Aesthetic ideals, part II

Playfulness
Sensing
Recap

Emotions

- Norman: designing on the visceral, behavioural and reflective level
- Jordan’s division into physio, psycho, socio and ideophysics
- Furbies: ”I love you” – easy to evoke positive emotions in toys

Criticism

- Can rely on emotions (Dunne) or a clever pointing-out of the issue (STATIC!)
- Dunne: The goal is satire, making the user ask ”is this for real”, too much humor can muddle the point.
Engaging as many senses as possible in an experience

“An experience has a unity that gives it its name, that meal, that storm, that rupture of friendship.”

“In an experience, flow is from something to something. As one part leads into another and as one part carries on what went on before, each gains distinctness in itself. The enduring whole is diversified by successive phases that are emphases of its varied colors.”

— John Dewey in ”Art as Experience” (pp.37-38)
Pragmatism in IxD


- *Pragmatist perspective; socio-cultural background matters when assessing aesthetics*
- *Design ambiguous systems aiming at playful interaction and improvisation*

### PERSPECTIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System</th>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Aesthetic experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Man is...</td>
<td>system component</td>
<td>master</td>
<td>equal partner</td>
<td>communicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMI</td>
<td>equal partners</td>
<td>mediated by machine</td>
<td>MMI dialogue</td>
<td>Supporting human dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IxD ideals</td>
<td>efficiency</td>
<td>transparency</td>
<td>human dialogue</td>
<td>communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fiore et al: pragmatism as design method when designing for blind people (storytelling)

A pragmatist way of seeing requires us to understand the experiences of the blind person in relation to ourselves and it is here that we identify empathy. In other words, we see how the designer’s expression of empathy in the object designed [...] is connected to the experience of the user or perceiver.

– Salvatore Fiore et al in “A pragmatist aesthetics approach to the design of a technological artefact”, p. 131
Shusterman’s somaesthetics (2000)

- *Combination of Dewey’s pragmatic ideas and others”*
- Closer to Baumgarten’s original intention; that aesthetics should comprise a general theory of sensory knowledge.
- Involving the bodily experience in one’s appreciation of the aesthetic; what is sensed by the senses but also how the body moves and operates (Shusterman 2000, ch. 10).
Schiphorst; soft(n) themes

- Experience (what the senses detect)
- Poetics (meaning-making)
- Materiality (material properties)
- Semantics of caress (measuring touch)

But how does it work? :)
Djajadiningrat et al:

“If aesthetics improve the perceived usability of a product, this leads to the question: what kinds of aesthetic sources do interaction designers have at their disposal?” ...

“[we explore] how interaction with physical objects can exploit mankind’s sophisticated perceptual-motor skills” ...

“From frustration of motor skills to challenge and pride.

Djajdiningrat et al: tangible products: Aesthetics follow usability...products should be beautiful in use

- Interaction patterns; timing, rhythm, flow (as in many games)
- Richness of motor actions; not just pushing buttons, actions that require some skill instead, and are more precise
- Freedom of interaction: many possible ways/paths of interaction in order to attain the same result
Tangibility and feedforward; but how?

- Unity of location; action and feedback in same location
- Unity of direction; direction of feedback, same as direction of action
- Unity of modality; modality of feedback same as action (modality = e.g. visual/audial/physical)
- Unity of time; feedback & action coincide in time
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Examples please?!
We’ve been playing games forever! (Especially “olympic” type games)

First reference to chess, India 625

Hnefatafl; the Viking version of chess
Playfulness in art

Guiseppe Arcimboldo, *Summer* and *Spring* (1573)
Bartolomeo Ammanati: *Allegory of Winter* (16th century)
Playfulness and intrigue in art

Op Art (optical art): making use of optical illusions

Left: A sculpture by Victor Vasarely, Left: Bridget Riley; Movement in Squares (1961)
Playfulness & intrigue in art/lit

...my book
The Interactive Quilt – a successful unsuccessfully project
The Interactive Quilt; Slow Technology
.... But also intriguing!

– Ambiguity the key

“Thus ambiguity is a powerful tool for designers to raise topics or ask questions while renouncing the possibility of dictating their answers. By supporting this balance, ambiguity not only represents a useful resource, but a powerful sign of respect for users as well.”

Countless examples, e.g. Bembo’s Zoo
Intrigue BIG TIME!!!


- 13:43 "Snout" (Watch the entire talk for more stunning examples!!!)
Playfulness & challenge in IxD

Any computer game ever made...!
Tempting challenge!

“...without sufficient challenge an activity can be perceived as boring, or soothing, or calming or “nice” but hardly entertaining. Then again, “challenge” is to be interpreted widely. Also the level of challenge must suit the user and the situation; [what fits a child does not necessarily amuse its parents]. The adult may be more entertained by trying to solve a cross-word, however not when being tired and nervous [...]. In order to be entertaining, the challenge has to be tempting to that user at that moment.”

Desiging playfulness?

Björk & Holopainen: Patterns in Game Design
– Game(play) patterns; the building blocks of games

Salen & Zimmerman: Rules of Play
– Theoretical framework; "game design schemas“ e.g. Games as context for social play, games as storytelling etc.

Fullerton: Game Design Workshop,
– Designing a game from start to end

Kramer: What makes a game good
Lundgren et al (2009); several ideals/aims of design…

- Light Games
- Pottering
- Emergent games
- Meditation
- Player Adaptability
- Reenactment
- Camaraderie
- Meta Game

… coupled to the presence of gameplay properties

- Use of Chance
- Meaningful Choice
- Varying Strategies
- Game Balance
- Player Interaction
- Accurate simulation
- Micro Management
- Limited Time
- ...and more
Hunicke et al (2004): MDA-model (further developed by LeBlanc)

Mechanics ("Rules")
- Basic rules; how pieces move, cards are drawn, trades can be done, openness of information, enemies

Dynamics ("System")
- Actions that are consequences of mechanics; if trading is allowed that opens up for negotiation and establishing an economy, if a game has teams or mutual enemies it opens up for cooperation

Aesthetics ("Fun")
- The experience of playing a game; team efforts and accomplishments, stress, fear, "o shit" (FUBAR Enjoyment)
The MDA-model

Mechanics

- *Basic rules; how pieces move, cards are drawn, trades can be done...*

Dynamics

- *Actions that are consequences of mechanics; if trading is allowed that opens up for negotiation and establishing an economy, if a game has teams it opens up for cooperation*

Aesthetics

- *The experience of playing a game; team efforts, stress, fear, FUBAR Enjoyment*
Mechanics ("Rules")

- Standard card deck, chips/money, each player has x cards (hidden), there are x cards on the table (open), bidding phases, blinds, different ranked combinations of cards ... 

Dynamics ("System")

- Play depending on where you are in turn sequence, bluffing, strategic choice of when to play, counting on odds, choosing how much to bet 

Aesthetics ("Fun")

- Psychology element, Thrill/fear, excitement of revealing hands