is critical and inquisitive. The self-designer does not think in terms of fixed products and quick fixes. The self-designer experiments with future expectations, and explores the effects of immersive technologies for the sake of fellow humans – and humanity as a whole.

*There is no longer an outside to the world of design.*

*Design has gone viral and is now bigger than the world.*

**Design is what makes the human.**

*It becomes the way humans ask questions and thereby continuously redesign themselves.*

Beatriz Colomina and Mark Wigley

*Forever design!*

## About the authors

**Mieke Gerritzen** is founder of The Image Society in Amsterdam. She was director of MOTI, Museum of the Image in Breda. As designer in the early nineties she was involved to digital media initiatives like Waag Society and VPRO Digital and therefore she belongs to the Dutch new media pioneers. Gerritzen is fascinated and critical on developments that involves technology and influences the world of art and design. She published about 10 books and organised conferences and events like *Me You And Everyone is a Curator* in 2011. Gerritzen was head of the design department Sandberg Institute from 2002 - 2009, the master course connected to Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam.  
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Supported by

Stichting Droog

AFK, Amsterdam Fund for the Arts

Printed by

Raddraaier, Amsterdam

Published by

The Image Society

[www.imagesociety.nl](http://www.imagesociety.nl)

e-mail: [info@imagesociety.nl](mailto:info@imagesociety.nl)



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PRODUCT DESIGN  
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SERVICE DESIGN  
MEDIA DESIGN  
GAME DESIGN  
EXPERIENCE DESIGN  
SOCIAL DESIGN  
WEB DESIGN  
USER EXPERIENCE DESIGN  
URBAN DESIGN  
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TYPE DESIGN  
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ETHICAL DESIGN  
LANDSCAPE DESIGN  
STRATEGIC DESIGN  
SELF DESIGN  
ORGANISATION DESIGN  
SUSTAINABLE DESIGN  
PROCESS DESIGN  
RELATIONAL DESIGN  
GENDER DESIGN  
DILEMMA-DRIVEN DESIGN  
EXCLUSIVE DESIGN  
ENGINEERING DESIGN  
MOLECULAR DESIGN  
GENETIC DESIGN  
INTERACTION DESIGN  
PACKAGING DESIGN  
GENERIC DESIGN  
TOTAL DESIGN

What happens when anything can be labeled design? We simply don't see it anymore because it's everywhere. This manifesto investigates the design inflation: is design taking over contemporary arts and aesthetics, turning the world into a uniform visual soup?

"What if politics would be at the end a question of design? This is the bold thesis of this manifesto: social design, biotech-design, environmental design, gender design and self-design replace government, health, ecology, and identity politics. Love it or hate it, but read it before your ideas are re-designed by someone else."

**Paul B Preciado, Contemporary writer, Philosopher and Curator, Paris, France.**

"It's cruel, but fair. You'll want to read this manifesto one scalding page at a time. Take plenty of breaks to web surf for cool memes." **Bruce Sterling, Science Fiction writer, Turin, Italy.**

"Design escaped norms and became normal. This new normality is banal and, therefore, starts to be subversive again." **Uta Brandes, Professor Gender Design, Cologne, Germany.**

Authors:  
Mieke Gerritzen  
Geert Lovink

