

Ohio University

College of Fine Arts

School of Art + Design

Interior Architecture

Introduction to Design Process and Programming

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Intellectual Methodologies: Giving Your Design Focus & Character

How does a designer 'come up with', or create, their design work?

How do you, as a designing person, do this?

In the realm of professional design practice good designers study, seek out, and identify ideas, concepts, approaches, methodologies, and philosophies that they 'connect with', that they resonate with, that provide them with a larger orientation to the world of design than their own, immediate experiences may have provided.

If you grew up in a small mid-west town, and have not travelled widely, how do you expand your own design understanding, your awareness of important and exciting happenings around the world?

The following are current and widely employed ideas and methods used in design by all sorts of designers, large and small offices, those who are famous and those who are relatively unknown.

Think about these and try to align yourself with one of these approaches when you are assigned a design project. Use one of these intellectual methodologies to give direction, character, and meaning to the project you develop.

Intellectual Methodologies (could also be considered philosophies)

1. **Critical Regionalism/Site Specific Contextual Design:**

Contextual design, also called *Contextualism*, suggests a design approach that responds to its surroundings by respecting what is already there, and by being influenced by what is there. Climate, land forms, physical terrain, local materials and building practices, and social aspects of culture and tradition all play roles in contextual design.

A building or interior environment whose design responds to its surroundings successfully, creating the impression that the building or spaces “belong.”

It would blend seamlessly into its environment, not only maintaining the context, but also enhancing it.

A good short essay about 'contextual' design:

{ HYPERLINK "<http://wirednewyork.com/forum/showthread.php?t=10047>" }

{ HYPERLINK "<http://blog.buildllc.com/2016/01/contextual-doesnt-mean-copying/>" }

This approach can also be thought of as Critical Regionalism:

Critical regionalism is an approach to { HYPERLINK "<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Architecture>" } and design that strives to counter placelessness and lack of identity in { HYPERLINK "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_architecture" } by using the building's geographical context.

Critical regionalism is not { HYPERLINK "[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regionalism_\(politics\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regionalism_(politics))" } in the sense of { HYPERLINK "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vernacular_architecture" }, but is, on the contrary, an avant-gardist, modernist approach, but one that starts from the premises of local or regional architecture.

Vernacular architecture is an architectural style that is designed based on local needs, availability of construction materials and reflecting local traditions. Originally, vernacular architecture did not use formally-schooled architects, but relied on the design skills and tradition of local builders.

Vernacular architecture can be contrasted against *formal architecture, produced by trained, schooled, architects*, which is characterized by stylistic elements of design intentionally incorporated for aesthetic purposes which go beyond a building's functional requirements.

Critical regionalism adopts modern approaches to architecture, critically, for its universal progressive qualities but at the same time value is placed on the geographical context of the building. Emphasis is on topography, climate, light; on tectonic form rather than on making things simply look 'nice.'

2. **Parametric design:** using specific, selected, conditions, needs, or desired outcomes (these are called 'parameters') to determine the design of an object, space, building, etc. For example: "Design a wall that only allows sunlight to hit the dining table during lunch time." This is a specific need, desire, parameter. To achieve the desired design outcome a computer may be used to analyze the path of the sun as it strikes the wall of this space, and then determine where a window opening should be placed to allow the sun's light to strike the dining table at lunch time.

3. **Bio Mimicry:** is the examination of nature, its models, systems, processes, and elements to emulate or take inspiration from in order to solve human problems. The term *bio mimicry* and *biomimetic* come from the Greek words bios, meaning life, and mimesis, meaning to imitate. (Wikipedia)

Bio mimicry is an innovation method that seeks sustainable solutions by emulating nature's time-tested patterns and strategies, e.g., a solar cell inspired by a leaf. The goal is to create products, processes, and policies---new ways of living---that are well-adapted to life on earth over the long haul. (Bio Mimicry Guild)

4. **Historic Assemblage:** assemblage is a form of sculpture comprised of "found" objects arranged in such a way that they create a piece. These objects can be anything organic or man-made. Scraps of wood, stones, old shoes, baked bean cans and a discarded baby buggy - or any of the other 84,000,000 items not here mentioned by name - all qualify for inclusion in an assemblage. Whatever catches the artist's eye, and fits properly in the composition to make a unified whole, is fair game.

You will need to research these topics to fully understand what they mean, and what they offer as design methods. Required From You: Thinking, Sketching, Research

Thursday, September 1: Initial Concept statements: This is to be a written statement that expresses your over-arching design approach to this project.

Experiential Reality You May Wish To Emphasize

Deciding upon specific characteristics of your designing approach may be very useful in guiding you to an interesting visual work. It is a way of putting a constraint, a defining boundary, upon your search for form and idea.

Select one (1) from each of the following groups of experiential characteristics.

Write down your selected 'characteristics' either in your sketch book, or in a Power Point document. Using your sketch book, OR a Power Point (or Keynote) document, you are to keep a running record of your Design Process, through the entire course of this project. Document, with words, sketches, and any other media/imagery what you do to develop and explore this project. This document is to be a component in your final course presentation.

Positive Space
Negative Space

Linear Form
Planar Form
Volumetric Form

Day light
Artificial light

Open View
Filtered View
Blocked View

Opaque Material:
Translucent Material
Transparent Material

Rough Surfaces
Smooth Surfaces

Visually Massive
Visually Delicate

Calm Experience (emotion)
Chaotic Experience (emotion)