Overview
- About the authors
- The Role of the Artist-Designer
- What is Interaction Design concerned with?
- More Art than Science

About the Authors

Gillian Crampton Smith
- History as a designer, book publishing
- Royal College of Art (UK)
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- Trained as an architect
- Teaches theory at Barlett School (London)

The Role of the Artist-Designer

"... interaction design is more of an art than a science. Its ultimate subject matter – human experience and subjective response – is inherently as changeable and unfathomable as the ocean" (37).

Do you agree that interaction design is more of an art than a science?

What is Interaction Design concerned with?

"The product, therefore, is almost entirely experiential: It creates an alteration in the mind of the user. The customary (originally Platonic) assumption, that substance – the real thing – is separate from, and is privileged over, appearance, is misleading... The interface is the product" (39).

"... The interface is the product" (39).

What does it mean to say "The toaster is well designed"?

What does it mean to have a "pleasurable experience making toast"?
Content and Form

“There is a commonly held assumption that content is somehow separate from form... We think that this assumption is mistaken” (43).

What is content?
What is form?

Function and Aesthetics

“Function takes precedence over aesthetics... this precedence tends to be temporal; that is, artist-designers are invited to only the final stages of a design’s development, to apply a final coat of spray-on aesthetics” (44).

What is functionality?
What are aesthetics?

A Path to Understanding

Users follow a path towards understanding.

- Functionality
- Aesthetics (beauty)

What it does => How it looks

- Interpretation
- Cultural codes
- Shared sensibilities
- Emotional responses
- Habitual prejudices

How Do They Relate?

functionality beauty
content form

Traditionally, They Don’t.

Industry likes to commoditize each role.
Four roles, four people.

What’s wrong with this?

Component Activities of Interaction Design

1. Understanding
2. Abstracting
3. Structuring
4. Representing
5. Detailing

Design Process!
“More Art Than Science”

1. The design of what the software does – its purpose for people
2. The design of a model of what the product is, and its representation to users in the terms of their world, through vision, touch, and sound
3. The detailed design of the software’s look and feel – the exact number of pixels, their color, how fast or smoothly they move, and so on

Do you agree? Is interaction design more art than science?

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