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DMDN371 Critical Theory

## Designs need theory.

Design requires a process of problem solving; this problem-solving begins with research and theory development. “Design is about a well researched and theory based tasteful selection of colour, form and function to create a design that does not only fulfill its purpose but expresses the designers meanings, knowledge and feelings that in turn is embodied within their design”. Once a designer is well-informed and has a good theory and research base of knowledge toward the design brief he is then able to create sound and well thought-out project. One way to begin this research procedure is to highlight the main points and words within the brief. Then gather information on the meaning of these words and their relevant theories. Once this stage has been completed and new knowledge has come out of this one’s own personal theory can be drawn out of the previous discoveries. It can well be said that the main cause and need for research is to discover a theory or another concept and key elements within the brief that are not immediately visible. The need to take this journey of discovery is to find answers (the brief theory), to become better informed about the issues of the project and to develop a design theory. With many projects that digital media designers construct a good research theory basis is required or else the final outcome is a disaster like the web page moiré (right) which has no chance of getting a good viewer rating unless they do something about their visual appearance. The web page WeFeelFine can be said to have great web design

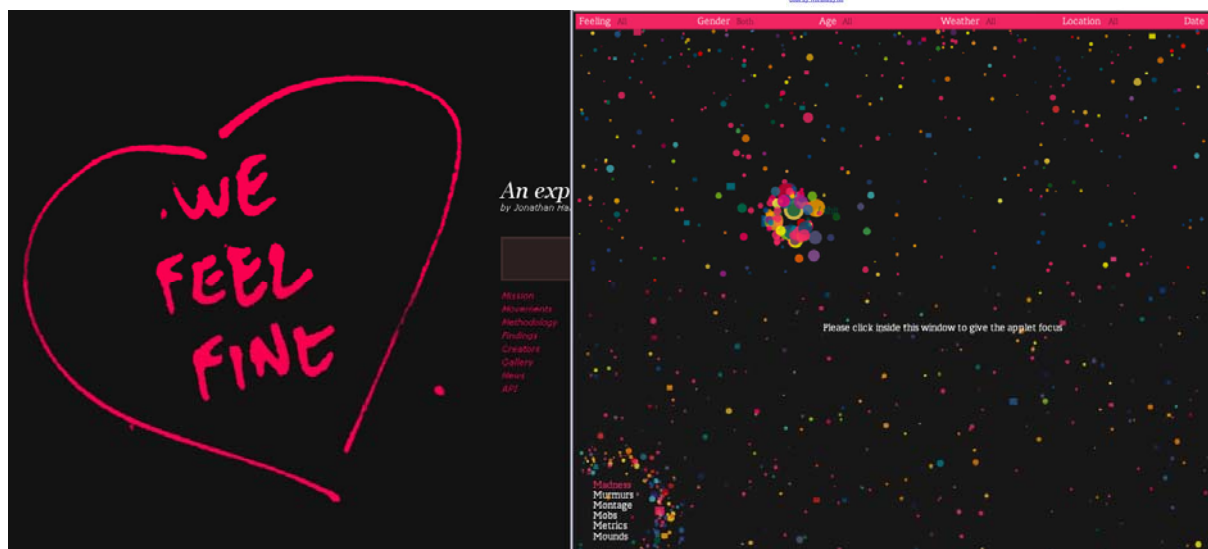
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Projects

- Insel 2 books for the Migros Museum / [Gegenwartskunst Zürich](#)
- Insel Annual report for the Swiss Curling Association
- Black Maria #2, Fontaine for fine art
- Issuing soon! Catalogue for the group exhibition *Real Fantasies*, Fotomuseum Winterthur
- Corporate design for *Jewellery Prize Switzerland*
- Hybrid*, a catalogue for the Fotomuseum Winterthur
- Image brochure for *Mettler/Chizzo*, Construction Company, Chur, Zurich
- Issuing soon! *Janefestival*, Schaffhausen
- Insel *Masterplan* (Melinda Nadj Abonji & Jurczok 1001), Muschelabel, Zurich
- moiré # Copy of a Tree
- moiré # Make a Tree
- Insel *Parcours und foundation for contemporary art*, London
- Pascale Wiedenmann, *In Notera*, artist book and poster
- Pin-up
- Insel *Flug Pentagons*, a book for *Marcel Merli*, Markus Peter Architekten, Zurich
- ssDA *Mogozin #18 #26*
- Some Posters
- Two Steps Back*, a book for *SS Diesel*, Milan

Abstracts

[#moiré](#)



throughout all their web pages (below).

The process of research and theory development is one necessary for digital media designers to examine the evidence, to allow them to ask questions, and to allow them to seek answers, which can

in turn be gathered up into a conclusion whether right or wrong. This term of right or wrong leads onto one of the very important points about design theory, design theory is usually limited to the individual's opinion they have about his or her design and the project at hand. This can vary at times due to research which may agree with other people's theories especially if it's a group project. But one quality theory has about itself, is that it is individualized it is sometimes theory.

Theory requires some evidence to determine or demonstrate the truth of its assertion. Some design theories/propositions are put out there as true and used in support of other theories/propositions to build a strong basis of theory and knowledge for a project. There are times when the theories/propositions can be assumed to be false or just not fully true but they are theories in their own right never the less.

When a design has a well developed research and theory basis it is strong against any attacks from challenging designers and designs but also disbelievers and critics. It's like in a debating contest or even parliamentary debates the side/party that has the strongest theory/argument and best research base usually wins the debate.

Theory is constructed by finding more knowledge and interesting diversities through research using parts of what we already know. It is also added to by the way we perceive things and the attitude we have towards them during the research phase but also in daily life.

Research is constructed by finding the key elements of the issue and using them as the starting point. It's also about finding its context and how it relates back to itself. Once the research has taken place the next phase begins and that is; how does design come about? Design comes about by constructing design ideas, research, and theories into a final design mould. But also physical testing or testing its relation to other physical things is part of this phase.

Now begins the creating and what creativity is about. Ideas are based of your own theories and then processing that into a result and once again relating that back to your own initial theories and ideas.

In concluding, the benefits of critical research and theory must be highlight. The process of theory development though deep research and analysis brings about a firm grounding of knowledge that will support the design project that it has created. "Design is about a well researched and theory based tasteful selection of colour, form and function to create a design that does not only fulfill its purpose but expresses the designer's personal meanings, knowledge and feelings that in turn is embodied within their design".