

Design for a sustainable culture

PARODE, Fabio / PhD / Post-graduation Program in Design at Unisinos / Brazil

BENTZ, Ione / PhD / Post-graduation Program in Design at Unisinos / Brazil

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The focus of this study is the production of meaning in the work of the Campana Brother and Vik Muniz, exploring through a critical reflection the notion of technology, communication and culture in the globalized society. It is intended, by the symbolic and media dimension from the work of these designers, to reflect on the theoretical universe of the art-design relation, epistemologically approaching design, art, and communication of the contemporary paradigm of complexity. It is considered that the formal and expressive aspects from the work of these designers, demonstrate the mediation of values and meanings that reflect an important trend of the contemporary society: the design of the author as an agent within a system for the sustainability capable of powering significant chains of singularities and differences. In the scenario of post-industrial society, are evident plurality and diversity of socio-cultural processes and the changes produced by them, including the saturation of the systems of symbolic representation, aesthetics and politics. In developments, installs a state of crisis of ethical values on consumption. The perception of these limits has created a new culture of design. The contemporary consumption and the large population increase, but also the lack of natural resources and energy to meet the demand of the current system of production and consumption, has forced a rethink their livelihood patterns of postmodern culture. In this paper, we propose to develop this theme by the strategic design, art and culture in its relationship with sustainable logic. The methodology adopted is of qualitative and exploratory nature, seeking to understand new concepts and contexts of design. The expected results will be the formulation of a paradigm for the sustainable design, of complex and transdisciplinary nature. The goal is to investigate the notion of design-author and to identify in the relationship design between art and design relevant questions about the foundations of innovation guided by culture.

1. Art re-meaning design

The focus of this article is the production of meaning of works that express the relationship between art and design. As an object of this first investigation it was chosen part of the work of the Campana Brothers. It is intended to explore the universe of these designers through aesthetics, culture and communication, updating problematic of the design in the context of a globalized society in crisis.

In this article, the media and symbolic dimension of the work of these designers will be explored, and so, through the critical interpretation, formulate a theoretical space for the relation-

ship between art-design in the perspective of the sustainability, searching for, in the horizon of this research, an approach of the design of the contemporary paradigm of complexity.

The perspective of this paradigm, as presented by Edgar Morin and Ilya Prigogine, is perceived as a non-cartesian theoretical and formal space, opened to random, chaos and uncertainty, where the definition of limits of the own rationality is present, opening up this way, to the most sensitive and subtle experiences, such as those caused by the colors, textures, organic shapes, and mathematical and infinite lines. First, the formal and expressive aspects of the work of these designers show the mediation of values and meanings that are reflected through the plastic and technological language a relevant trend of the contemporary society: the sustainability through the stimulus of affection from the body relationship with the matters, forming, from the art-design relationship, possible cultural innovations.

2. Cultural innovations

Cultural innovations are those that are mediated by cultural artifacts producing significant changes in the socio-cultural context. As a result, a cultural innovation tends to modify the levels of perception of world, behaviors and values in a given context. It is believed that through design it is possible to stimulate the



Figure 1. Tramontina Corkscrew



Figure 2. Grinza Couch



Figure 3. Alligator Couch



Figure 4. Panda Chair



Figure 5. Milan Couch

construction of new ethical, aesthetic and political values that may be more favorable to the relationship between man and nature, without losing sight, however, of the technological and machinic horizon of the human development.

It is probable that the design that fits in this modality can act as an operator of new meanings within a complex system that seeks the social, environmental, and economical sustainability. Would the design of the author be sufficiently understood by the applied social science field within their capabilities to respond to emergencies of the contemporary society? Author design is primarily a producer of singularities and differences and therefore it faces the problematic of the accelerated entropy of values and assets in the current consumption culture.

3. Humberto and Fernando Campana

They are Brazilian designers who were born in Sao Paulo. Humberto was born in 1953 and Fernando in 1961. Humberto studied law at the university and Fernando studied Architecture at Fine Arts. They became designers experimenting: in 1983, Humberto helped his brother who had launched himself in making metal furniture. Since then, they've been working together.

It is understood that the production through art-design, or design of the author, as media, conveys messages, building affection fields, changing the process of construction of the meanings and the perception of the world, constituting new possibilities for the relationship between subject-object. The problematic raised by the work of the Campana Brothers suggests an ontology of the object



Figure 6. Capanas Brothers



Figure 7. Cascavel Snake

Figure 8. Boa Couch

and the aesthetic-communicative experience. What are the potentialities of the production of differences, of openings to new subjectivities that the design of these Brazilians point? Considering the design as a communication device it is properly to frame it within a logic of construction of meaning where all the communication chain is evident, from the sender to the receiver, being the artifact the media itself.

From the standpoint of design and communication, the works of the Campanas indicate a path of cultural innovation that approximates subject and object in an aesthetic experience modulated by a more open and casual logic, that is, more baroque, more ludicrous. A framework of new meanings and aesthetics points to new standards of society and culture to be described. What are these new meanings drawn from the author's design?

The concept of the Slum chair (1991) presupposes the reuse of pieces of recovered wood. Its meaning suggests the inclusion in the project of simple materials and its organization and upgrading into more complex forms. These objects originally perceived as surplus, residue, excrescence, have the vocation to expand the intensity in the sensible relationship between subject and object.



Figure 9. Slum

Figure 10. Slum Chair

Overall, this arrangement raises the opening of the senses in a perspective of shifting emotions - a new one can emerge: perhaps in the plasticity of a less dominating relationship of the complexity of the object. The analogy of the object as figure-world becomes relevant here.

Design, by its applicative nature, is properly a reductor: reductor to the forms, materials, concepts, experiences. In fact, the design that seeks references and it is potentiated along with the field of arts, tends to play with the boundaries between significant producers of ruptures and continuity, thus generating a strangeness that tends to intensify the sensation of the

body, approximating it closer to the matter of the object and, by analogy, the body of its density and sensations.

4. Design and singularity

Design of author is, above all, the result of the embedded creative process of methodologies of arts, being able to trace a logical path of singularity in the language of design, singularity in the sense of production of differences. The production of differences in a creative process can occur in two different perspectives: in an immanent or transcendent way.

In the immanent perspective, the difference occurs in contrast to the representation [from inside out]. In the transcendent perspective, the production of differences occurs by coupling to the codes recognized and established by the group [from outside to inside].

This order of difference [transcendent] is the reproduction of a collective significant, determined socially.

According to Baudrillard, “we always manipulate objects [in a broad sense] as signs that distinguish us, either in affiliating with our own group taken as an ideal reference, or demarcating ourselves from our group by reference to a group of higher status” (Baudrillard, 1970: 79)



Figure 11. Sushi Chair, 2003

Figure 12. Tribal form



Figure 13. Anemone Couch

Figure 14. Red Chair

5. Organic, hybrid, multiple forms

Espinoza’s logic of affection, “affecting and being affected” is the key point which is possible to understand the place where we put the work of the Campana Brothers. They are works that produce affections, by visual, by touch, by formal estrangement, by the analogies that are translated into cultural values. These works take us to the experience of the *other* in us (the being in the world in relation), by its intensity, density and presence, producing folds of meanings which individuals move from their comfort zone, are affected, and are launched in an eternal come to be, in a rhizome dynamic that preserves the expression of becoming.

Maybe we can identify the sustainability dimension associated with the art from some formal and symbolic aspects present in the work of the Campana Brothers. The order of temporality that is established in the subject-object relationship in the experience of art allows us to reposition the very logic of consumption when the design breaks the borders with the art. A temporality that entices us the effect of duration and memory, as observed by Bergson in Matter and Memory.

6. Forms of expressions in scrap material

The space of the cultural experience is only produced by significant operations that lead individuals to assign meaning to everything around them. Such meanings, however, do not lie only on the level of manifestation, and it is in subliminal subjacent spaces that lies the heart of the symbolic operations. Differentiated by the matter in which form and substance work, they are subject to a discrete analysis, but are really interested by the content offered to fruition, the different significant matter that differentiate each one of the various languages, are, in turn, of metalinguistic interest, for the analysis of its significant potential and operations that are inherent. As the first theory, there are no restrictions of any kind to the use of sensitive materials from the most diverse kinds, so that the configuration can depend on them to inaugurate a new language. In turn, the syncretism is the reducer process that subsumes the significant operators and the semantic inputs that are presented to the reading actions of the interpreting subjects. Suddenly, this is an attribute that it is suggested by the work of Vick Muniz (V. Muniz), specifically in the figures mentioned here. New forms of constitution of the significant materials, and the asyncretic construction to reframing them, and thus, to inaugurate new ways, make the screens a true event. The event is understood as autonomous and inaugural reality to compose the scenario of reality, also the space of possible virtual meanings.

The comprehension of areas of the cultural experience involves the perception of the urban realities, more specifically how the cultural possessions are produced and how the symbolic components articulate. The work of V. Muniz speaks directly about these events, being their own events. It is a productive complexity. It speaks about the society in a subliminal critical way by the narrative that the reader can compose, or so expressed, for example,

the own recovery of matters or residues which themselves bring to the screen, in double sense, the events (social facts). In general, there is an update in the symbolic chain to mean the perishable and transient, the appearance and the trivial, the included and excluded, the usable and disposable, under the aegis of consumption, increased expression of the society of abundance and the excess. Not paradoxically, they are experiences that generate healthy tensions for the development of the society, therefore, not ignoring the so-called modern times, they are included as relevant in the processing of transformation or the cultural innovation.

The expression of these doings updates the representative manifestations of the factual or discursive innovative processes, the own facts are discursive of the symbolic nature, i.e., connotative differences when mediated by the technologies. In this sense, it also operates V. Muniz, in varying the significant materials, in overlaying plastic techniques and in working with the technology for the production of his screens. In his work, the strategies of composition are indicted, as it happens in the fragments of juxtaposed residues, in the design of data of the human figure in composition, technologically immobilized.

The fruition of some of the screens by V. Muniz speaks directly of the symbolic representations, of the sustainable materials, of social inclusion thesis, of experimentation and of technologies and innovations. By way of information, which is available to everyone, in the public domain: it is about a Brazilian artist who has works in major museums of contemporary art in the world. In his creations, he uses unusual materials such as sugar, cotton, chocolate, junk and dust. He investigates themes related to memories, perceptions, representations of the images of the world of arts and media. The use of unique materials impress by the creativity, by bringing together drawings, paintings, photographs and techniques, this artist, besides addressing different issues, reveals that great things can arise from simple elements, even perishable, using everyday life. They are expressions of the contemporary makings and feelings permeated by simplicity and emotion, by reason and feelings.

It is for these reasons that the fruition (the pleasure of the text) of V. Muniz takes the overflow of the limits of the screens (of the symbolic representations and the technological mediations), to read, to hear or to feel the readers (the interpreting communities) in effects of the senses produced by them... It is alive in the surroundings, the discussion of the residue recovery, reprocessing of materials, social consciousness and innovative attitude as the conditions of preservation of the environment, the rescue of inclusive citizenship, the generation of wealth and the innovative production. They are some of the socio-cultural frames that unfold on screen, those duplicated in external physical frames in themselves, or internal to the text stated, for example, the frame of the residues and the human body represented. It's as if this dialogue takes place around the facts, like the picture that opened the soap opera from Globo TV "Passione" (Figure 15), or the surroundings of the theme of the documentary film whose protagonists are the garbage collectors from the landfill in Gramacho in Rio

de Janeiro. For Floch [1990], significant practices are essentially social practices and for Fontanille [2005], the levels of pertinency of the textual cuts obey the criteria of relevance. These are two fundamentals of cuts made here.

At this point of reflection, the questions are imposed: In what space does the reflection on the meanings lie, those meanings that we'll later call floating? On what basis, also floating, do the flows and becomings happen? Touraine [1994] helps us to reflect on these issues. Certainly, it would not be on fixed space, streamlined, with historical references, and unique culture or identity, because that's not the physiognomy that shows us the so called current modernity, fragmented and liquid; transience, diversity, dissociation, hatching, but also decomposition and irreversible rearrangement in constant interaction, this is the contemporary scenario.

One of the different ways to understand the contemporary space is to treat it by the look of morality, because the greatest estrangement occurs in the mean current forms of ethics. Just like the other concepts worked here, morality is not a homogeneous tissue, without dispute or contradiction. Like the "semiotic set of figures," there is a set of socio-cultural constructs to structure the context and the situation. This is what Lyotard [1996] calls "maximum murmur, the complaining laughter" in the movement "so life goes on." Continuing, he recognizes that life goes by fast at the movement in which the morals volatilize by the effect of diversity so appreciated, by the course of life in all directions, and by the construction of the futility and the deception.



Figure 15: Passione

de Janeiro. It is from Maffesoli [1996] the theme of hedonism, of appearance and frivolity. There is an irrepressible everyday hedonism and powerful that underlies and sustains all life in society. It is a reality at the same time very much alive and growing. The pictures of all the speeches of the social and of all the languages organize in the dynamic transformation to the idea of continuity, which echoes the propositions in terms of semiotic textual space. Moreover, the postmodern, for the author, appears "as an organic mixture of archaic elements and others in little contemporary" (p.14), inaugurating "the newest form of solidarity, the social, then defined, not by contracts, but by "a complex process made up of attractions, repulsions, emotions and passions" (p. 15). "As a patchwork blanket, the post-modernity is

made of an entirely different set of elements that establish ongoing interactions with each other made of aggression or kindness, love or hatred" (p.16), in solidarity relation.

It seems productive for the determination of cultural differentiation marks, the idea of replacing the logic of identity by the logic of identification. For Maffesoli (1996), the logic of identity "rested on the existence of autonomous individuals and masters of their actions, the logic of identification brings into play" people "of variable masks, which are tributaries of the emblematic systems that identify" (p.18). It is seen in V. Muniz's, the production marked by the logic of identity which comes from the membership of the magical atmosphere, between lustful and playful, talking about the contemporary readings of the latent Brazilian-ness. There is viscosity in the air, the good viscosity not of the opacity, but the transparency that lets you see how the identification data are permanently on the boil, image so proper to say of the Brazilian culture. From the realm of appearance to the logic of identification, Maffesoli's thesis can install a new paradigm of understanding that would mean more and different from the Brazilians. The formation in allegories would allow the explanation of a remarkable process of national culture, that is, the carnivalization. The texts of V. Muniz are allegorical constructions in which the various modulations build a formal and allegorical appearance of simulacrum and replica, talking about the society at any given time. They are synchronized records that function as a source of historical interpretation, and assume the character of the document, the "testimony" (LYOTARD, 96). It is a way to put it on screen (in its two senses) responsible content for re-enchantment of the world in operation that does not disdain the available technicality.

Certain images, then removed by science and technique, return with strength, spread into the whole social body with the help of the technological development. The body generates communication because it is present, it occupies space, it is seen, it favors the touch."It is, therefore, the horizon of communication that serves as a backdrop to the exacerbation of the appearance" (MAFFESOLI, 96) the reinstatement of the body (GIL, 97). In V. Muniz, for example, the body is the articulator of the visual and textual spaces and the organizer of the residue materi-



Figure 16: Lixão do Gramacho

als into new sensitive tissues, significant matter of the substance and the form of the social contents. It is a peculiar way of building the post-modern identity, the paradox of wealth and waste, in the paradoxal scenario of poverty and exclusion, in the context of wealth as well as market and not as a social good.

Aiming at the pleasure of the eyes (tactility and visibility), his writings take the thought to flow, but also to know, to express the various truths of the things. It acquires, then, the value of testimony, so registered in history, as noted previously. In a way, it replicates the four essential pivots that Maffesoli (1996: 145) proposes to structure the social aesthetics, "the prevalence of the sensitive, the importance of the environment or space, in search of style and appreciation of tribal feeling." The character of the document of the epoch is proposed by the work of V. Muniz, in the process of identifying expression of Brazilian culture.

By thematizing the passion (Figure 15), V. Muniz surrounds in pieces of objects simply joined to internal configuration of the frame that metaphors the passion by the kiss, another metonymic expression to score heavily on the screens of the author. The joke here is on the textual context; lust gives way to the ascetic purity of the physiognomy features of the narrative. It reappears, very clear, in figure 16, in the macunaimic form that represents the common man in society around poverty and scrap, as sovereign in their distinctive national identification process, in one of its many segments. In the mosaic of culture, it settles the mosaic of plastic forms technicized. It is noteworthy, in this particular case, the recognition of the culture of poverty in an abundant and disposal society, and the resumption of the chain in the counterpoint of extreme poverty. Strategies are created for re-materialization and recycling, raised to the status of agent of transformation to promote new lifestyles. The dialectic consumption-discard-scavenging recycling is coated of great significance by introducing an aspect of otherness kitsch, dominant in the urban public space, as the pleasure of the senses and forms of the game.

Conclusion

It is considered that from the sensitive experience proposed by these works, not only the perception of time and space change, but also the affective value which is constituted in an immanent way between subject-object in the consumption generates a quantum of affection, of construction of the meaning and memory. However, as noted by Adorno, the cultural industry, and within the design itself, produces effects of standardization, which in the current era, the globalization tends to replicate. The resistances to this system have gradually been giving way to a new order. Some designers express this conflict, trying to bring out beauty, order, luxury. Would this be the case of Campana Brothers? .

It is considered that the work of the Campana Brothers is potentially anti-mass, and therefore reflects the luxury despite extracting its significant materials of the poorest and simplest means of the society, thus creating continuity between the different social spheres. Its result, in the perspective of a Campanian object, is an amalgam among forces that opposed each other, but

also they complement each other: an effect of representation of carnival order. It is considered also that the work of Vic Muniz, in the mosaic of culture, it settles the mosaic of plastic forms technicized. It is noteworthy, in this particular case, the recognition of the culture of poverty in an abundant and disposal society, and the resumption of the chain in the counterpoint of extreme poverty. Strategies are created for re-materialization and recycling, raised to the status of agent of transformation to promote new lifestyles.

The understanding of the design of the author as a process requires an anthropological view of itself, in the sense that it is necessary to rescue, from its whole, whatever gives it a systemic shape and what it is its singular use: the expression of an intrinsic humanity in the creative process and in the expression of the materials.

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