

Summary of Doctoral Thesis

New Design Process.

Visual Communication Design Research

Paulina Urbańska

1/2 Paulina Urbańska's publication *New Design Process. Visual Communication Design Research* is a scientific and design thesis focused on the problem of purpose and applicability of methodologies in visual communication design. Author's reflection on this subject results from experience of professional and didactic work, which merges design and research activities. The text was developed on the basis of author's own experience and in reference to available materials connected with design theory (visual communication design, industrial design, user experience design) as well as other fields, such as psychology, praxeology and cybernetics. This publication could complement the structure of the graduate program in the area of graphic design and constitute a basis for developing a course in design methodologies in relation to graphic design.

In the context of the dynamically changing role of communication and increasing accessibility of tools for production of visual communicates, designers must shoulder even more responsibility. Undoubtedly, their work is a factor in social, cultural and economic development. Consequently, the products of design are no longer its sole purpose, but rather constitute an element of deliberate strategy and thereby a part of a larger whole. The author attempts to demonstrate the scale of this problem providing examples from the field of visual communication and interdisciplinary design operations. She emphasises counter-productivity of marking clear borders between disciplines. On the contrary, she is convinced that reaching to other fields develops designers' professional skills and broadens their horizons. This influence is mutual – design can be significant to other disciplines. Merging the newly acquired knowledge with the seasoned and tested practices can potentially bring much better effects than blind pursuit of innovations. Although the proposed approach to design might seem unoriginal in view of well-developed methods commonly known as *design thinking*, author's arguments, going beyond design theory and supported by descriptions of case studies, aim to convince the reader that rather than prescribing what design should be, one could focus on determining what purpose it should serve.

The publication includes descriptions of methods and tools emphasising design attitude based on openness and flexible design process, as well as conclusions dedicated to achieving the expected design effect, understood as the real change generated by the implemented project. The quality of this research paper lies in compiling the methods facilitating the well-conducted design process. In conclusion, the author emphasises the importance of design and refers to the key role of designer, indicating that there is not one appropriate set of methods which would guarantee success and efficiency of work. Much depends on one's aware attitude, therefore the author intends to present the approach allowing for the deliberate application of methods and tools in the future, which is especially important in the context of dynamically changing realities of market and technologies.

The main design objective of this work was creating a useful publication that would address diversified subject matter and clearly demonstrate various problems, which the author achieved by means of essays, case studies, key words, footnotes and visuals. The included illustrations complement the text and use the language of metaphor to facilitate understanding of particular issues. This solution was designed to favour acquisition and systematizing of knowledge, while encouraging the use of publication in various contexts. Its recipients could be students as well as professional designers, who seek to organize their knowledge and design practice. The selected formal means account for the character of publication, while the applied typographic components support the legibility of its structure and facilitate understanding and further work with the text for the purposes of studying or preparing lectures. Due to the fact that the essays compiled in this book refer to diverse subject matter and are dedicated to various readers, the publication might not constitute a typical academic textbook.

Paulina Ubała