A CRITICAL DIALOGUE
MASTERS COURSE
DESIGN ACADEMY EINDHOVEN

A CRITICAL DIALOGUE

January 2012
Arjo de Vries
# INTRODUCTION

1. “We dream of width”
   Gijs Bakker, head of the Masters, on the history and philosophy of the Masters  
   5
2. Brief introduction to the Masters  
   6

# PART 1  POSITION

## COURSE OF THE MASTERS

1. Mission: personal statement and commitment in a global context  
   9
2. Author-designer/researcher  
   10
3. Educational model  
   11

## WHAT RESEARCH HEADS HAVE TO SAY

1. “What used to be neutrality, is now transparency!”
   Joost Grootens on Information Design  
   13
2. “Moving a small rock in a river is a great start!”
   Jan Boelen on Social Design  
   18
3. “Without context, there’s nothing to talk about..!”
   Louise Schouwenberg on Contextual Design  
   24
4. “The Masters completely changed the way I worked and held presentations”
   Alumni about the Masters  
   32

# PART 2  INFORMATION

## THE MASTERS IN DETAIL

1. **Curriculum**
   - A Structure and content  
   38
   - B Source lectures/workshops  
   38
   - C Study feasibility  
   40
   - D Admissions  
   40
   - E Discussion  
   41

2. **Results and assessment**
   - A Master vision of assessment  
   42
   - B Criteria  
   42
   - C Assessment procedure  
   43

3. **Quality care**
   - A Principle  
   44
   - B Quality of the program  
   44
   - C Improvements as a result of the previous accreditation  
   44
   - D Alumni - survey 2011  
   44

4. **Topical discussion items within the Masters**  
   46

# APPENDICES

A Master competencies in relation to Dublin Descriptors  
B Source lectures 2011 - 2012  
C Literature lists  

PAGE
“WE DREAM OF WIDTH”

GIJS BAKKER, HEAD OF THE MASTERS
TALKING ABOUT THE HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE MASTERS
"When I started with the Masters in 2003, a period in which we were still caught in the conceptual thinking, we named the department ‘Conceptual Design in Context’. The most important thing was, and still is to me, that, as a designer, you have to be able to think in concepts. You are able to give authentic thought to whatever you are confronted with. By dealing with this in an inquisitive and investigating manner, you develop a central thought which can be expressed in words and images. This is the kind of thought that will form the basic idea for your final design.

So there is more than just the principal and the issue you’re facing. In my own development, personal intuition and desires have always been a guiding factor. The designer, per definition, is more interesting than the bodice of the industry or the ideology of a school. Still, we believed that the emphasis on the individual behind the designer was too strong at that time, which is why we added ‘in Context’. The 100% concourse of foreign students quickly taught us what all those cultural influences were doing with us. We converted this enrichment into a program: one of the first things that plays a role within our trade, is the context in which design challenges reveal themselves to you. It simply was the next step en route to maturity of the trade. We joined that process as a department and incorporated it into our curriculum.

Meanwhile, the context has become somewhat broader. Three years ago, we said that the visionary was culturally well versed and that he views the design trade from that perspective. Today, we take this much further. We train our students so that their designs can be guiding from a cultural, economic, political and social perspective. We dream of width, making the trade more layered and more interesting."
“We are not a position-oriented study. We don’t teach our students any tricks. We build them. What we give them, is something that sticks with them, that makes them who they are, long after they have forgotten all pure knowledge they learned during the Masters…

We grow intellectual curiosity and conceptual design skills with our students and we challenge them to take in an autonomous position in the design field. We prepare them for finding new connections between science, education and society, due to which they can play an unexpected but essential role as a designer in business, education or elsewhere. This is not so much related to a position as it is to a mentality. Everything has to be questioned. Based on the not knowing, the unanswered questions, the confusion and the calling into question of one’s own beliefs. What I’m trying to do, is to change a way of thinking. By taking away axioms, interesting questions and connections arise. In addition, we cherish intuition. I want to make intuition practicable and explicate the culture our students carry with them. What matters to us, is the indescribable, the contra-rational, combined with solid research. We’re not worried about the question where our students will end up. This doesn’t appear to be a problem, as demonstrated by our Alumni survey. The author-designer/researcher we train is able to have everyone in a team of interdisciplinary professionals, face in the same direction, and play a leading role. Because of his Bildung and cultural background, he will be able to plot a course and get other experts on board. And that is of great value in many professional situations.”

“I think that it is important that I am a connector, I love to connect people. That is something I inherited from my mother. She had 6 children and a bunch of grandchildren, and she was very good at hiding which grandchild was her sweet heart. When we were playing with children in the neighbourhood, she would always say: “When you grow up, you have to make sure that you’re the one they come and play with!” Wise advice that I still keep in mind. I love working with my team. I feel great pleasure in seeing how Louise, Jan and Joost interact. It is a great pleasure to be at the table with them. We have a good and fruitful partnership. We gained a lot over the past years. It works more efficiently like this, ideas go back and forth, a clear situation for the study coordinator, since we use similar assessment systems. In this respect, the quality of our study is guaranteed as well”

“Over the past years we have gained a lot: broad context combined with authentic conceptual thinking based on intuitive and rational research, with an inspiring and well-cooperating team!”

THE MASTERS AT DESIGN ACADEMY EINDHOVEN CONSISTS OF 3 RESEARCH DEPARTMENTS:

CONTEXTUAL DESIGN under supervision of Louise Schouwenberg is involved in the question about the relationship between people and their physical and non-physical (digital) context or environment and the role designers can play. Based on abstract themes, the department asks questions about the essence of design, art and architecture and their interconnectedness; about cultural, social and historical meanings that are associated with those things, about the meaning of industrial and traditional production; the changing meaning of functionality and the importance of the geographic, architectural and socio-economical context in which design is born and in which it will function.
SOCIAL DESIGN under supervision of Jan Boelen departs from social developments and human needs and drives. The changing way in which people, objects and social phenomena are connected and affect each other is a central theme. Such new socio-economic ecologies form the object of study. Social Design is more process-oriented and system-oriented than object-oriented.

INFORMATION DESIGN under supervision of Joost Grootens focuses on the changing role of the designer in a world where information is available in abundance and is accessible to everyone. And where the role of the reader has evolved to that of user and co-designer of ubiquitous information. The role of a designer changes from creator of an end product to the creator of a filter, a tool which the user can use to filter information. Digital technology and tools have become indispensable.

The Masters presents itself as a research-driven design department extending to the overall curriculum of Design Academy Eindhoven. The initiated educational reform is focused on better alignment of the own Bachelors with the Masters and more cohesion between both curriculums.

The Masters forms a permanent think tank between tutors/mentors and international students from various cultures. And by doing so, the Masters significantly contributes to the development of the overall education at the academy. The dynamic dialogue between (mainly international) Master students and tutors/mentors in finding new concepts, possible interactions between various cultural angles and exploring and increasing the options of the professional field is a central theme. For instance by entering into partnerships with external experts from other professional fields (such as scientific fields).

Design Academy Eindhoven expects the Master student to be engaged and culturally informed, someone who is able to address relevant themes in a conceptual and sometimes immaterial manner. This helps the academy contribute to topical developments and discussions in the field of design, both within the school as without.

Firstly, the academy emphasizes the combination author – designer with its own design research approach. In the study of various themes, the students work and use their own fascinations and intuition as well as their acquired knowledge and critical analysis skills. The broad context of social developments, including cultural, social, economic, political, ecological and technological developments is part of every research and therefore guiding in the design of the curriculum. Therefore, the road to mastership with regard to design doesn’t run through the independent, more or less traditional, design disciplines, but is established through an integrated conceptual and contextual approach. This makes the various research departments fairly unique in the world. In addition, the international status of the research heads of the Masters, together with the professionalism and experience of the mentors and guest mentors, provide a topical and dynamic interpretation of the study. The themes that people are working on are relevant to the professional field and relevant to the world. With design–research as a foundation, the academy is constantly challenging students to reflect on new social roles of the designer and invites them to display frontier-like behaviour in conquering new design fields: autonomous, curious and open-minded, independent, authentic, guileless, inventive and averse to conventions.

The projects are a focus point in the Master’s degree program. “With projects we can confront students with an approach to problems that they would never have come up with. This is the essence of a project. In our opinion, a good project is about a relevant and topical issue.” A project focusses on the design of a physical or virtual object within a context to be defined by the student.

The dynamic of every project lays in the unbridled curiosity of the student which makes the objective and the work method of the project unpredictable, whereas the road still seems accessible. Central project competencies are the ability to conduct applied research, to present this research in a form providing new perspectives in the research field and the ability to translate study results into visionary and innovative design proposals. During the first three trimesters, students implement projects to discover new work methods which they aren’t used to, in a continuously recurring (design)process of research and design.

---

2 95% of the students come from abroad
2 Joost Grootens, research head of the Information Design department.
During the first year, the products are partially specified. Based on the assignments, students work on their project. Gradually, students obtain more individuality and skills, and they will—in close consultation with their mentors—start working on their own thesis design project during the second year. They will determine the research question and the principle.

Each third trimester, students implement a project in collaboration with the business community, the government or non-profit agencies. The results of those projects find their way into the world through official publications and exhibits.

Integral part of the projects is the requirement that students have to present themselves verbally and in writing. Each trimester, a student presents and defends himself based on the project results. During the final graduation, the student has to present the results of his thesis design project in front of a room full of research heads, mentors, delegates, interested parties and critical colleagues. Projects require students to provide integrated deployment of their knowledge and skills when working on a design issue.

Source, the in-depth lecture and workshop program, is mainly intended as a support program for the student to develop his own perspective, own work methods, positioning and autonomic vision of design in a global context. The goal is to provide the student awareness of the global context of the trade. In addition, the program supports personal development of the student with regard to skills such as empathy, autonomy, intuition and collaboration.

Students will get lessons about design research during which they learn to use various source materials, including scientific research and insights from other cultural fields such as fine arts and architecture. The academy aims to create a form of research where intuition may be used in the interpretation of solid scientifically obtained data. Design–Research is not the same as fully relying on artistic talents, personal fascinations and intuitively obtained insights, but incorporates all of these qualities when analysing and interpreting phenomena. In this combined form of research and design, the academy wants to create a research method that reflects the special, extensive and international professional practice in which the Masters will operate. With this research method, the Masters wants to lay an academic foundation for research that also reflects the use of intuition within Design-Research.

**PROJECT: ATLAS OF LIMBURG**

Exhibit on the Atlas of Limburg from foreign perspectives, in the MECC in Maastricht
PART 1

POSITION

COURSE OF THE MASTERS

MISSION:
PERSONAL STATEMENT EN COMMITMENT IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

Below, we outline the image of the perfect Master student we actively aim for in our education.

A Master designer of Design Academy Eindhoven is an autonomous and independent designer with broad intellectual baggage. Someone who works based on an elaborate vision that is reflected in the intellectual depth and background of his designs, in the way he implements and directs projects, communicates about them and in the way he presents his projects. This personal position combined with global commitment enable a Master designer to travel unexpected roads and to come up with original and surprising solutions. With applied research, a Master designer makes sure that his design functions in a broad social, cultural, social and economic cohesion, a context he uses to get his design realized and implemented.

A Design Academy Eindhoven Master’s designer is a ‘leading’ specialist within the design field. He has a conceptual and contextual mind-set. He starts designing after he has explored his own position, premise, opinion, response, work method and options in relation to the issues with which he is confronted. He automatically makes a connection with the broad and topical social and global themes and is used to extensive and solid research that is associated with such a wide view. His authorship gives him own approaches, accents and colours with regard to designs, whether it concerns products, strategies or programs. A Master designer of the academy is shaped to honour his own culture and to integrate authentic influences into his designs. Within the study, each Master research department explicitly challenges the student to involve their own cultural baggage in their work.

4 Design Academy Eindhoven refers to “author designer” in that case
A Master designer is also ‘leading’ in another sense. In, often, complex projects, he is able to have a multidisciplinary team of designers, technicians, researchers and producers work under his overarching vision. In this vision, all necessary work is given cohesion and meaning. A Master designer is able to convey his vision in an inspiring manner. Overview, communication and efficacy are the cornerstones of his success.

Master designers of the academy are guiding and visionary in national and international social debates about design in the broadest sense, albeit from a theoretical angle or from the design practice.

AUTHOR-DESIGNER/RESEARCHER
An author-designer/researcher is a designer who works based on his own fascinations and a social or professional theme and distinguishes himself from the designer as mere problem solver. He or she characterizes himself by means of a strongly developed intuition combined with broad analytic researching skills and expressive ability. An author designer takes an autonomous position and is able to create his own vision, observing a broader social context.

In the opinion of Design Academy Eindhoven, the qualities of an author designer are best described using the following keywords:

**Intuition**: according to the dictionary: “understanding obtained by immediate intuition”, a pure knowing and understanding, without guidance or mediation by the ratio. Intuition comes from great receptivity, an ability Master students have to develop, receptivity for unexpected discoveries. A strong intuition implies the ability to ask original questions about the world and to relate to that world in an authentic and original manner, beyond axioms and platitudes. Intuition rests on curiosity, knowledge and experience and is developed by refining, questioning, moving and criticizing. The ultimate function of Masters at the academy: “I come from the school of confrontation, both towards students and towards my colleagues.”

**Expressive ability**: a student with a strong expressive ability is able to evoke, gather, create and communicate clear and challenging images during all phases of the research and design process.

**Research in relation to design**: Master research at Design Academy Eindhoven is characterized by a gradually fading threshold between intuitive and systematic research and the fading threshold between creative research and design. Master students investigate to design and design to investigate: it is hard to indicate where one stops and the other begins. A Master student will substantiate his research by means of personal insights and results of scientific research, by designing a prototype for instance, after which the research focuses further. In this kind of design research, there is room for subjective data, for intuition and creative insights that have not (yet) been substantiated with hard facts. In the broad spectrum of research options, the academy is looking for her own approach in close relation to intuition and the expressive ability of students. Supported by the lectureship Design Theory, directed by Louise Schouwenberg and Gert Staal, Design Academy Eindhoven aims to explicate and integrate this way of research into both the Bachelors and the Masters study.

**Contextual design**: in the Masters, design is understood to mean "design in context", to be characterized as developing an autonomous vision based on a strong intuition, a great expressive ability and a clear consciousness and knowledge of the social and international context provided, all this supported by thorough design research. Design can relate to a product, but also to a strategy, an installation, a scenario or a program, but always to a personal story, an idiosyncratic position or a surprising perspective, in the light of a meaningful social context.

* Gijs Bakker, head Masters
In line with the previously mentioned mission and objectives of the Masters, the teaching model is in line with project education. The focus is on the student as a project assistant or a project leader. In the 3rd trimester he works, in collaboration with a company, the government or organization, to perfect his competencies within one of the 3 research departments. Work experience, history and story, including their opinion about the profession and their personal vision of their own future form just as many guidelines for the design as well as the course of their study and the way they design their projects.

Learning is mainly doing, researching and designing, actively and involved, with more and more knowledge of affairs, through intense experiences, by trial and error, reflecting about what is required to improve it. Doing and thinking are a team. Together, they generate commitment, motivation and devotion. In this way, students get more and more in touch with their growing identity as a designer.

Goals and the content of the program come together in the approach of the student. The Masters challenges students to discover the direction and form of their own curiosity and intentions. The Masters provides them with a learning environment that encourages curiosity, supports it, questions it and fortifies it. From the very first moment, the academy wanted every student to really understand and to be aware of the reason why he wants to be at the Masters of Design Academy Eindhoven. There are three main questions:

- What is my personal motivation to be here?
- What do I want to do and learn here?
- What do I want to achieve in these 2 years?

This helps students, consciously or unconsciously, put their background into perspective and they discover the possibility to work on what they didn’t have sufficient time for in their active job, in complete freedom, which helps them take the responsibility for the course and the direction of their Masters study.

What is a project within the Master’s degree program? Firstly, a project contains all components of the overall design process: question, orientation, research, analysis, brainstorm sessions, design, realization, communication and presentation. A project starts with a briefing. Important are the substantive and educational considerations that play a role in determining the projects.

Master projects grow in complexity as the study progresses. They require a multidisciplinary approach and thorough research into the backgrounds and context of the project theme. The integrative variation of research and design, words and actions, theory and practice form one of the main ingredients of the study. The academy invokes this variations to enable students to get introduced to countless research and design methods and to countless ways you combine these two. Again and again, it appears that it isn’t easy to make students aware of the necessary balance. Research cannot be at the expense of design and vice versa, a design can’t just be the result of initial ideas that do not rely on knowledge and analysis. Making a useful connection between the research and design phase is a difficult tasks for most students, and thus a recurring theme in the mentor meetings.

Students are monitored and guided individually. However, the group is also seen as a ‘body of intelligence’. By encouraging collaboration between different, complementing personalities, the Masters wants to obtain new views, particularly because of the large variety of cultural backgrounds of the students.
“WHAT USED TO BE NEUTRALITY IS NOW TRANSPARENCY!”

JOOST GROOTENS, RESEARCH HEAD INFORMATION DESIGN
JOOST GROOTENS WAS AWARDED THE PRESTIGIOUS GOLDENE LETTER IN 2011 IN THE SCHÖNSTE BÜCHER AUS ALLER WELT COMPETITION, FOR HIS DESIGN OF ATLAS OF THE CONFLICT.

As a designer and as a teacher, he is mainly interested in the new role of the designer in his shifting position in-between the user and ubiquitous information. It should be clear what the designer has done with the information and how the user can edit it. Designing design tools is a new task of designers in his opinion. "It is time for software tools as outcome of a design process".

RESEARCH HEADS TALKING

WHERE IS THE WISDOM WE HAVE LOST IN KNOWLEDGE
WHERE IS THE KNOWLEDGE THAT IS LOST IN INFORMATION
WHERE IS THE INFORMATION THAT WE LOST IN DATA *

IS INFORMATION DESIGN THE NEW ADDITION TO THE DESIGN TREE?

In a certain sense it is. Information Design is more than graphic design alone, it is a new professional field. It is moving in two directions. On the one hand, it concerns the huge amount of data available nowadays, but that in itself doesn’t provide information. So Information Design involves the question how to make useful information out of data. On the other hand, we see that the user of information plays a much more active role in the process of discovering and unlocking information. We are dealing with a huge reservoir of digital information, freely accessible through the internet. The amount of information hasn’t just increased, it also gained a much faster turnover rate. Never before in history it was this easy to become author or publisher of information. This has somewhat compromised the natural authority of information carriers such as newspapers, books or magazines. The user is taking over tasks that originally belonged to the designer, and plays with the information and with the tools that grant him access to that information.

IS THIS SPECIALIZATION UNIQUE IN THE WORLD?

As far as I know, it does exist elsewhere, but the focus is more on Info-graphics. For me, that is more of an illustrative art which is not something I focus on. For me, things get interesting when there is more than just images that go with text. I get curious once the images start telling their own story. When the image challenges the user to do something with the information. This is a completely different role for the designer.

* J. Ossewold free after T.S. Elliot, in: Lost in data, het belang van storytelling in een mediacultuur, lectoral speech, June 2010
WHAT IS THE ROLE OF AN INFORMATION DESIGNER?
WHAT IS HIS OR HER EXPERTISE?
The position of a designer traditionally lays somewhere between the user and the supply of information or data. When both aspects change, the role of the designer changes.
The professional field is shifting. In Modernism, neutrality was the highest achievable goal. Afterwards, the idea arose that neutrality doesn't exist. This has led to a more autonomous attitude of the designer, with more artist-like behaviour. But this is not a solution either. Because it isn't true that a designer decides how the reader should read or absorb the information. Today, it is important for a designer to show what he did with the information, especially because the origin of the information is often vague. In this way, the reader or user becomes aware of the fact that the information was given a design to begin with.
More transparency about your own role and interventions. After all, if you don't, you'll be manipulating before you know it. What used to be neutrality is now transparency!
This changes the role of the designer from creator of an end product to someone who designs filters for information or tools with which a user can process the information himself.

BUT THE DESIGNER STILL HAS TO HAVE A LOT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN THE DIGITAL FIELD?
Certainly, a very important part of Information Design involves digital technologies and digital tools. Where, in the old days, people like typesetters and typographers had to deploy their craft, people can now do that themselves with the computer, if they want to publish something.
In my opinion it is absurd that we, as designers, are dependent on a handful of companies such as Adobe with regard to software. Within Information Design in particular, I want students to develop this kind of design tools themselves. So, a design for a software tool can just as well be the outcome of a design process as a product.
At the same time, this is one of the things I really miss in Eindhoven: adequate technological possibilities. Something that was neglected within the academy for too long, by idolizing that which was made manually. Don't get me wrong, we’re doing fine in terms of technology at the academy, but we should be doing much better.

WHAT MAKES INFORMATION DESIGN A MASTER STUDY?
It is a caricature, but very clarifying in this context: a Bachelor student of this academy is someone who puts style to a pedestal, together with his own intuition. He is someone who sometimes has a hard time working in a team, someone who can only rely on his own intuition in case of an emergency. Great designers! But as a Master, you have to be able to work in a systematic and analytic manner. This is one of our principles, that, as far as we have one, our methodology consists of three pillars: research, concept and design. They form the basis for a successful project. We don't really care about where a student boards, as long as there is a transparent reasoning under the process that shows that the student is able to reflect on his process. The start can be intuitive, for instance by starting with material, only to develop a concept later on by research. And in the end doing something else with the material. Our principle is that designing isn’t a linear process, you can dive in however you want, but the pivot points between the three parts are truly crucial. I want to be able to clearly see how a student proceeded from his research to concept and from concept to design.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF THE THESIS AND THE DESIGN? SEEMS THRILLING, AS THEY MIGHT CONFLICT?
My first requirement is that the three crucial parts, research, idea and design, are in clear connection with each other. I want a crystal clear reflection on those pivot points. This is why the thesis is such an essential part for me. Of course, the question is whether this should always be a paper document consisting of a certain amount of words. In my opinion, the form may be far more free, as long as the principle remains: a thesis, regardless of its form, makes the research process, concept development and design transparent, and justifies the choices made. A sketchbook may show just as much ideas and concept development as a text, sometimes even more. This certainly applies to my specialization. I hope that we, at Information Design, are able to develop other assessment forms, by giving students more freedom in this respect.
In my opinion, it is justified when someone is able to graduate when he or she writes a brilliant paper, got a little stuck in her final design but has taken a convincing step in explaining how the design should be.
NAME: OLIVIA DE GOUEIA
DEPARTMENT: CONTEXTUAL DESIGN
PROJECT: APOCALYPTOPIA

By unearthing ancient artefacts, archaeologists shed light on the shadows of a time long past – hoping to gain a better understanding of human history. Using principles from this discipline, Olivia de Gouveia designed a series of structures to reveal something about the present in a fictional future. She calls this ‘inverse archaeology’.

CAN YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THE FINAL ASSESSMENT OF OUR MASTERS IN RESPECT OF SIMILAR STUDIES ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD?
What always strikes me in the US is that a student can’t fail with the graduation project. This is a big issue at times, but it is what it is. They have the students draw up a proposal for a graduation project, which is subject to a very strict assessment. They may reject a proposal up to 6 times. Once the proposal has been approved, you may proceed. You could compare it with our red light meeting, but not 3 weeks prior to the final examination, as is the case with us, but at the beginning of the graduation project. I discussed this with my colleagues, because I am very much in favour of this system. As a study, you connect with the student, as of the approval of the project proposal, the study is a joint responsibility, for better or for worse, till death do us part.
To me, it is a huge limitation that we have too little opportunity for retakes. This means that someone can fail after 2 years, leaving him with nothing.
For us, this means that we are extremely strict during the 1st and 2nd year, to protect the study program, but also to protect students from themselves. Of course, we just represent another vision of the professional field and not everyone has to share this view. So we’re very strict at the start and very generous at the end. It is very easy to be strict at the end, but you have to consider how much someone has grown. For me, this is an important guide in the design of my curriculum and the way I want to guide my students. Everyone can paint a black square on a white canvas, but in case of Malevitsch it is in line with his previous work, which is why his choice became so famous.
You’ll have to assess that in relation to the rest!
HOW DOES THE PROCESS RELATE TO THE ACTUAL END RESULT DURING THE ASSESSMENT
There are two ways to assess. One is: this is what we want, these are the criteria one has to meet and this the time frame. Or you can say: this is where someone started and this is where he ended. He has made such a leap during that period, that we have confidence that this process will continue, even after his study. The latter is how we assess the Masters. What often also is included in an assessment, is someone’s potential to grow towards the level you feel everyone should achieve.

SOMETIMES, ASSESSMENT CONTRADICTS THE PROCESS. SOMEONE IS GIVEN POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM HIS MENTOR, WHO GIVES HIM A NEGATIVE ASSESSMENT IN THE END.
This is mainly caused by the fact that up until the assessment, you are unable to see what someone has done for other teachers. This reveals for instance that he has made the same mistakes, in which case you have to give a negative verdict. At the same time, I think that this is why it is so important to have a strict assessment during the first 2 trimesters. Everyone should be imbued with the sense of urgency, both mentors and students. After all, this is how it will be when you’re facing principals in the real world. At the Masters, we consider the assessments to be a supporting component of the learning process.

WHAT ABOUT THE LEVEL OF OUR MASTERS?
I can clearly see that we, in the Netherlands, and in Eindhoven, are leading. We have a serious lead compared to many countries from which our students originate. We live in an exotic design paradise. Ever since my 4th year, Wim Crouwel has played a part in my life because of phone books, school books etc. It is in our genes. That lead will be hard to catch up by others. This is why we have raised the bar up high, we expect a lot from our students. However, I do see that students in America are much more motivated than our students. That truly is a different class.

WHAT WILL AN IDEAL INFORMATION DESIGN MASTER OF DESIGN ACADEMY EINDHOVEN LOOK LIKE?
To give you a very concrete example of the Graduation of last year: the cum laude of Garder. Because he came over from Iceland to study here, he is able to look back to his country with other eyes. He saw global phenomena he wouldn’t have seen if he had chosen to stay there. The physical and mental distance lifted him above reality for a while, allowing him to make unexpected connections. That truly is one of the strengths of our Masters, they come from all over the world, giving them a different perspective.
Once our students arrive here, they are already designers, that’s not something we have to worry about. As soon as they arrive here, we challenge them to think about the design process itself. Thinking about the trade will automatically become part of their professional practice later on.
Once you get out, you won’t be the same person who came in. Garder is a great example, but a Master student of the academy is able to make unexpected connections, from an often, literally, global perspective, fuelled and supported by solid research.
Applied to an Information Designer graduated from Design Academy Eindhoven: he will have an analytical mind-set in the confrontation with complex information flows, providing him grip on its essence, which he can then translate into a shape or an instrument that unlocks those flows to the user in an accessible manner. At the same time, he redefines the role of the designer, which can be a successful product of a design process.
Someone like that contributes to the development of the trade.

NAME: CHUANG HSIAANG-CHING
DEPARTMENT: CONTEXTUAL DESIGN
PROJECT: RE:_MACHINE
The appearance of an object should convey its character and how it actually functions, believes Chuang Hsiang Ching. He feels that the appearance of consumer electronics today bears no relation to their functionality.
SO A WELL-DEFINED CAREER PROSPECT IS DIFFICULT TO OUTLINE?
Definitely, but in my opinion, a Master study is not a vocational training. This is a big difference in comparison with a Bachelor. They learn a trade. We teach our Masters to step aside and take a good look at the trade, to question it, to analyse different approaches of the trade and to take a position with regard to it. With us, it is mainly about reflection and research, particularly about yourself as a designer. This input is of great value everywhere, regardless of whether you are working at a major design agency as a project manager of a large and complex design process or as independent entrepreneur in collaboration with principals, authors and scientists. Not to mention the educational field many of our Masters end up in. Whatever the case, we provide visionary designers with a unique vision and a personal point of view.

HOW DO YOU SUCCEED IN CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO STEP ASIDE AND QUESTION THE TRADE IN A CRITICAL MANNER?
Firstly because of the composition of our staff. Our mentors aren’t what you’d call a role model to the students, since a number of them transcend the design discipline. In addition to graphic designers, the team of teachers consists of a computer scientist, a design critic and a journalist.

FINALLY, WHAT ARE TYPICAL FEATURES OF THE MASTERS OF DESIGN ACADEMY EINDHOVEN?
Our projects confront students with an approach to issues they would have never come up with themselves. And they always concern a relevant topical problem. That is lacking at many other schools in my opinion. Thanks to the larger supply of students, we are able to make stricter selections, giving us a constantly improving balance between what we determine as a study and what the student determines himself. We don’t take them by the hand as we used to do, simply because it is no longer necessary. We are increasingly able to respond to the larger role that Master students should play in the design of their study, which is great! It is important to us that students develop their own methodology instead of a discipline or professional field. The international group of students is a great help. We don’t provide a mould that students should fit in to. We like diversity, in fact, it is our principle in our way of teaching and in how we view the world. The student with a large aesthetic sense, but who isn’t able to create beautiful things, is just as welcome as an analytical thinker.

THIS MUST REQUIRE A LOT FROM YOUR MENTORS?
That is why it is great that they represent different backgrounds. And that they are older. Between the older and younger mentors, there is a healthy dynamic tension: mildness versus strict, strong focus versus a broad view of the trade, open and willing to go along with extravagant proposals versus a more safe approach. The great thing is that the diversity in international students and in staff helps put a lot of issues into perspective. This often causes assignments to head in a direction that nobody could have expected. Never a dull moment for anybody!
“MOVING A SMALL ROCK IN THE RIVER IS A GREAT START!”

JAN BOELEN, RESEARCH HEAD SOCIAL DESIGN
JAN BOELEN IS CONNECTED TO DESIGN ACADEMY EINDHOVEN AS HEAD SOCIAL DESIGN.
In addition, as initiator and curator, he organizes exhibits around topical social themes in collaboration with artists, architects, philosophers and other scientists. At the time of the interview, he is doing an exhibit around fear, named: “Architecture of Fear”. Characteristic to his approach of the design trade is his fascination with social themes such as entry and starting point for design. He loves to stir discussion, gets restless when satisfaction lurks around the corner: “I will be the Belgian rebel who refuses to conform!”

IF YOU LOOK AT ALL THE THINGS YOU DO IN ADDITION TO YOUR ACTIVITIES AS A SOCIAL DESIGN PROFESSOR, YOU SEEM TO LEAD SEVERAL LIVES AT ONCE. WHY STILL BE CONNECTED TO THE ACADEMY IN THE RESPONSIBLE POSITION OF HEAD?
It has been over a year ago that Gijs Bakker asked me to do Man and Humanity, as the specialization was called back then. He wanted to bring together design research on anything related to social and human together in the Masters. And that has everything to do with what I’m doing in Z33, where I have the artistic direction and where social developments play a central role. Therefore it’s a logical extension to my practice. Education offers the opportunity of departing from a blank sheet. I find that very interesting.

MAN AND HUMANITY HAD A CERTAIN RING TO IT…WHY SOCIAL DESIGN?
Man and Humanity is the entire world and much more. At the same time, it also is a projection to the Third world, of which I – being a Belgian with our Congo trauma - don’t believe that we can live up to that suggestion from this academy. If we were able to live up to it, I truly wonder if It would be anything else than a way to get rid of our guilt, instead of actually trying to solve things.
I choose a less ambitious principle. Social Design is a kind of playground for which everyone will have his own definition of course, but it is a work field within which you can easily define a cluster of definitions and concepts. We’re not planning on healing the world, but we can change it a little bit. Moving a small rock in the river is a great start. The connectedness of people, objects and phenomena in society creates a sort of ecology. This has become our nature, which was also designed, in fact. With this, we have created a new type of culture, in which we are constantly changing our behaviour because the environment is constantly changing as well.
CAN YOU GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF THIS COHESION BETWEEN PEOPLE, OBJECTS AND PHENOMENA ON WHICH YOUR RESEARCH FOCUSES?
The theme for this year’s first trimester is “Me, myself and I”, returning to yourself. Looking at what happened this summer in Great Britain and London, it’s all about the haves and the have not’s in our society. As a designer, you play a huge role. There are those who can’t afford it, but they are there, while emitting the signal ‘grab me!’ I think that ‘me’ portion is the problem, the individualization and at the same time, if you listen carefully to yourself, this is also where the solution lays. It exactly is the bringing together of that sort of contradictions on which Social Design research focuses. Social Design begins with yourself. There is nothing easier than solving someone else’s problem. You externalize the problem, you don’t feel a connection with it. I think that you always have to begin with yourself and see how you relate to the other and the objects around you.

HOW DOES THAT PRINCIPLE “BEGIN WITH YOURSELF” TRANSLATE INTO THE STUDY PROGRAM?
We are looking for a personal work method for each student, in other words, an individual approach in which we provide the student handles and tools and insight into his own actions. This also means the confrontation with himself. After all, the better I know my position as a designer, what culture I come from, what experience are important to me, the better I know which research I should initiate and which tools I should use to shape and represent that research. The better we are able to expose the student’s talent, the better the student can deploy his characteristics for his own practice. In this way, he develops his own language and story. That is the challenge! Fortunately, Gijs, Louise and Joost are on the same page with regard to this approach, apart from some nuances.

“SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE.” HOW DO YOU MAKE SURE THAT I GET WHAT I NEED AS A STUDENT?
In 2011-2012 the following mentors and guest lecturers are involved in the programme: Aldo Bakker, Dick van Hoff, Thomas Lommée, all three of them are designers. Liesbeth Huybrechts is a thesis mentor. Rianne Makkink is an architect and designer. I am also a designer and artistic director of Z33-House for contemporary art. During the year, we will invite several guest mentors. Thus, the team we work with is a carefully balanced ‘system’ of different competences and characters. Each of the mentors has a different profile.

SUCH AS?
First there’s Thomas Lommée, of www.intrastructures.net. His approach is analytical, he thinks in terms of systems. Intrastructures is leading in design that starts with mapping complexity and constructing open infrastructures in which the individual shares his thoughts and his enthusiasms. Thomas is good at seeing the big picture, the wider implications of a project. His assignment starts at the beginning and continues in the second term. Dick van Hoff focuses on product. He’s in love with developing and producing ‘authentic’ products, with a strong sense of material and form and a great love for industrial and craft-based techniques. Entrepreneurship is part of his practice. Then there is Aldo Bakker, who’s concern is with the details and the image; key to the way the research and the product finally come together. Bakker believes strongly in the mastery and control of aesthetics. A situation or an act will be the starting of his assignments. Finally there’s Rianne Makkink, architect of Makkink & Bey Studio. She has a more intuitive stance in the way she conducts her analyses and research. In her practice with Jurgen Bey she’s focused on the way experiment, doubt and ‘a hodgepodge way of thinking’ can disclose hidden values and stories. She will guide and give extra input in your design process and methodology in the first and the second year. So, there’s a trajectory, from small to large, from research to product, from imagination to image. That’s the way we hope to connect design research to social reality and make a change in people’s lives. Because of this mix of teachers, we, as a department are able to encourage students to conduct research in all kinds of ways. Varying from systematic research to intuitive and poetic research with which they make a story or performance part of their research projects. That way, they begin to see the process more and more as a process. That is the direction I want to go.

WHAT KIND OF ‘PROCESS’ ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
My iPhone was designed as an object of course, but in fact, it is a platform onto which a lot of people release their ideas. Those ideas are connected to a huge, constantly changing system through their iPhone. The content of that system is always moving. These changes are very interesting to us as a source of inspiration and principle based on which we shape the material. In other words, it is not the thing itself that is important, but what it does to us and how those changes affect our behaviour.
THE PROFESSION IS IN FACT ALL ABOUT HOW OBJECTS ARE PART OF GREATER PLANS AND HOW TO INFLUENCE THAT AS A DESIGNER.

Exactly! Looking at 70% of the graduation projects of 2010, you’ll see that it is not about one thing, but always about a system of things that are interconnected. So this can’t always be captured in one image. This fact is also the basis of a kind of conflict we have at Design Academy Eindhoven. The format of the Graduation and the associated catalogue suits a design that is product- and object-oriented. The format dictates: a page in the catalogue, a photo and 5 lines of text, all in a lifestyle-oriented manner. That is no way to communicate our complex systems. In other words, it conflicts with a different approach of what design is. In the latter case, you’re talking about a different kind of ecology. And I hope we’ll be able to find a suitable way to present it, something we are working hard on at the Masters.

WHAT DOES A DIFFERENT WAY OF PRESENTING IDEALLY LOOK LIKE?

It would constitute expressive and descriptive systems that provide room for new multi-touch technologies. The written thesis is certainly not sanctified in our opinion. Websites, links, films and tablets are justified means, probably even better means to show how objects are part of larger systems and how they are affected by that in time and space.

The question is whether the thesis and the Graduation are the right and sustainable strategy in their current form. They may be for a certain part of the school, but you’ll have to create systems for another part in a different way, that are more relevant in the concerned field. You have to pick the right medium, which is something that doesn’t happen sufficiently at the academy.

Don’t forget that we’re developing concepts that will prove their value in about 5 to 10 years, since that is the term we work with.

The relevance can’t always be measured from that which you see. It requires mediation, mediation we often lack because of the dictated format.

WHICH IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS SHOULD A STUDENT SOCIAL DESIGN MEET?

The main requirement for a Master is that you have to have an investigative attitude. Someone who is eager to investigate and who has a critical mind-set. Even when someone like that is merely creating, he is still reflecting: why is this relevant? Once he leaves this place, he has a story to tell that may last him a lifetime. Research, reflection and story are one. He is able to convert his unbridled curiosity and his fascination stimulated by us into a research process. Contemporary life is a complex hybrid system and is these times form the context we live in. It is an ecology between people, things and environments. New models and products have to respond and relate to this reality.

We believe that form follows context. Meaningful social design is responding to the needs, and has to fit into the new context of society, form follows content in context.

The strategies, products and services that are designed are part of a system. The research output of the department will vary from product design to system design.

We analyse the systems and contexts and formulate scenarios, prototypes and models that fit.

Our methodology is that form follows content in context through process. In this department the analytical approach and the emotional approach are united. Rational and irrational aspects cognitive and intuitive knowledge’s, science and design (approaches) methodologies are integrated in the design process. Above all, through the making, thinking will inspire you and define the design process. We believe that making is thinking. The design process is iterative. True experimental e.g. (trial and error) goes beyond ‘interest shopping’.

We expect a self-critical, reflective and constructive attitude.

WHAT IS THE COURSE OF THE SELECTION PROCEDURE?

WHICH CRITERIA DO STUDENTS HAVE TO MEET?

The most important thing is their motivation. I want to know what their fascinations are and what their motivation is for choosing our Masters. We ask them to do this in writing. By the way, the only incorrect answer to that is: “Dutch Design”. That is probably because I originate from Belgium… The essential question is whether you feel like writing your story as a designer and to investigate that, this is what it is all about.

A critical attitude, knowing what you’re doing, preferably people who have done countless of other things and who are consciously thinking about what they want and where they’re going. People who have a sense of reflection. That doesn’t necessarily mean that every Bachelor student can proceed to the Master. A good Bachelor is a good designer, but it doesn’t make him a potential Master.
HOW DO YOU GUIDE THE STUDENT TOWARDS HIS OWN RESEARCH IN THE 2ND YEAR?
That is a gradual process. During the first trimester, three teachers give them a defined assignment. As the year progresses, the mentors gradually become consultants. The initiative lays more and more in the hands of the student. In the second trimester, they are given two assignments and one mentor. They have to formulate the second assignment on their own. To this end, they are asked, during the Christmas holiday, to write a first draft about their own design activities and about the way they want to convert it into their own research during the second trimester. During the third trimester, students face an assignment by an external principal, in which they are deemed to formulate their own thesis project.
In addition, the scale and complexity of the assignments increase each trimester. As the study progresses, the assignments become more complex and more comprehensive. Eventually this should translate into their own design research during the second year.
And they have to be careful that it doesn't become too obedient. Because sometimes I feel that everything is too justified, too correct. But we partly exist to introduce the error, to cast doubt. If we do this, something unexpected happens. The contradiction, the discussion and the debate. Refusing to agree, that is also important in shaping the student.

SO, IN FACT, TWO THINGS HAPPEN: STUDENTS LEARN FROM THE PROJECTS THEY HAVE TO DO AND THEY HAVE TO BE SHAPED AS A PERSON: AUTONOMOUS, REFLECTIVE, AND SELF-AWARE. HOW DO YOU REALIZE ONE IN RELATION TO THE OTHER?
I think the occasions on which feedback is given, are in fact the actual learning occasions for the personal development of the student. We handle this differently today than we did before. Before, the student had to hold a presentation on which we would base the majority of our feedback. Today we want to provide feedback in advance. This seems contradictory, but it isn't. It is true that there are results of assignments and projects, but that is not the first approach. We expect a student to tell us what it is he wants to talk about. For instance, an issue he ran into. In other words, a student has to properly reflect what it is he wants to receive feedback about, what he wants to discuss with us. A less passive approach, so to speak.
Subsequently, we confront him with our criticism, which is of course based on the establishment and the result of the assignment or the project, but also on the personality of the student. Person and project should match in our opinion. If there is a difference between the two, we confront the student with that. I can tell you, these are important learning occasions.

NAME: LUCAS MULLIÉ
DEPARTMENT: SOCIAL DESIGN
PROJECT: TIME RESTAURANT
Lucas Mullié is a ‘food curator’, a profession he invented himself. In this new function, he established a Time Restaurant in a regular terraced house, in a regular Eindhoven housing estate. He set himself the task of serving dishes that reflect the season and locale of their creation.
WHAT ARE THE DEMANDS IN RESPECT OF THE EVENTUAL
THESIS OF THE STUDENTS?
We require a student to have explored a certain research
theme or a certain field of knowledge in such a way that new
connections have arisen. Connections that otherwise wouldn’t
have come up due to the mind-set and methodology used. In
addition, we expect everything to be presented in a transparent
and metaphoric way, so that there truly is new knowledge and
new insights so that others can work with that.
It may still be a hypothesis, as long as it sufficiently challenges
and argues in words or in images. It can also be a critical
reflection of the research issue. In the end, we want to see that
someone is able to go in-depth and to properly reflect by making
unexpected connections. This is something everyone can learn
from and where the innovation is hidden.

SOMEONE WHO STRETCHES THE BOUNDARIES OF THE
TRADE?
Students are often working at the edge of the design trade. But
I don’t believe we are working with the trade itself. When looking
back at the themes of the past years, we are mainly concerned
with social developments. The starting point, which is obvious to
me, is more fear or stress than the design object in itself.

YOU SAID THESIS IN WORD OR IMAGES. CAN YOU ELABORATE?
Not everyone is able to handle words, the written thesis. We
are a study for people who mainly think and argue in images.
What we’re doing now, a written thesis, is not what we want. In
the previous academic year, I introduced the visual aspects of a
thesis. I hope we are able to continue to travel in that direction
in a way that someone is able to graduate with a film as thesis.
Like Lucas, who graduated with his time restaurant. He couldn’t
stop creating, every week he released something new. Time,
food, everything was connected. Every week he wrote a column
about it in the newspaper, a page on Facebook or on his blog.
What he wrote were reflections on the reflections he wrote, in
an extremely poetic way. That is one side of the spectrum of a
possible thesis form.

On the other hand, the design can be a conclusion of the
preliminary research. It can also be a starting point for the
research. Both are intertwined. Like the research also the
design can take many forms. The most obvious form would be a
product, a strategy or a service. The student starts this education
as a designer, it’s only logical he concludes it as a designer, who
has improved his and her analytical skills. However, during the
masters studies students will discover their specific strengths
and weaknesses. If they succeed in writing a very good thesis,
whereas their design proposals don’t reach that same level, they
might end their studies with a theoretical project. If on the other
hand their design talent exceeds their writing skills, they might
end their studies with a research and design, of which the main
ingredients are visual.

WHERE DO YOUR SOCIAL DESIGNERS END UP?
I can tell you that many of our alumni will function in networks
and that the products and processes they monitor and design
will also function in that kind of system. They are part of the new
mind-set, the new networking society.

HOW DO YOU LOOK BACK ON YOUR PAST YEAR AS HEAD OF
SOCIAL DESIGN?
In the beginning, I immediately said that we had to add structure.
Everybody should know what is expected from him/her. There
was a great need for clarity, for everyone. That has made the
course clear, and the ship is sailing. For the first time, we will
educate people who have consciously chosen Social Design
instead of Man and Humanity. I am relatively satisfied, but
politically correct projects make me restless!
I’m also here to introduce incorrect ideas, to provoke, especially
when we all try to be good. I’ll be the Belgian rebel who refuses
to conform.
“WITHOUT CONTEXT, THERE’S NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT…!”

LOUISE SCHOUWENBERG, RESEARCH HEAD CONTEXTUAL DESIGN

NAME: SONJA BÄUMLER
PROJECT: (IN)VISIBLE MEMBRANE
The (In)visible membrane confronts scientific data and methods with fashion design in order to find a balance between individual identity and the surrounding local environment. By doing so, I want to create a new second living layer on our body based on the interaction between individuals and the surrounding.
LOUISE SCHOUWENBERG IS ACTIVE WITHIN DESIGN ACADEMY EINDHOVEN AS LECTOR DESIGN THEORY AND HEAD OF CONTEXTUAL DESIGN.
When she is not working for the academy, she publishes articles about design and fine arts, is curator of exhibits at the intersection of design and art and is active in various advisory functions. A recent publication is a monograph about designer Hella Jongerius. Currently, she is working with Gert Staal on a publication in which the international success of Dutch design is explained. In her opinion, a good study has to have room for the discourse about the discipline, from strong (sometimes controversial) visions and angles. In the dynamic that is created in this way, the possibilities of the discipline are stretched and the cultural and social relevance increased.

WHY “CONTEXTUAL” DESIGN?
DOESN’T GOOD DESIGN ALWAYS CONSIDER THE CONTEXT?
I consider design to be a field that answers to the needs of society that affect the immediate living environment of people. Design is a discipline-bound professional field, involved with questions about the relationships people have in their daily life. That automatically means that one can’t just think in terms of isolated products, but always in a context in which all elements are addressed: products, users, manufacturers, the architectural, private or public area, the social connections in which designs function. This is why, within Contextual Design we deviate from a narrow approach to design: coming up with a targeted solution to a specific problem. We are not aiming for the next ingenious corkscrew. The field we cover is significant, which is why we often work from abstract themes that, in our opinion, are important to the trade of the designer and for the current world. This helps our students explore the themes in such a way that, in the end, they offer a new perspective, both on the theme or the issue and on the possible answers. Those answers may consist of physical products, but also of visionary strategies, imaginary models or critical mind-sets. To me, context means that you involve all forms of context in your process of designing and researching: social, historic, cultural, philosophical, economical, anthropological, expressive etc.
This context is huge. Where is the limitation, the demarcation within which the master reveals himself?

I am unable to demarcate where the results of Contextual Design lead to. They can be extremely diverse, as demonstrated by the graduation works of the past years. What you can see is that it is always about themes that have a topical social and cultural relevance.

This year, we started "Living as a physical being in a digitalized world", because we noticed that students are thinking about the question how designers should adapt their role thereto. In the choice of themes, we use our own antennae as a mentor team, we rely on the visions of designers and theoreticians and we certainly also rely on the signals we get from our students. When a certain generation suddenly starts to worry about their own role, since digital media are democratizing the trade so to speak, that indicates it is an important subject. The projects of our students, including those of the Bachelor studies or other design studies in the world, show that is actually happening in society at this moment.

Students are free in how they address those themes. It can be a purely cultural or artistic approach, it can be a humanitarian or ecological approach or represent a new vision of the market. We don’t immediately inhibit a direction, however, we do point out the consequences of certain choices.

And how can this be distinguished from social design?

Our approach does differ somewhat from the approach of Social Design, where, as a student, you’ll always begin with a social issue. We aren’t that strict, often we work with a more abstract theme that does have common ground with social issues but doesn’t necessarily coincide. To us the question: ‘what is design?’ is always central. And further: ‘what role can (a) design(er) play within this specific context?’

The demarcation lays not in the direction a project can take, but in the starting point. Subsequently, we require students to analyse any theme based on personal interest and talents and based on knowledge and research, before they come up with answers.

In addition, our themes don’t necessarily have a moral charge, something that happens a lot with Social Design. I suspect that you’re gagging creativity when you turn a design assignment into a moral project. Irony and humour can play an important role, in fact, we hope they do! Nor do we shun projects that involve apparent amoral aspects. We had discussion for instance, about the associations a project would invoke with animal abuse or a project that reminds of dubious Nazi practices with human skin. The latter project proposes to make plastics from dead hair. Of course, the student has to be aware of the associations he invokes with his project, but that doesn’t have to mean that he has to refrain from doing it out of fear that people won’t understand. After all, in our opinion, his motives are different and legitimate. It is important to let go of moral prejudice, after all, only then can you develop a sincere sort of personal moral.

Name: Garðar EyjólfsSon
Project: Hydro Morphosis

Despite the ever-increasing imprint on Iceland’s economy and the environment, all of the aluminium produced here is directly shipped away for further treatment elsewhere, and so the entire process remains largely invisible to the local population. Garðar Eyjólfsson rose to the challenge of making the industry tangible and reconnecting it with the surroundings.
STUDENTS WHO THINK ABOUT THEIR FUTURE ROLE, ABOUT ABSTRACT THEMES AS PRINCIPLE FOR DESIGN CONTRACTS AND ABOUT ALL POSSIBLE MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONTEXTS: YOU OPERATE AT THE BORDERS OF THE DESIGN FIELD. WHICH CHOICE LIES AT THE ROOT OF THAT?

Contextual Design doesn't necessarily take on a concluded position in the discussion about the role of the designer. I think this applies to all Master departments. We don't define the role of designers, but by a varied offer, we try to challenge the student to explore the boundaries and to challenge them where possible. To me, it is extremely important that my teachers represent a position. I invite them, in fact, I choose them for their strong and often conflicting positions. Within the department, that is how the discourse is established.
And that discourse focuses on the question what design can mean in the relation of people with their physical and digital or rather non-physical environment. What place can design have? When everything becomes smart in our environment, what relation do we have with that environment? Well, that's the abstract question that will soon take you to unexpected and uncultivated areas where design may play a part.
So yes, we do display frontier-like behaviour, we explore the boundary of the design trade and we have a lot of fun doing it: researching, curious, independent, optimistic, authentic, guileless, inventive and particularly averse to conventions.
That behaviour is characteristic to the entire department: head and teachers/mentors are constantly working on pushing the boundaries of the trade and to map new roles of designers.

CAN YOU GIVE SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT IT HAS RESULTED IN?
What is interesting, is that students often eagerly accept the challenges we present them and surprise us with their own angles. For instance, over the past years, we have seen a number of students work together with scientists, including biologists and agricultural scientists. This has led to unexpected results, with which not just we were extremely happy, but the scientists as well. One project explored new possibilities for the growth of mushrooms during transport in collaboration with scientists of the Agricultural University of Wageningen. Another student investigated how the layer of bacteria on human skin can engage new relationships with clothing. Together with biologists of the University of Utrecht, one student investigated how ‘fungi’ can result in a natural decomposition process of corpses. These designers acted as translators of scientific insights the scientists wouldn’t have come up with, because they have a different focus.

NAME: MAURIZIO MONTALTI
PROJECT: NEW WAYS TO EMBRACE THE CYCLE OF LIFE AND DEATH

Decay and death are natural processes. However, in modern society the natural cycle of life tends to be denied, an attitude that is both harmful to the process of mourning and harmful to the natural environment. To reverse the denial, Maurizio Montalti decided to research how nature itself might contribute to the decomposing of both organic and inorganic tissue.
In close cooperation with scientists he explored future possibilities, and created decomposing coverings. The felt dresses, inoculated with fungal organisms, are capable of ‘eating’ both human remains and plastic waste materials. In the end, these will return to the soil as nutrients, completing the cycle of life.
**IS THAT THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTIC OF A MASTER STUDENT IN YOUR OPINION: THAT HE OR SHE PUSHES THE BOUNDARIES OF THE TRADE?**

Not in the first place. Above all, a Master is someone who conducts systematic research, someone who knows how to demonstrate how he did it, and why he made certain choices. Someone like that is capable of reflecting on his own design and research process. With us, you have to be able to defend yourself as a Master with words, both in writing and in speech. Not everyone is able to do that, as we saw during the previous Graduation, but we are getting there.

And maybe even more important: we are en route in our search to find various formats for that research and the necessary reflection and analysis. For scientists, the question what scientific research means exactly is a constant topic of discussion of course, but they largely agree with the main requirements of objectivity and neutrality for instance. Meanwhile, we have a pretty good idea about what ‘practical research’ means and what criteria you can use to assess it. But the question what artistic research or design research means is an unexplored area. How do you combine rational knowledge, hard data, critical analysis with intuition, passion, emotions and idealism? Together with teachers and students, we investigate the pitfalls and the unexplored possibilities. I love that quest, because there is so much left to explore.

**“NOT EVERYONE IS ABLE TO DO THAT” YOU SAY. WHAT DO YOU DO WITH SOMEONE WHO IS UNABLE TO DEFEND HIS IDEAS IN SPEECH AND WRITING? CAN SOMEONE LIKE THAT GRADUATE?**

We want his design and his report of the research to demonstrate that he has worked in a systematic and logical manner. Say someone designs a series of marvellous chairs, but his thesis isn’t solid. We want him to show that he has explored his design and that he has made clear choices. Graduating can be a close call for someone like that. That invokes a big dilemma by the way: how do you deal with weak design results. As long as it isn’t possible to retake the exam, which is different at universities for instance, it is very harsh to give someone confidence for two years only to send him home without a diploma in the end. We are very careful with this. If we can justify that someone has developed, that also counts in his final assessment. Sometimes it may be that someone who doesn’t have great verbal or researching skills, still comes up with a convincing design. The Spider factory for instance, mainly relied on the imagination of the student, not on extensive research into the feasibility of his project. He is convinced his project will succeed, and we believe him, even though he hadn’t come up with hard evidence for his exam.
The other situation exists as well: people who are great at researching, who are great writers, but who don’t know how to translate their visions into designs. I wouldn’t have any problems with someone who wrote a great paper combined with the justification of why he/she has chosen to follow a design study. What I just said is very dangerous, because you’re bordering the academic world, but let’s say someone wants to become a design critic! or a gallery holder or organizer? These people have a lot to gain from studying at a design academy. In your assessment, the perspective with which someone graduates is always considered, as is the extent to which he has grown and matured during the study. Ambitions of a student certainly play a role in graduation.

**BUT WHAT IS ‘DESIGN’ WHEN SOMEONE GRADUATES PURELY ON A BRILLIANT THESIS?**

It could be someone who is designing his own future or opens a brilliant new vision on the discipline that steers other designers into new directions. We had someone graduate with a vision of exhibits, for which she made a design in the Van Abbemuseum, but to me, the strength of her exam mainly lied in her proposals for alternative forms, not so much in the visual design itself. Whatever the case may be, assessment remains a difficult subject matter. We keep looking for appropriate forms when someone is unable to express himself in words. Expressive research, graphical research, those kinds of things. And we keep looking for appropriate forms when someone isn’t very good at designing, whereas is analytical skills are good.

---

**NAME: THOMAS MAINCENT**

**DEPARTMENT: CONTEXTUAL DESIGN**

**PROJECT: SPIDER FARM**

Each creature has evolved to fit perfectly into a specific biological niche. So what better way to produce a 100% natural product than to utilise such innate design and let nature do the rest? The Chinese have done it for thousands of years, carefully cultivating silk worms for silk. Now, Thomas Maincent proposes to do the same with Madagascar silk spiders. Their silk is a magnificent golden colour and is five times stronger than steel of the same thickness, while also remaining elastic, making it a highly attractive raw material.

---

**AND WHERE DO THEY END UP, THE ALUMNI OF CONTEXTUAL DESIGN?**

Our alumni become product designers, organizers, sometimes they lead complex design processes, achieve high positions in companies or teach. Countless of alumni have found a place in design studies and even university studies. Some of them even invent their own position, because the area they cover doesn’t have an official name yet. That applies to the previously mentioned Sonja Bäumel and Maurizio Montalti, for instance, who mainly look for and enter into multidisciplinary collaborations.

**IN WHAT WAY AND TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU TAKE THE AMBITION OF YOUR STUDENTS INTO ACCOUNT IN THE DESIGN OF THE CURRICULUM? HOW FLEXIBLE ARE YOU?**

The steering principle, which also applies to Social and Information Design, is that we track precisely how each student develops towards a certain direction, to which we adjust our guidance and our curriculum. Looking at the history of the Masters, we’ve come a long way. In the early years, we had 10 applicants, 9 of which we had to accept. During the previous accreditation in 2007, we were still fiercely competing with the Bachelors of the academy, with regard to the visual appearance of the design results. The international applications weren’t abundant, in addition, the Master students came here to learn Dutch Design and that was something our Bachelors were much better at. We were still tempted to hold their hands until they were good enough. In fact, the principle of the study hadn’t been properly formulated yet. After all, Bachelors and Masters are very different studies. The Master study has its own dynamic and colour and thus its own student profile. We had to learn to cherish that uniqueness and to reinforce it, and I think we did a pretty good job.

**WHAT IS THE SITUATION LIKE NOW?**

We now take a proactive response. The supply of students is much bigger, we can choose the best and that quality has led to a student population that is ideal to us: students who definitely have design skills and who are good at thinking about themselves and their work, about their place in the world and who can have a large share in the design of their own study. You could say that we were given and took the liberty and room to mature. The Bachelor studies focus on the personal development of students. The Master studies teach students to open the window to the world outside, allowing them to see the bigger context from their own baggage, the bigger themes that matter in the current world.

**WHAT DOES THAT GROWTH INTO MATURITY MEAN FOR THE CURRENT STUDENTS?**

I asked the current freshmen to write a one page document during the Christmas holidays about how they see themselves as a designer. Which role does he or she want to play. Which fascination and ambitions play a role. How do you see the future as a designer. What relevance plays a role?
After the holiday, the texts were read by all teachers of the 2nd semester. The task of the teachers is to give each student an assignment within the scope of the one-paged document and the overall theme for the 2nd semester: Message and the Medium.

Yes, we address the student more with regard to his maturity. They come here with an ambition and a direction they want to go. Often even with a direction for their study. We try to deal with this as flexibly as possible, while reminding them of the consequences of certain choices and the requirements they, or we as mentors, may have.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STUDENTS AND YOU AND YOUR STAFF IN TERMS OF YOUR OFFER AND CURRICULUM?

Let me first of all tell you that it is a lively relationship and a dynamic discourse. No two academic years are the same, which is where our quality lies in my opinion.

The great thing about a design study is that students tell you which themes are relevant. You can be frustrated by that, or you can cherish it and provide room for it. As Masters, we want to provide room for that. The discourse is flourishing, because we reel in strong visions. We generate the discourse, it refines and sometimes it hurts, but it always leads to something useful even if it is something you don’t want. But if that is the case, at least you know why! See how the assessment interviews of the study are conducted and hear with how much passion every mentor defends or attacks projects and you’ll know that you’re not working on something that doesn’t matter.

We partly give up our steering role as mentors, or rather: we focus more on the learning environment of the student. I don’t try to find our authority in that what we know as Contextual Design, but more in organizing a permanent dialogue between what students want and what we, as team of various people, have to offer. That partly takes away safety, both for the students and the mentors, but maybe I should say ‘false safety’ because that is what it is. What we get in return is a continuously inspiring discussion about the interpretation of the trade and about the relevance of themes, both to our students as to our mentors.

HOW DO YOU GUARANTEE THE QUALITY OF YOUR DEPARTMENT?

First to safeguard the quality of the mentors of course. From a pool of experts, I carefully select the mentors that have a lot to bring to the table within a certain phase of the study or within a certain theme. Each of them has an active professional practice in addition to teaching, nobody considers teaching their main job. That guarantees that they have feeling with what is happening in the world at that time. Diversity is the magic word here: older experienced mentors and younger mentors that are working with early enthusiasm. With regard to their background, mentors are diverse as well: they are designers, artists, architects and theoreticians and in each trimester, the team has a different composition.

The students work in close contact with their mentors, through which we try to safeguard the quality of the graduation work and the projects of the first year. In addition, I frequently discuss with my group of students what they think of the study program, the mentors and everything around it. I want things to run smoothly and I monitor it closely. I frequently do the same with my teachers, sometimes individually, sometimes as a group.

During the 2nd year, the year of their design study, we started the presentations of their research theme in September. Afterwards, they were assigned two design teachers and a thesis teacher. I am involved in this as well. Each student has a weekly consultation with one of the three teachers, which I frequently attend. This year, we did it like this, because we had received complaints in the previous year about the organization: each student was linked to a mentor, in addition, they could consult other mentors, but that didn’t really work in practice.

We listened carefully to the complaints and took action. That is how I keep refining the study program. From the thought that no education will ever be finished, you always have to be open to new developments and new insights.

HOW DO YOU PERIODICALLY GET STUDENTS AND MENTORS OUT OF THEIR COMFORT ZONE?

We have a rule that all teachers of a certain day, say teachers that teach on Tuesday, share the first hour (10 AM – 11 AM) jointly with all students. This means doing something for both the freshmen and second year students. A kind of sharing time. This may be about anything, as long as it is interesting and relevant to everyone and it varies from lectures and workshops to discussions and jointly watching documentaries. It is intended to offer students more than what they are working on. For inspiration, but also to create unexpected twists, unleashing creativity. In addition, it is an excellent opportunity to make optimal use of the various expertise of the mentors.

An architect mentor struggles with an architectural issue and discusses it with students, it opens up their perspective on the conventions and themes of another professional field. The insights from one discipline may serve as inspiration for the other, even if that isn’t clear immediately. Time and time again, it turns out to be a challenge for both students and teachers to add content and shape to all of those morning programs. Students can also take care of the introduction if they want. These are valuable hours, during which, as a teacher, you have the opportunity to show something completely different of yourself, your work or your fascinations. It is a very unifying activity that benefits the atmosphere in the group and during the lessons.

How do you periodically get students and mentors out of their comfort zone?
NAME: AGATA JAWORSKA  
PROJECT: MADE IN TRANSIT = A SUPPLY CHAIN CONCEPT FOR ON THE WAY GROWTH

‘Made in Transit’ proposes to shift the paradigm from preserving freshness to enabling growth along the way, a shift from ‘best before’ to ‘ready by’ for perishable goods. Growing food on the way would mean it gets better as it travels and that it would be still alive upon arrival, ready for harvest by the consumer.

NAME: MAURIZIO MONTALTI  
PROJECT: CONTINUOUS BODIES

In order to try and change this attitude this project places its focus towards a better understanding of the realm of fungi and at their fundamental importance in the environment with regard to decomposition and transformation of both organic and inorganic substrates and the resultant cycling of elements.
“THE MASTERS COMPLETELY CHANGED THE WAY I WAS WORKING AND HELD PRESENTATIONS”

ALUMNI ON THE MASTERS
AN ANIMATED CONVERSATION WITH 5 ALUMNI OF THE MASTERS LEADS TO A CAREFUL ANALYSIS OF THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE MASTERS IN THE YEARS 2009 AND 2010. IT IS A MORE OR LESS SPONTANEOUS CONVERSATION, PART OF A DISCUSSION THAT OCCURS REGULARLY ON REQUEST OF THE ACADEMY AND USUALLY CONCERNS THE MUTUAL COURSE OF AFFAIRS. THIS TIME, WE ZOOM IN ON THE SITUATION THEY EXPERIENCED PERSONALLY. THEY DON’T JUST EXPRESS THEIR OWN OPINION. REPORTS FROM THAT PERIOD SHOW THEY REPRESENT THE MAJORITY OF THE STUDENTS IN THIS.

To begin, let’s ask what the Masters has brought them. What is the main thing that the Masters taught them. That mainly appears to be their way of working and the approach of the design profession:

► “So, what I learned was how to present work along the process. Never to make it tangible if it’s not, don’t print and cut a book well if it’s not done. I learned how to present my work to designers. That’s an important skill to come up with, I do it all the time now. Don’t tell everything, because it seems that as soon as you put something on the table they criticize it and they don’t understand that it might be a little seed. Then the seed gets completely dug up and pushed away before it gets the chance to sprout.”

► “I got a lot more guts to dare to go with my vision much more further. To believe in my abilities and to see my abilities more clearly. I think also because this was an international group I saw much more clearly where I’m strong and where I’m weak.”

► I think I learned a lot in terms of process of design and presenting which is really much connected. Because here you don’t use for example always computers which was something I didn’t know from home. And it changed completely the way I was presenting and the way I was working. It created a different kind of design process which I really like. I think also in terms of storytelling in presentations. It costs me a lot of energy because I really didn’t like it and I still have a lot to say about how the academy is demanding you to present your story. But I also learned a lot from it, how to sum up your story well and how to be able to present very briefly to other people in a way they have patience to listen to you.”
”The masters give you the opportunity to work on your own stuff without thinking about the future. I have two years to follow this project and then working for myself.”

“Regardless of the academy it’s a time, it’s like being in a meditation for two years because you are completely in yourself. So, your ability to see yourself is much higher than in a normal situation. All your senses towards yourself are much more open and sensitive so in that sense you hear yourself better. The situation in the academy where you have an international group, mentoring and this kind of energy you learn a great deal about yourself quite fast.”

“I feel that in the struggles and the things that went smoothly in the academy, that pushed my own personal growth. I was challenged a lot. Maybe not in the right things but it forced me to sharpen my opinion, sharpen the way I communicate and sharpen a lot of things and that wouldn’t have happened in a school what already understood what I was doing.”

Another side is discussed as well. The image of that side of the Masters is less optimistic. A short situation description as an outline of the context of the comments made about that.

Until 2010, the Masters consisted of two departments: IM, the predecessor of what is now Contextual Design and Man and Humanity. The sudden departure of the head of Man and Humanity was the apotheosis of a slumbering discontent among students about the content and organization of that department, that, unfortunately, affected the whole of the Masters. Both prior to and after the departure of the head, intensive discussions between the Executive Board, research heads, tutors and students took place. The criticism of the students was serious, the conversations sometimes intense, but the attitude was mature: these issues had to be resolved and that could only be realized through solid organizational measures. The current design and organization of the Masters is the result of that.

What was the criticism of the students?
A selection of the comments:

“I think the people who are in charge of the masters, they do not know how to be tutors. A tutor should back up and support his student. He should try to get out of each one of them his own personality and creativity and help them to achieve it in their own way. And he should not try to push himself, his thoughts or his style on their design.”

“You get the feeling that they are very busy and that you should be thankful for this one hour that they meet you”.

Someone else provides an even more formulation: “There is definitely a lack of the word mentor. That’s what they are called. But I find that there were some that understood the word mentor and there were some that were just there as a critique and they didn’t took time to invest.”

“I came here with an agenda and with a will and desire to do research projects. To practice shape is something you do in the bachelors! It doesn’t need to be in a Master study, at least not in my case!”

The current design of the Masters is also discussed. For the Masters, it was the reason to start organizing regular interviews with students, to hear their ideas and experiences, honour them where possible and correct them where possible based on the philosophy of the Masters. Mutual feedback appears to be beneficial and constructive.

The students largely agree with the research heads of the 3 Master departments about the exhibition during the Graduation Show. Just like them, they feel forced into a mould that is mainly aimed at exhibiting the work of Bachelors.

“When you take a step forward to the exhibition and you compare the exhibition of the Masters here to the exhibition of the Bachelors. It seems like the exhibition of the Masters wants to be the exhibition of the Bachelors. Personally I feel that it’s not the way because the nature of the project is totally different. But all through the year you are asked to create objects, this is one. On the other hand they can ask you to come up with a solution that can be system, that can be website, that can be many things. But on the last point they will demand to see an object. The object is traditional Design Academy. There is no place or a small place to do something completely different.”
The criticism continues when it concerns the topicality of the curriculum of the Masters:
► “Contextual Design is about a field of content that everyone is talking about nowadays. About open design, system design and how design has become more flexible. Design Academy Eindhoven for me represents something more traditional design in the sense of space, furniture, the basic elements of design. I find it’s really connected in that point to mentoring and building a team. In a way the mouth of Contextual Design is saying one thing but the hands of Contextual are not able to do what the mouth is saying. In a way the academy knows that the direction is going to some place but it still is not able to bring all the content there. As a student you are much more flexible. You want to be there already and there’s a gap between you and the mentor in terms of content. So, you have mentors now that match to these fields and are able to follow you and your ideas quit fast. And you have mentors that are still in the other step and there is a tension there. This tension I think creates a lot of issues.”

What do the students think of the Source program?
► “The concept is amazing but sometimes it depends on the lectures. Sometimes they press all the lectures before presentations, it makes no sense, there’s no correlation between schedules. There was one trimester that the program was really boring and that’s a problem because it demands a lot from us. But in general I think it is an amazing program.”

► “You have to have it but in a much higher level.”

► “I am like the source program number one fan. I thought it was fantastic. Ok, sure some of the lectures were completely irrelevant to what I did. But to listen and to see other perspectives was really good. I acknowledge the difficulty in bringing speakers in. I think it needs to be on a higher organizational level, it needs more hours and more time. It doesn’t even have to be high speakers. I don’t care if it are all people speaking from the Netherlands. I don’t need to see the biggest names. There are some more interesting people out there doing things. It just needs a bit more effort and more investment from the academy. It’s one of the things that brought me here. Because it was told to me that there were monthly lectures for the masters and weekly lectures for the bachelors that you could also join. I missed a lot of lectures from the bachelors because I didn’t know.”

► “There is a need for a program like that brings content, not always that relevant to your work in a direct way, but it’s very inspiring. It’s really valuable. There is a lot of hunger for knowledge among the masters.”
PART 2

INFORMATION

THE MASTERS IN DETAIL
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRIMESTER</th>
<th>CONTEXTUAL DESIGN</th>
<th>INFORMATION DESIGN</th>
<th>SOCIAL DESIGN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Overall theme:</strong> living as a physical being in a digitalized world.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Goal:</strong> introduction to the approach of the discipline within Contextual Design: conducting research based on a more or less abstract theme and developing design concepts.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Content:</strong> research into the latest production methods, research of visions of life, exploration of the role of design in the digital era. During the Christmas holiday, the student is given an assignment for an essay: who am I as a designer? Forms the principle for guidance of the student during the 2nd trimester, in which the theme is: the message and the medium.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Methods:</strong> critical discourse, Socratic discussion, group discussions, individual and group assignments, individual and group guidance, external consultation.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Keywords:</strong> confrontation, systematic research, identity of the designer and of the trade, physical and digital environment, confrontation, escaping from own cultural background, confusion, awareness, reflection and self-knowledge.</td>
<td><strong>Overall theme:</strong> Tools, the designer’s pallet.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Goal:</strong> designing design tools, positioning, who am I and who do I want to be.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Content:</strong> Two long-term research assignments. Four workshops: Processing, intuitive and poetic workshop about letter designs, an experimental workshop aimed at the process, a workshop about language as a tool of the designer.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assignments:</strong> 2-trimester assignments. 4 short (2-4 day) workshops.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Methods:</strong> critical discourse, Socratic discussion, group discussions, individual and group assignments, individual and group guidance, external consultation.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Keywords:</strong> systematic research, confrontation, escaping from own background, confusion, awareness, reflection, self-knowledge.</td>
<td><strong>Overall theme:</strong> Me, myself and I.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Goal:</strong> self-study, own identity, talents and qualities, escaping from own context and culture, design attitude in relation to products: object level.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Content:</strong> materiality, system and analysis, action, intuitive research.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assignments:</strong> aimed at own home, neighbourhood and environment, here or in home land and of limited complexity. The tools and methodology that students use are important topics of discussion.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Methods:</strong> critical discourse, Socratic discussion, group discussions, individual and group assignments, individual and group guidance, external consultation.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Keywords:</strong> awareness of yourself and your own responses to environment, products etc. What do you show of yourself (branding) why? With what? Self-expression.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2         | **Overall theme:** the message and the medium.<br>**Goal:** research into what message required what medium and vice versa: what medium invokes what message?<br>**Content:** Increasing awareness and sensitivity for the fact that every vision requires its own materials, production techniques and contexts. Depending on the outcomes of the essay, students learn specific knowledge and skills provided by the guest speakers.<br>**Assignments:** in line with the essays of students, the tutors develop specific assignments which they can use to deepen and broaden their research.<br>**Methods:** guidance of individual assignments, group discussions, external feedback, presentations<br>**Keywords:** awareness, deepening, broadening, knowledge and skills associated with their own ambition and story. | **Overall theme:** Interface: the transition from data to information.<br>**Goal:** organizing information, between information and user, positioning: responsibility from designer to author and user of information.<br>**Assignments:** Three trimester assignments that regard the interface in different ways: spatial, concrete, digital – analogue, experimental, graphical, conceptual. In addition, the students work on their own research that falls within this theme.<br>**Methods:** critical discourse, Socratic discussion, group discussions, individual and group assignments, individual and group guidance, external consultation<br>**Keywords:** investigative design and designing research, process, presentation. | **Overall theme:** We.<br>**Goal:** choosing the right medium for one’s own message, process and system as object of research, discovering potential hazards of conventional participatory approaches to design.<br>**Content:** instead of finding solutions for others, the personal approach of each student is central: the response and the reflection of the student as designer and as a person before he starts designing. Focus point: tension between individual and collective, critically redefining the current design development into sharing participation and co-creation.<br>**Assignments:** working in concrete neighbourhood in Luik, Walloon: strategic neighbourhood development. Assignments of larger complexity.<br>**Methods:** critical discourse, Socratic discussion, group discussions, individual and group assignments, individual and group guidance, external consultation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRIMESTER</th>
<th>CONTEXTUAL DESIGN</th>
<th>INFORMATION DESIGN</th>
<th>SOCIAL DESIGN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3         | Overall theme: “for real”, assignment in collaboration with real principal.  
**Goal**: working with and within a realistic context.  
Assignments: 3 projects formulated by 3 mentors within the overall assignment.  
**Methods**: critical discourse, Socratic discussion, group discussions, individual and group assignments, individual and group guidance, external consultation.  
**Keywords**: investigative design and designing research, complex processes and situations, communication and presentation.  
**Preparation**: prior to the summer holiday, freshmen discuss their first ideas for their own thesis study with their mentors. During the holiday they elaborate their research proposal. | Overall theme: “for real”, assignment in collaboration with real principal.  
**Goal**: working with and within a realistic context.  
Assignments: one project assigned by a teacher, in addition several own projects in the context of a realistic design assignment.  
**Methods**: critical discourse, Socratic discussion, group discussions, individual and group assignments, individual and group guidance, external consultation.  
**Keywords**: investigative design and designing research, complex processes and situations, communication and presentation.  
**Goal**: working with and within a realistic context, developing proposal for own thesis design.  
**Assignments**: one project assigned by a teacher, in addition several own projects in the context of a realistic design assignment.  
**Methods**: critical discourse, Socratic discussion, group discussions, individual and group assignments, individual and group guidance, external consultation.  
**Keywords**: investigative design and designing research, complex processes and situations, communication and presentation.  
**Preparation**: own thesis proposal. |
| 4         | Thesis-design project | Thesis-design project | Thesis-design project |
| 5         | Thesis-design project | Thesis-design project | Thesis-design project |
| 6         | Thesis-design project | Thesis-design project | Thesis-design project |

* **SOURCE LECTURES**  
During all trimesters
B SOURCE LECTURES/WORKSHOPS

Worldwide developments influence the meaning, function and position of design practice and its definition. As design is omnipresent and a powerful force in shaping our (material) world: it breathes our culture, embodies societal values and thereby both translates and influences human behaviour.

New approaches of consequential thinking in the field of design are surfacing. Within their work, designers are moving towards a more autonomous or critical position by means of engaging in processes that question the underlying (inter)relational structures or behaviour patterns of our society.

Designers who dare formulate visionary plans for alternative scenarios need an understanding of the global context, paired with a firm position within the creative process. This balancing act requires the designer to be an author, infiltrator, entrepreneur, adventurer, mediator, director, collaborator or/and hermit at the same time. Thus the designer not only poses (and possesses) an outsiders’ critique, but also needs to have the skills to analyse and integrate a criticism from within. It is the aim of the Source Program to help participants to understand, to strengthen their knowledge and confidence in the cultural field.

The Source Program consists of weekly lectures and/or workshops by (internationally) renowned professionals. Source will program by weaving different lines of thought, topics, trends and speakers into a patchwork of relevance for designers now. Within the Source Program we aim to generate a (pro)active dialogue and exchange on topics such as ethics and aesthetics, technique and technology, crafts and concepts, activism and anthropology. Source is aiming to inspire designers within their practice and (beyond) their discipline, focusing on deepening and broadening the MA students’ understanding of the complex context they work in and refining their own design attitude.

Through literature suggestions, excursions - visiting designers’ studios and relevant exhibitions - a deeper understanding of the practice and cultural landscape will be further developed. Opportunity and potential are woven into one to stimulate the participants’ curiosity and develop his or her own initiative.

The setup of the Source lectures and/or workshops will be in keeping with the themes relevant to three MA research programs: social, contextual and information design.

See Appendice 3 for the Source Program during the first trimester of the academic year of 2011 – 2012.

C STUDY FEASIBILITY

In contradiction to the semester structure of the Bachelor study, the Masters study has a trimester system. This system guarantees the student 6 evaluation and assessment occasions instead of 4, which is given the duration of the Masters, no luxury. In addition, this helps the academy more evenly distribute the pressure on the workplaces and exhibit areas.

Inherent to the artistic process, the planning of students doesn’t always keep pace with the well-dosed offering of the curriculum. Of course, the periods just before the assessment are peak periods for students in several respects. Still, the evaluations from students show that the distribution of the study load is adequate in general. The interim Midterm and green light interviews about the progress of the projects play an important moderating role in that.

The official credit table is available in the Education Examination Regulations.

When a student fails to pass a trimester of the first year, he or she has to repeat a similar project and present it in the Midterms of the next trimester. Such a retake may only occur once. If a student fails two trimesters during the first year, he is strongly advised to quit. If he chooses to proceed, the entire first year has to be redone.

If a student fails to pass the third trimester, he / she works on the retake during the summer holiday and presents the project at the start of the second year. He or she can only begin the second year if the retake project is completed successfully.
D ADMISSIONS
The previous education of the Master students at Design Academy Eindhoven varies from design studies and architecture studies to art academies. By far, most students followed a design study at bachelor level. Many of the bachelor studies are focused on problem solving design, an approach that contradicts that of Design Academy Eindhoven, as elaborated above. Design students, architects and visual artists or interior architects are admissible to the academy as soon as their portfolio demonstrates that they have the talent and the ability to train themselves in conceptual design, an important characteristic of the academy.

From the very beginning, the Master student faces a heavy program. The bar is raised high, the requirements are intense and the work method as well; motivation and deployment are required to the extreme. After one or two trimesters, each students knows whether Eindhoven is the place for him. The very heterogeneous group of new students have high requirements with regard to flexibility of the tutors/mentors and staff. Because of the link of the central theme “letting go” with confronting methods – the ‘harsh hand in the velvet glove’- Design Academy Eindhoven was able to find a programmatic entrance that grants access to the large cultural diversity the academy welcomes each and every year within the Masters.

The recruitment policy of Design Academy Eindhoven goes hand in hand with its international appearance. Meanwhile, the Masters alumni are just as much ambassadors for the study and, in the wake of their success, their colleagues and students apply to the Master study in Eindhoven. Polling has shown that students choose Design Academy Eindhoven for various reasons: the open culture of the Netherlands and the international appearance of the academy and because the academy, in terms of finances, is a relatively cheap English speaking study.

One of the tasks of the heads of the Master departments is the decision about admission. Their extensive network of fellow designers, their knowledge and experience enables them to assess the 350 portfolios we receive annually, for the following admission criteria:
- quality of performance
- ambition, personal goals and motivation of the candidate
- (self-) critical research attitude
- expressive ability and the room it – still – allows for growth and development
- potential quality of ideas, concepts and thoughts, that can be further refined, deepened and enriched by following the Master study
- good proficiency of the English language
- references

Given the large amount of applications for the Masters, it is necessary to adjust the admission procedure for the new inflow of 2012. The main changes concern the following points:
- responsibility for the assessment of portfolios is distributed among the research heads of the department
- organizing intake interviews
- establishing an admission committee per research department
- maintaining a stable admission standard
- separation of the substantive and organizational side of the admission

E DISCUSSION
In what way will you gradually honour the freedom of students during the study program? The experience of the past few years dictates that students can’t handle one theme for an entire year during the second year of their study. Apparently, that requires too much of them with regard to concentration, involvement and planning. Often, they got stuck in research, without supporting it with designs. The value added by the Masters is hidden in the variation of research and design.

Over the past years, the mentors have given the students another assignment during the 1st trimester of the 2nd year, with the same theme as the assignment the freshmen started with. This year, this has been adjusted even more. Each student is given tailored assignments based on a theme they chose. Eventually, those assignments are intended to make sure that they don’t linger in the research and start designing.
RESULTS AND ASSESSMENT

A MASTER VISION ON ASSESSMENT

To Masters, assessment remains a complex issue, both for students and for tutors. The question is whether what we are measuring is important, and if by measuring it, we have measured all that’s important. In addition, it isn’t always clear what “measuring” means in the context of the curriculum of the Masters. It is an attempt to capture reality in words, that didn’t just, or maybe in essential moments not at all, get established with words. Measuring may also mean expressing the expectation about the future development of the student or about the growth he has experienced during an essential period during his study. And what that means in relation to the end result achieved.

Heads and mentors of the Masters assume the following reality during assessments:

- There always is a mix of objective criteria, evident to everyone, and subjective criteria that give rise to debate until collective agreement has been reached.
- The academy pursues a personal and authentic elaboration of assignments. When working on assignments, other criteria may start applying to the assessment. After all, not everything can be captured in assessment criteria in advanced. “Individual and subjective assessments and using criteria in hindsight is unavoidable”.
- Not only the work of the student is being assessed, his individual work process and his individual artistic development are being assessed as well. On his final examination, the perspective for the future of the student may also play an important part in the assessment.
- The emphasis on own creations and own approaches sometimes involves the relativity of the standards and assessment criteria used, as a consequence.
- Pursuing the unusual and being open to the surprising are valued principles with the Masters.

Especially because of the unavoidable level of subjectivity in assessments, Masters chooses an assessment in which all mentors and the head of the Masters and the relevant department are involved simultaneously. Inter-subjectivity is a great good, and always appears to be necessary to prevent blinkers.

B ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Principle for the assessment are the 6 competencies as included in attachment 1:

- Ability to conduct research and analysis
- Conceptual ability in context
- Designing ability
- Ability to give a verbal and visual presentation
- Leadership skills, the communicative aspects thereof
- Ability to grow and renew

These competences are converted into the following criteria on the assessment form of the Masters:

- Research and analysis
- Vision and concept
- Verbal presentation
- Design/visual presentation
- Written thesis

To further refine the desired end level of the Masters, we will describe the criteria that apply to a cum laude graduation project. That will make clear, in a different way, which vision is underlies the design of the three Master departments.

The following criteria apply to a cum laude:

- A perfect score for the 5 assessment criteria
- With the graduation project, the student doesn’t only achieve interest and appearance within the academy, but mainly beyond as well
- Thesis and design form one whole and are of excellent quality
- The project has a strong contextual and substantive relevance
- The project adds a new dimension to the field of design or the role of the designer
- The project invites to a sequel in the form of research and design
- The project reflects a strong social and professional engagement
- The study process of the student was of continuous high quality

* quote from: Je bent goed bezig, publication HKU 2004
C ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

In addition to these more or less formal requirements associated with the assessment of the projects, the student makes for each project explicit which personal goals he wants to achieve with that particular project. Under the supervision of a mentor, the student will later evaluate to what extent he has achieved those personal goals, what made a positive contribution to that and what was difficult. Such reflections are indispensable in the opinion of the Masters to achieve awareness of, insight into and guidance with regard to personal growth and development.

Partly because of this, the Masters has experimented with self-assessment by students over the past years. For a Master student it is essential that he assesses himself first using the same form used by tutors/mentors to assess the work and the process of the student. Self-assessment is part of the assessment in the Masters. The critical reflection on personal growth and development, prior to the formal assessment by the exam committee, gives the student an opportunity to reflect on his own competency development in relation to the goals he envisioned at the start of his study. After all, it is that self-critical and evaluative attitude that can lead to innovation and growth during his later career.

Students write their own report about each project. Part of that report are the self-reflection and self-evaluation. In addition, it is indicated what way the parts of Source followed are reflected in the process and product result of the project. Through such a description, it is easy to check which way the student has interpreted and used the part of Source.

Each trimester concludes with an assessment. Based on a design realized by solid research and a visual and verbal presentation thereof, the assessment committee (the full staff), in the presence of all Master students, determined to what extent the student meets the required competency level. Afterwards, the mentor discuss the results with the relevant students and jointly establish a written advice about the focus points for the upcoming trimester. For instance about the way the student can use Source to supplement gaps observed in knowledge and skills or to explore certain subjects. Students write a report about these interviews which serves as an evaluation during the next assessment.

With this design, Design Academy Eindhoven guarantees that the assessment is an integral part of the learning process of each student, much more than the conclusion of an academic period. Experience dictates that both students and tutors/mentors feel that approach to be intensive and valuable. The introductory year (1st academic year) of the study, corresponding with the first 3 trimesters, is concluded with a final assessment.

The final phase (2nd academic year) of the study consists of:

- Module 4 and 5 in which the student conducts research and establishes the theme and the global concept of his thesis design project.
- The 6th final exam module resulting in the final examinations. This 6th module begins with a so-called “green light – evaluation” of the 5th module. The assessment committee gives a green light, effectively expressing her confidence that she expects the candidate to pass the final examination with the proposed thesis-design project. In case of a red light, the student has to retake module 5.
- After passing the 5th module, the student is entitled to participation in the final examination which will be conducted by the staff supplemented with an external examiner. The final examination consist of:
  - A thesis-design project.
  - A 20 minute written and verbal presentation for an audience of colleagues and Master students, including the process of answering critical questions of those present: the final master proof.
- With his final examination, the student mainly demonstrates the ability to link an extensive and thorough research phase to a visual and / or tangible result, such as a product, strategy or service.  

* this procedure is extensively described in the current education examination rules of the Masters.
3 QUALITY CARE

A PRINCIPLE
Care for quality is demonstrated by the attention to and contact between students, tutors, heads, employees and Executive Board. This principle has been leading over the past years in the way the academy has begun to shape its quality care system. Periodically, we hold surveys among employees, Bachelor and Master students and alumni.

The extensiveness of the anonymously held surveys and the time it cost to analyse and appraise the results appeared to be little effective to us. Meanwhile, we have begun developing a simplified form of mainly short surveys that will form the basis for that which we aim to do: initiating the discussion between stakeholders. At the Masters, those discussions have been part of the regular course of affairs for some time.

B QUALITY OF THE PROGRAM
At the start of each academic year and semester, each research head consults with his or her mentors and Source coordinator about the interpretation of the curriculum. Trimester assessments and end assessments also count as an evaluation moment for mentors where it concerns the quality of their assignments and guidance. Mentors within the Masters have a large level of autonomy, and sometimes have slightly rebellious tendencies. In our opinion, that is a requirement for innovative education. The autonomy is limited by the joint assessments, which is where the quality of the assignments of each mentor should be demonstrated. This is where it should become clear what each assignment has contributed to the development of the student as an individual and designer. In other words: results count for both the student and the mentor/tutor.

Recently, the contract with a mentor was terminated because she was insufficiently able to express her criticism in a transparent way for students.

Each department of the Master organizes an evaluation interview with students, 2 to 3 times a year. What is going well in their opinion, what could be improved, what is their opinion of our education etc. One of these evaluation interviews follows the annually held student survey. The results are discussed with the students, refined, put into perspective and clarified.

C IMPROVEMENTS AS A RESULT OF THE PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION
The main items that have improved following the previous accreditation:

- The general level was characterized as adequate, observing that fact that it concerned a relatively young study. Meanwhile matured, the study has achieved a level associated with an internationally high regarded Masters study.
- The number of mentors that has their own Master or PhD degree has been brought up to a good level.
- A permanent list with recommended literature is part of the study.
- Coordination between the research departments within the Masters has greatly improved.

D ALUMNI – SURVEY 2011
November 2011, the academy asked the Masters alumni to give their opinion about their study by means of an extensive survey. The report about the conclusions is available as supporting document via the website of the academy. Below you'll find several illustrative results of the alumni survey, whereby noted that the results have 61% reliability.

The first figure (1) relates to how long it took a student to find a job.

The second figure (2) shows in what kind of work situation the student finds himself.

The last figure (3) shows within which segments of the design field, alumni students of the Masters are active.
Master students of Design Academy Eindhoven are primarily creative, often visually oriented people, in contradiction to Master students in other university studies. Many of our students have little experience in writing texts.

Their strength is in visualizing research results. The requirement of a written thesis to demonstrate their systematic research, makes us force students into a mould they don't always fit in, while they are most definitely able to justify the systematic of their research in other ways.

The question we're facing as Master mentors is in what way we can do justice to the special qualities of the students, while simultaneously meeting the requirements in respect of the justification of their systematic research that led to their final design result. In our opinion, each Master student has to be able to demonstrate and justify that he has closely applied the rules for systematic research, making his research repeatable and transparent. The way in which he does this may vary: from a movie, a purely visual video report by means of photos animations etc. In line with the development of the design trade, the design result of his research may be a tool, a service or a strategy. The requirements we place on such a justification are the subject of discussion.

The available technology at the academy contrasts sharply with the requirements placed on, for instance, an Information Designer. The Master heads seek collaboration with the TU Delft for instance, to give students the opportunity to learn about the latest developments in the technological field. A recurring question remains: to what extent should we be able to provide students these possibilities ourselves?
PART 3

APPENDICES

A  MASTER COMPETENCIES IN RELATION TO DUBLIN DESCRIPTORS

B  SOURCE CURRICULUM 1ST TRIMESTER 2011

C  LITERATURE LIST OF THE JOINT DEPARTMENTS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPTUAL ABILITY</th>
<th>KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT</th>
<th>APPLYING KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT</th>
<th>JUDGMENT</th>
<th>COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>LEARNING SKILLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The student knows the ins and outs of different types of research and applies the appropriate research methodology in the development and elaboration of his own innovative concepts.</td>
<td>The student conducts systematic and intuitive research into complex issues and makes well-informed, tactic, strategic and creative choices that he is able to clearly express and justify when facing a critical audience.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student has a critical understanding and detailed knowledge of several topical discussions within the design field and is able to justify his own position in this.</td>
<td>Taking into account the often global context, the student integrates his own intuition as driving force behind his concept development and uses his cultural background as valuable source of inspiration.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design proposals of the student demonstrate advanced knowledge of and insight into the topical international work field and social reality, a well-informed opinion about the results of his systematic and intuitive research and an original way to convey those results.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student acknowledges and analyzes complex issues in the practice of the design trade and resolves them in a strategic, tactical and creative manner, while observing social, professional and ethical opinions of his own and of others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As leading designer, the student is able to guide complex design processes in such a way that different groups of stakeholders (principal, other disciplines, users etc), feel recognized and acknowledged in the design result.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student is aware of himself, of his own social and ethical responsibilities and cultural background as authentic influence on his design proposals and is able to put his own specialist knowledge and opinions at the service of the developments of the design trade in relation to adjacent fields of knowledge, both from the context, background and perspective of others and from a ‘global’ perspective.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SOURCE CURRICULUM 1ST TRIMESTER 2011**

**CONTEXTUAL DESIGN:** LIVING AS A PHYSICAL BEING IN A DIGITALIZED WORLD  
**SOCIAL DESIGN:** ME, MYSELF & I  
**INFORMATION DESIGN:** TOOLS

**WEEK 37 – SOURCE 01**  
Monday 12 September 15.30- 17.00  
Timo de Rijk - Design Challenges – On design, Culture and Unchangingness  
Lecture and Q&A

**WEEK 38 – SOURCE 02**  
Monday 19 September 15.30- 17.00***  
Martijn de Waal – The Influence of New Media on our (urban) Culture - Historical overview, approaches of digital media and public spheres  
Lecture, Q&A and one on one talks  
*** Wednesday 28 September 14.00 - 15.00  
Martijn de Waal will do one on one talks on your project with 4 students (approx 15 minutes each), please email Kim at kimboovy@gmail.com before Monday 19th to subscribe, first come, first serve!

**WEEK 39 – SOURCE 03**  
Thursday 29 September 10.30 – 15.30  
LUST (graphic design studio)– How tools become form/strategy  
Lecture and Q&A, workshop

**WEEK 40 – SOURCE 04**  
Tuesday 4 October 15.30 – 17.00  
Robin Brouwer On Contemporary hedonism: the culture of Me, Myself and I  
Lecture and Q&A

**WEEK 41 – SOURCE 05**  
Thursday 13 October 10.00 - 18.00  
Excursion – New Craft and Old technology ( and vise versa)  
to Audax textielmuseum Tilburg / EKWC Den Bosch  
Visit to the Textile Lab and the Europees Keramisch Werkcentrum  
http://www.textielmuseum.nl/

**WEEK 42 – SOURCE 06**  
Wednesday 19 October 10.30 – 14.30  
Partisan Publik Analyzing and building on the social & empowering the community  
Lecture and Q&A, workshop

**WEEK 43 – SOURCE 07 DUTCH DESIGN WEEK**  
Public lecture in collaboration with White Lady (date, time and place will be communicated)

**WEEK 44 – SOURCE 08**  
Tuesday 1 November 15.30 – 17.00  
Bik van der Pol - How can (artistic) research be translated into representation and/or a projects?  
Lecture, Q&A and workshop

**WEEK 44 – SOURCE 09**  
Thursday 3 November 10.30 – 15.30  
Inga Cholmogorova – ‘GO!’ by tandem (Giorgio and Giorgina)  
Lecture, performance and Q&A

**WEEK 45 – WEEK 44 – SOURCE 10**  
Tuesday 8 November 15.30 – 17.00  
Nanna Verhoeff – Mobile Media Screens (interface for new communities)  
Lecture and Q&A

**WEEK 46 – MIDTERMS (NO SOURCE)**

**WEEK 47 – SOURCE 11**  
Thursday 22 November 10.30-17.00  
Studio Joris Laarman (Joris Laarman)  
How research and idea translates into from and craft (beyond portfolio+design attitude)  
Lecture, Q&A and workshop

**WEEK 48 – SOURCE 12**  
Tuesday 29, Wednesday 30 November or Thursday 1 December  
Lecture organized by the students (4 pax)  
Lecture and Q&A or..?

**DATES TO BE CONFIRMED**  
Keynote lecture Ethics& Aesthetics  
Konstantin Grcic  
Skype lecture by Paola Antonelli  
On the MOMA exhibition Talk to Me: Design and the Communication between People and Objects
C

GENERAL READING LIST OF BOOKS AND TEXTS MASTER PROGRAMMES DESIGN ACADEMY EINDHOVEN


John Thackara, In the Bubble, Designing in a Complex World, Mitt Press, 2005


Walter Benjamin, The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, 1936

Martin Heidegger, The origin of the work of art, 1935-1937

Marshall McLuhan, The Medium is the Massage, 1967

Vilem Flusser, The shape of things, 1999

Robert Grudin, Design And Truth, 2011

Christopher Alexander, A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction, Oxford University Press, 1977

Juhani Pallasma, The Eyes of the Skin, Academy Press, 2005

Bruce Mau, Massive Change, 2004

Paul Hawkins & Amory Lovins, Natural Kapitalism, 1999


Jared Diamond, Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed, 2004

READING LIST FIRST YEAR PROJECT MASTER RESEARCH PROGRAMME INFORMATION DESIGN 2011 - 2012

Walter Benjamin
The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. 0141036199

John Berger
Ways of seeing. 0140135154 (BBC television series available on youtube)*

Hugues Boekraad
My Work is Not My Work (Pierre Bernard). 037780879

Kees Broos and Paul Hetting
Dutch Graphic Design. 0262522500*

Elias Cannetti
Crowds and Power. 0374518203

Le Corbusier
The Modulor. 3764361883

Umberto Eco
Mouse or Rat? Translation as negotiation. 0297830015

Hal Foster
Design and Crime. 1859846688

Karl Gerstner
Compendium for Literates. 0262070618
Designing Programmes. 037780930

James Gleick
The Information. 0375423729*

Stephen Jay Gould
Bully for Brontosaurus (especially: The Median Isn’t the Message, pp. 473) 039330857x

Robin Kinross
Modern Typography. 0907259057

Ewan Lentjes
Kleur. kaAp (in Dutch)

Hans-Rudolf Lutz
Today’s Hieroglyphs. 3721206398

Scott McCloud
Understanding Comics. 9780060976255

Marshall McLuhan
Understanding Media. 9780262631594
The Medium is the Message. 1584230703*
The Gutenberg Galaxy. 0802060412
The Mechanical Bride. 9781584232438
War and Peace in the Global Village. 1584230746

Jan Middendorp
Dutch Type. 9064504601

Stanley Morison  
First Principles of Typography. 052105768X  
Politics and Script. 0198181469

Josef Muller-Brockmann  
Grid Systems in Graphic Design. 9783721201451

Eadweard Muybridge  
Animals in Motion. 0486202038

Otto Neurath  
From Hieroglyphics to Isotype. 0907259448

Heidrun Osterer, Philipp Stramm (Ed.).  
Adrian Frutiger Typefaces. 9783764385811

Raymond Queneau  
Exercises in Style. 0811207897

Susan Sontag  
On Photography. 0312420099

Edward Tufte  
Size & Democracy. With Robert Dahl. 0804708347  
Data Analysis for Politics and Policy. 0131975250

Political Control of the Economy. 0891075948

The Visual Display of Quantitative Information. 0961392142*  
Envisioning Information. 0961392118*

Visual Explanations: Images and Quantities, Evidence and Narrative.  
0961392126*  
The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint. 0961392169

Beautiful Evidence. 0961392177*

Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour  
Learning from Las Vegas. 026272006X

Bruce Mau, Massive Change

Paul Hawkins & Amory Lovins, Natural Capitalism

Jane Jacobs, Death and rise of great American cities

Jared Diamond, Collapse


FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF THE MASTER DESIGN STUDY
CROHO NUMBER 44759
NVAO CHARACTERISTIC #5489

DESIGN ACADEMY EINDHOVEN
January 2012
Arjo de Vries