

KABK
DESIGN/
RESEARCH
CLUB

MEETING
NO. 2,
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2018

LECTORATE DESIGN

The Lectorate Design, headed by Alice Twemlow, started in September 2017. The lectorate aims to serve as a dynamic catalyst or provocation for design-focused research activity within the KABK and beyond.

Inherent in this mission is the imperative to surface, nurture and promote a robust design-focused research culture within the KABK and via the channels that connect KABK and Leiden University.

COORDINATOR

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DESIGN

Vera van de Seyp

KRIJN CHRISTIAANSEN & CATHELIJNE MONTENS (KCCM), BA Interior Architecture and Furniture Design, KABK



SAGA CREEK STORIES

The creek system in Saga City, Japan, is perhaps one of the city's largest public spaces. These creeks are like blood veins that run through every nook of the city. Yet, they are barely noticed or utilized – at least not to an extent that would do them justice. As these creeks are public, no one owns them, and as such no one feels any urge to use them. This raises two questions: 1) How may this feeling of lack of ownership be shifted to a sense of ownership? 2) How could one engage with these public creeks, without putting a permanent claim on them? In order to investigate this, KCCM thoroughly researched the creek network to understand how the creeks have informed and retain the basis of Saga's social fabric. They have trodden through, mapped, excavated, dredged, and collected the memories and stories the creeks contain, and have started to weave them into one whole. More than 24 creek walks resulted in a video registration from a frog's perspective, a series of photographs investigating creek-related topics, a collection of objects, texts about the conversations these objects evoked, a series of frottages, a temporary intervention and proposals for future usage of the creeks, presented in an exhibition. Now that the exhibition is almost over, their main question is how to consolidate and share this research.

YASSINE SALIHINE, MA Industrial Design, KABK



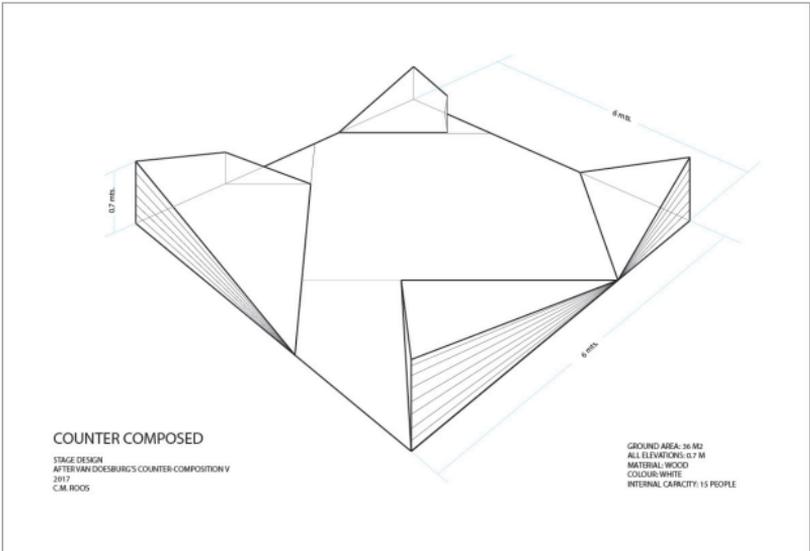
NOMADIC DESIGN STRATEGIES

The aim is to research if by using a Nomadic design strategy, Nomadic objects can be created that free the object and its user from oppression by Settler objects and therefore create a fluid, dynamic and heterogeneous approach to society.

BEING AND BECOMING

Materialism can be seen as the ideology of Being. The state of settled permanence is connected to the material. The static slumber of settled life feeds the accumulation of material as to the point where it becomes a belief: This is it. There is no thing more than this. Only this is real. The Settler object is defined more by its properties than its capacities, the apparent ending list of specifications defined by the creator of the object. The Nomadic object is defined more by its capacities than its properties. It is defined by the ever changing environment and the user it has relationships with. It is dynamic, always becoming some thing. For the nomad only the most necessary objects can come along on a journey. They are tools of survival, expressing their capacities in continuously changing assemblages. They are spiritual objects because they adhere to the ideology of Becoming.

CARLOS ROOS, Academy of Creative and Performing Arts, Leiden University



STAGE DESIGN AS A METHOD FOR THINKING

In this presentation, Carlos Roos explores the idea that articulate thinking can be enabled by creative practices such as stage design. That is to say, thought and reflection need not be coded into the languages we write or speak; they may obtain, too, in the heat of aesthetically productive moments. From this point of view, stage design can be conceived as a way of (or a method for) thinking 'in action', or as philosophers of language would put it, 'in a nonpropositional' way. Roos shall discuss this possibility with reference to a design of his own for a performance project called 'Counter Composed', currently in the making by The Involved Stage (a physical theatre group in Leiden, NL). The project is based on Theo van Doesburg's 'Counter-Composition V', a good example of the artist's late development of De Stijl aesthetics in the 1930s. The distribution of the scenic space suggests not only a tridimensional restatement of the original counter composition, but also a reflection on physical and social reality via the creation of a spatial layout destined to host the sounds and the bodies of the performers in constant motion.

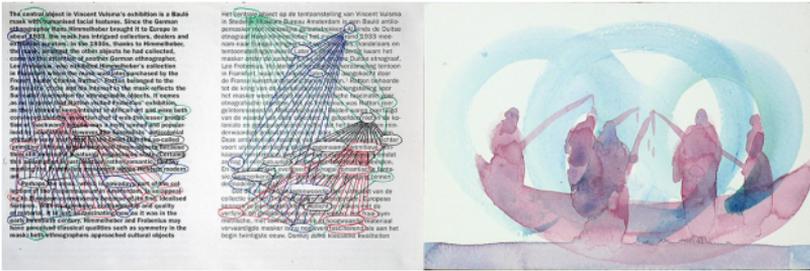
THOMAS VAILLY, BA Interior Architecture and Furniture Design, KABK



BIOPLASTIC FOR SYSTEMIC DESIGN

Increased awareness of the Anthropocene, and the harmful role that design has played in bringing it about, has led to a reshaped understanding of (eco- and industrial) systems in design. Design practice is becoming more aware of its systemic nature. Design is not only about products but also about (eco-)systems, (bio-)cycles and (natural) resources. There is a need for new design methodologies and teaching tools to address these paradigm shifts in design practice and education. This proposal argues that bio-plastic materials - through the study of material narratives and material flows - are the perfect media to foster systemic thinking in design. The proposed teaching tool can be broken down into two main constituents: the first aims to convey a practical understanding of bio-plastic (thinking by doing, bio-plastic lab, material library), while the second encourages a conceptual understanding of bio-plastic (systemic design thinking, material narrative, material flow).

TANJA SMIT, Practicum Artium, Academy of Creative and Performing Arts, KABK & Leiden University



SEE THE TEXT, READ THE IMAGE

Tanja Smit's work focusses on the shifting relationship between language and image. She is interested in processes of projection, translation and signification. In the working process, self-invented rules alternate with free association. This results in drawings, text- and book-works, paintings and photographs that are sometimes translated into video and (music) performances. Her work can roughly be divided into two directions, from language to image and the other way around:

- 1) The text works reveal structures and meanings of printed texts in newspapers, magazines and books;
- 2) The drawings, paintings and photographs project and outline meanings on random surfaces.

The figurative and abstract images that emerge can be read as nonlinear narratives. Sometimes the two movements coincide, for instance in her associative ink drawings on newspapers, or in book-works which combine text works and associative drawings. But often they don't. In that case the works are difficult to bring together, both in presentations and in her own mind. Smit would like to get more clarity about these contrary movements. It would improve the work and would make it easier to combine it in presentations.

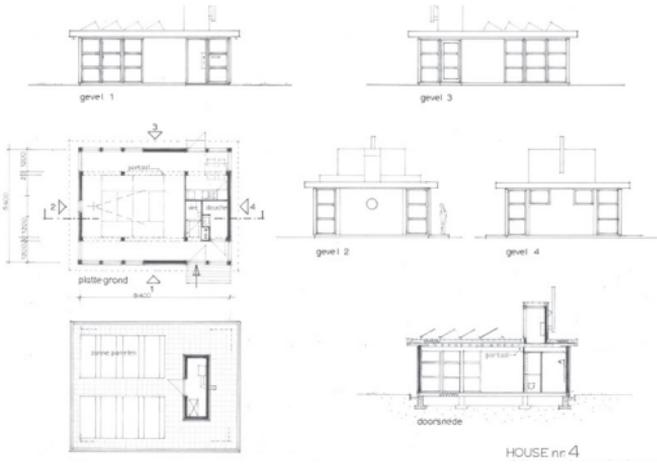
VIBEKE GIESKES, IST, KABK



CRAFTING YOUR THINKING, REFLECTING YOUR CRAFT

The IST course 'Crafting your thinking, reflecting your craft' focuses on the simultaneous engagement with theoretical and material research in the workshops. During the first couple of sessions, students are supported in identifying and delineating a personal fascination that will provide a starting point for further research. The student then follows a trajectory integrating theorizing, technical apprenticeship, analyzing, writing, making, drawing, producing work and reflection, which is guided by both workshop instructors and the theory tutor. The aim is to improve the students' understanding of their artistic process and working method when making and theorizing are seen as an undivided whole. The question Gieskes is concerned with as course tutor is how to develop a teaching method that can tie together the reflection/research/theoretical part and the actual making in such a way that the process can benefit optimally from it. She would like to become more analytical in describing some of the processes of the students and be able to theoretically go more in-depth in the teaching process in general.

JAN FREDERIK GROOT,
BA Photography, KABK



HOMELESSNESS AND NOMADISM

'Homelessness' in the modern industrial age is described by Karl Marx as a condition of precarious living. The house cannot be called home - instead it is an alien place where someone can be thrown out any time when he or she does not pay the rent. In the post-industrial age that manifested itself fully in the 1980s, architectural design and social engineering had smothered much of the suffering that tainted Marx' time. Nevertheless, a state of dependency and alienation continued to exist. In this period the introduction of the home computer and its early primitive network with the outside world gave birth to a new state of spatial uncertainty: the boundaries between the private space of home and the public space outside were becoming vague and permeable. The post-industrial nomad entered the stage. This research project began with the case of the destruction, by controlled implosion, of the buildings of the Pruitt-Igoe housing project in St. Louis, United States, in 1972. The project explores the reactions to that event in particular and seeks to understand in more general terms the ways in which the fundamental belief that design and social engineering could make a better world has been shaken. In fact, one might even ask if the disciplines of architecture and design have ever fully recovered from this crisis of doubt and shattered self-confidence.

MARTHE PRINS i.c.w. BENEDIKT WEISHAUPT, Preparatory Year, KABK



MOVING MEMBRANES

Confusion of Tongues is an artist collective consisting of Benedikt Weishaupt (Berlin, DE) and Marthe Prins (Amsterdam, NL). Over the past five years Weishaupt and Prins have developed an investigative practice, mediating the visual rhetorics of privatized border security, alternative wifi infrastructures, the optimization of individual labour and the rise of sophio-fascism. Often in collaboration with human/institutional bodies from various fields, Confusion of Tongues focuses on performance, exhibition and text. Here, Confusion of Tongues proposes a project around the visual rhetorics of Frontex. Frontex is the semiprivate governing agency held responsible for the management of border control in the Schengen area. The project focuses on the ways in which the agency engages in artistic expression through their annual photo competition: How do the artistic imageries produced by Frontex' employees relate to the broad range of analytical imagery produced by the agency as a whole? And more generally, how do contemporary image-reading machines distinguish in their 'reading', 'screening' or 'analysing' of these images? Images become analogues to membranes, through which constructs of 'factual neutrality' and 'creative expression' are on the move. Moving Membranes is an eventful periodical that mediates design-research into a performative exhibition and a series of lecture-performances.

MARJA VAN DER BURGH

MA Type and Media, KABK

The aim of the project 'Letters and Architecture' is to investigate collaborations between letter/type designers and architectural offices, examining to what extent letters/texts can be considered as an integral part of the design and the concept of a building.

WIM VAN ECK

BA Interactive / Media / Design,
KABK, LIACS, Leiden University

The project 'Evolving Game Terrains through Living Organisms' explores the concept of evolving game terrains through intermediation of living biological organisms and presents a proof of concept realization thereof.

INGRID GROOTES

BA Photography, KABK

Grootes investigates how primary sources can be used meaningfully in theoretical classes for art students, focusing particularly on the photograph and the ways in which it can be considered as both an object and an image.

ANJA GROTEN

PhDArts, KABK & Leiden University

By means of hands-on cross-disciplinary workshops and by producing and highlighting frictional experiences, Groten's inquiry aims to reframe the discourse about what is often described by tech-optimists as innovation.

KIM NUIJEN

BA Photography, KABK

Nuijen's project titled 'Original copy. Modern trompe-l'oeil' in the hyperreal examines how our society is influenced by an image culture built on imagery and representations that trick us into thinking they are real and thus become our model for reality: a hyperreality.

LENA SHAFIR

BA Interactive / Media
/ Design, KABK

In this project, Shafir seeks to understand what significance Design Thinking (DT) could have as a research instrument outside design practice and to define how DT could unlock a new approach to education in the arts, focussing on students' changing prospects for professional practice.

LOEK VAN VLIET

BA Photography, KABK

Starting from the observation that his photographic images of landscapes often fail to reflect his experience of that landscape, Van Vliet reflects on ways to overcome the inherent limitations of the camera in terms of capturing the progression of time and movement through space.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

1. INITIATING A NEW RESEARCH PROJECT (INTENDED FOR EARLY-STAGE RESEARCHERS)

In this session we will review some of the factors to take into account when embarking on a new research project, such as purpose, disciplinary context, personal skills, experience and interests, initial questions, potential collaborators and intended audience etc. Participants are encouraged to present their preliminary ideas to the group for feedback.

2. MATERIAL-, WORKSHOP-, AND LAB-BASED RESEARCH THROUGH DESIGN: METHODS AND APPROACHES

In this session we focus on the particular qualities and potentialities of research that is conducted through experimentation with the materials, techniques and processes of design itself.

3. SCHOLARLY RESEARCH INTO DESIGN AS SUBJECT MATTER: METHODS AND APPROACHES

This session is for researchers who orient towards an academic research paradigm. Depending on the interests of the group, we can discuss: the specifics of working with archives, databases, interviews, theory and other primary and secondary sources; issues around the analysis and interpretation of data; or questions of writing for journals and conferences and other forms of dissemination.

COMPLETED

Krijn Christiaansen
& Cathelijne Montens
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IN PROGRESS

Yassine Salihine
Carlos Roos
Thomas Vailly

EARLY STAGES

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Vibeke Gieskes
Jan Frederik Groot
Marthe Prins i.c.w.
Benedikt Weishaupt

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

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Wim van Eck
Ingrid Grootes
Anja Groten
Kim Nuijen
Lena Shafir
Loek van Vliet