

## *the pursuit of elusive creative process.*

### **pre\_amble.**

the following outline is incomplete. it offers an understanding of design theory and creative process and are references taken from a body of work which is limited to my personal experience as a designer.

the ideas expressed within this document are derived from critical observations, and associated readings established during the development of my professional projects, namely furniture, product design and exhibition / installations etc. it is by no means exhaustive it should be viewed as an essay of work in progress. there will be no constant ideology in the form of a *truth* and any attempt to reduce our complex world of code, sign and metaphor to clean simplistic equations will appear useless. it is an eclectic collection of images which illustrate, yet, fail to reveal the complexity of the arena within which we operate as designers.

consider this document as a point of departure for an educational journey and one which will be completed and modified by your own experiences and observations throughout your study and continued professional careers.

however, the method of reading of images illustrated is constant.

and within my remit as an educationalist I take a great interest and I am continually inspired by the production and manufacture of the image in all its facets and incarnations.

the image is a powerful tool and a critical element in the construction of any creative narrative. I propose a belief, that advertising is witness to acts of extreme creativity, ideas of gravitas which even outstrip conceptually the exploits of our artist colleagues. engaged and address a level of complexity responding to the commercial constraints, namely, a given brief and the problematic of a client with a profile and corporate identity.

as a consequence we find ourselves helpless, overwhelmed within the 40 second micro drama by the power of the image, advert. and at the checkout, with credit card in hand and a twingo in the trolley we automatically complete the loop of desire and deceit. we endorse products which we are convinced will change our lives, make more friends, appear a part of the cultural intelligencia and of course bed more sexual partners.

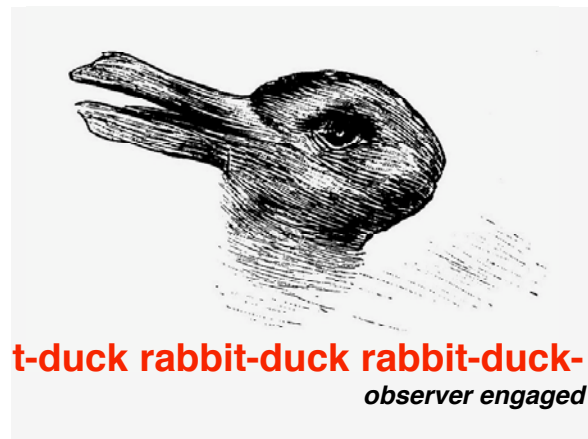
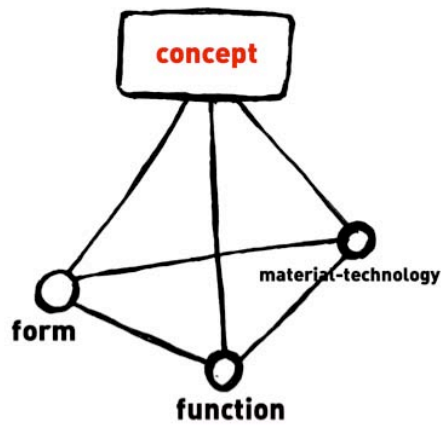


illustration 01

reference Jastrow (1900) via Wittgenstein <1950>.

our only defiance in the face of such aggressive manipulations, and given we are in the business of creativity, is to understand and raise issues which promote a more active role within the cultural context which we define as the design arena.



### product design [nomadic]

illustration 02 © david stokes 2002

conceptual tripod diagram format product design

technology\_formal language\_functional programme.

linking together of three components necessary to render a *concept*\* stable

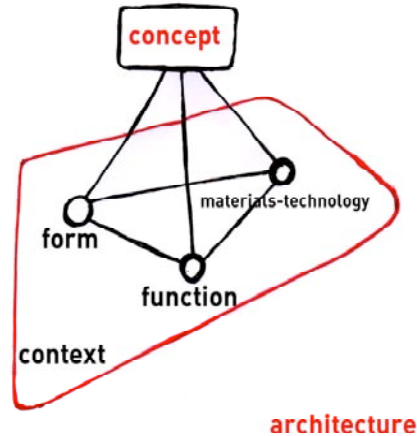


illustration 03 © david stokes 2002

conceptual tripod diagram format architecture

linking together of three components necessary to render a *concept*\* stable  
 technology\_formal language\_functional programme <contextualized by site>.

*“concepts are not identity conditions or propositions, but metaphysical constructions that define a range of thinking” deleuze.*

*\* to paraphrase giles deleuze, who, when asked during a conference addressing, the moving image, whether the French avant garde cinema was a valid vehicle for the demonstration of conceptual thought, he politely suggested that concepts are tools at the unique disposal of philosophers and are constructed to explain the mechanics of intellectual debate.*

so it may be suggested that we employ the word **concept** too loosely and he, deleuze, suggests we seek an alternative vocabulary and leave the process and mechanics of concept to the philosophers.

so let's focus on a useful pursuit and generation of appropriate idea and form.

we can imagine and have witnessed a dominant a pragmatic approach to the eventual proposition of an idea. an idea which may be evaluated to establish value and through the processing of raw data into engaged information leading to the application of specific knowledge to resolve a design problem.

a historical model founded upon a modernist vision of design process in the appropriate generation of form.

this book.  
 We shall begin with the first source of all form, which is also an incessant variable. And this is the principle of:

I. FITNESS

Which itself is divided into three phases:  
 Fitness to Function  
 to Materials  
 to Techniques

It is because of this principle of Fitness that the ultimate form of any object—natural or man-made—is inherent in the object itself: it must be evolved naturally to suit the function which the object is intended to perform, the materials out of which it is made and the methods used in its making.

Our first study is the needs of our times, the work that must be done to enlarge the rule of order in our world and advance our racial welfare:

illustration 04 © david stokes 2002

sample taken from design this day, walter dorwin Teague

published by the studio publications 1946

form as a consequence of...

we are accustomed to, and accept reluctantly the phrase, *form follows function* < attributed to Louis Henri Sullivan > and together with another “ornament is a crime” < Adolf Loos >. form the basis of an methodology which was adopted as driving principles central to the bauhaus and was the foundation for early modernistic phase of utopian ideals and belief in the advancement of civilisation through technology, thus, form derived from appropriate use of material and available process. this approach remains dominant and the default creative process even withstanding the new cultural readings of a post 1968 post modern condition.

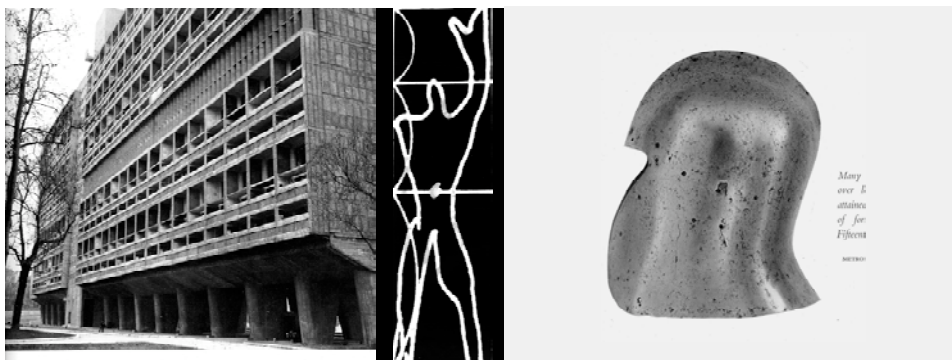


illustration 05 © david stokes 2002

samples taken from design this day plate 03, walter dorwin Teague

published by the studio publications 1946

Italian military helmet circa 1400.

unite d’habitation <Cité Radieuse> le Corbusier 1952, Marseille.

together with a detail of le modulator, le Corbusier Le Modulator 1948.

*however, if a desire to continue to employ the terminology of concept, an active understanding the implications which address our ability in the creation of the New, namely originality, appropriate vision and embracing of valid technology. an advantage of operating*

within the domain of Architecture is to embrace context. operating within this domain the process is unique where any proposition can only be unique, and for each project we begin again, not from the beginning as we have built our understanding upon similar design conditions. the process of stripping a design agenda back to first principles and ask ourselves critical and simple questions which will provide the framework for a valid intervention. any valid process will demand a creative framework within which it is possible to navigate and without which it is impossible to make any creative decision which will move the project through to it's logical conclusion of being.

**"an idea is only visible when extreme". brandon fix.**

the provision of any project within the *hypothetical* context of education is not an architectural problem, we employ key components of an architectural language and specific vocabulary, but I believe the obstacle which denies an architectural proposition being validated by critical appraisal is appropriate and efficient communication.

narrative defines communication, to sequence the reading and generate efficient communication it is important to engage with specific vocabulary.

this necessary to explain key moments of the creative process.

**thus, no communication = no idea.**

the idea if desired to be visible demands communication and many useful projects are lost through inappropriate misuse of image. as a result for the successful mediation of an idea, the idea and it's communication are bound together within suitable presentation.

the presentation format should read as an extension of the ideas discussed within the project.

as a result we can imagine that each project will require a different method of presentation.

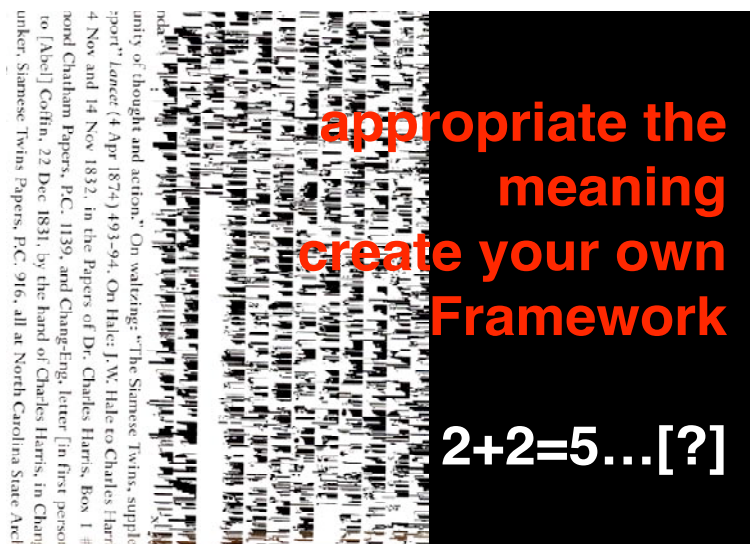


illustration 06

composite text-image sample with additional text information by fix

from On McLuhan, forward through the rearview mirror

edited by Paul Benedetti and Nancy Dehart p143.

published by the MIT press 1996

**“language is power  
the power to communicate and control the vocabulary  
master the narration and reveal the idea”. brandon fix**

from Hollywood to Islam, the world revolves around and is obsessed by image and the visual narrative. to an extent everything is narrative. within a post\_modern condition non meaning has a relevance, however, the language of ideas demands a coherent story where the components are specific and respond to a context.

if the revealing of the idea is treated like a story, with a beginning, middle and end the pattern for an efficient communication of an idea would effectively map the chronological creative process as follows:

1. contextual analysis\_conclusions.
2. design / idea development.
3. production of drawing set\_communication.

language is the foundation to any idea, contextualise the idea and therefore the appropriation of meaning <applicable to every media> is critical to grounding any design investigation. a foundation of analysis based upon observation relative to design problem is both necessary and encouraged.

the narrative, an explanation of the intuitive process of how a project is made, considered and eventually constructed would begin with revealing such criteria. ie. explain the design issues, agenda.

a useful tool employed to fix design agenda is the *manifesto*.

this method can be considered as a bridge between the analysis and creative mode as can be useful tool to introduce design objectives and intent.

remember the analytical phase <context> is a creative act and should not be divorced from the creative process and reduced to automatic response to climate, orientation and traffic noise.

given that every architectural project essentially responds to a unique site, the prototype <architectural proposition> in turn can only be unique.

it is the context and it's subsequent investigations which generates a proposition which is valid only for a singular condition within which it is placed  
and it is this creative opportunity which makes architecture special.