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My design identity...
My future...

An essay presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Design at Massey University, College of Creative Arts, Wellington, New Zealand.

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Thank you. So here's to the future...

Abstract

Title: My design identity... My future...

My research project involves the creation of a personal design identity in order to reposition myself within the design industry at a time when the existence of New Zealand designers who work within the mass design services market is being threatened by New Zealand based manufacturing and industry moving offshore.

The design-led research has involved the observation and analysis of designers that are positioned within the high profile and high value area of the design industry including Ron Arad, Ross Lovegrove, Marc Newson and David Trubridge in order to gain insights and inspiration for developing my own personal identity. On the basis of the information gained a process of repeated experimentation and reflection in the field of design art was used to establish the foundation for my personal identity.

Symbolic of this personal design identity is a curiosity for experimentation with material and structure to create everyday objects that are not devoid of function, but not serious either.

The goal of this identity is to make users smile and to increase sentimental attachment and desirability towards these objects by offering experiences that can be described as surprising, memorable, enjoyable, light-hearted and even exhilarating when compared with utilitarian, mass market equivalents.

An example of this is a chair called 'Sprung' that integrates elastic cord with a 2-dimensional plastic sheet that flexes into a 3-dimensional springy form when sat in. This transformation is unexpected and the bounce experience fun, challenging how we view materials and structures and how chairs are perceived and used.

This research has personal significance for my future career as the personal identity developed combined with my renewed enthusiasm for design can be applied to ongoing design art objects, allowing me to establish a track record in this field and move away from the mass design services market.

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