

# **An Imaginal Interpretation of Interior Design's Methods of Cultural Production: Towards a Strategy for Constructing Meaning**

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## **An Imaginal Interpretation of Interior Design's Methods of Cultural Production: Towards a Strategy for Constructing Meaning**

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I declare that the thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree Philosophiae Doctor at the University of Pretoria, is my own work, and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

**Raymund König**

14 July 2015



*The drugstore (or the new shopping centre) achieves a synthesis of consumer activities, not the least of which are shopping, flirting with objects, playful wandering and all the permutational possibilities of these ... [the drugstore] does not juxtapose categories of merchandise, but lumps signs together indiscriminately, lumps together all categories of commodities, which are regarded as partial fields of a sign-consuming totality. In the drugstore the cultural centre becomes part of the shopping centre. It would be simplistic to say that culture is 'prostituted' there. It is culturalized. Simultaneously, commodities (clothing, groceries, catering etc.) are also culturalized in their turn, since they are transformed into the substance of play and distinction, into luxury accessories, into one element among others in the general package of consumables.*

**Jean Baudrillard**

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## ABSTRACT

### **An Imaginal Interpretation of Interior Design's Methods of Cultural Production: Towards a Strategy for Constructing Meaning**

by

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Degree: Philosophiae Doctor

The main research problem was to determine interior design's methods of cultural production. The original knowledge contributions of this thesis is summatively included in the imaginal interiors hypothesis: "Interior design produces culture through synthesis, proximity, associations, timeliness, and technification".

The study was undertaken as an initial study of the role of interior design in the field of cultural production. It aimed to make tacit interior design methods explicit and emerged from the assumption that interior designers who excel in the creation of meaning are rewarded for it in the form of cultural and economic capital. The study is important since it may improve the praxis of interior design, it expands the discipline's research methodology, and it reviews the production methods of an emergent discipline.

The study considered cultural production as an iterative practice comprised of the individual acts of generation and interpretation and the group manifestations of meaning. Within this domain interior artefacts are considered as a material objects within a semiotic context. These objects are functional and their primary communicative role is to portray their function. Making the generation of culture analogous to the generation of meaning allowed me to assess the interior artefact from a logical point of view and enabled me to speculate on the role of interior design within the larger cultural discourse.

The research was located in the interpretivist paradigm. It took a non-positivist, social constructivist stance. I believe that meanings are emergent from the research process. The research encompassed a literature review, the collection of suitable examples, and the conduct of critical analysis. The primary research methods were constructivist grounded theory and phenomenography. Qualitative, interpretivist tools were developed and utilised in the content analysis through interpretation. The analysis followed a process of coding and analytic integration to construct theory. The analysis is based on a non-probability, judgmental sample of representations of interior artefacts which was compiled to cover the substantive area with a degree of representivity and generality. The corpus contains photographic documentation and meta-data for 72 interior artefacts.

The thesis presented a theory for the construction of meaning in interior design as it manifested in the substantive area. This was presented in a narrative format where the five imaginal methods were described by illustrating and discussing their general properties, the actions they undertake and the effects these create. 'Synthesis' relate to the selection of meaningful components and bringing them together in a cohesive whole. 'Proximity' relates to the placement of objects in space to create meaningful arrangements and patterns. 'Associations' involve connections in the mind between different components and to methods which infer meaning. 'Technification' is concerned with the physical expression of meaning. This theory should be considered as the foremost response to the research problem. The theory that is presented here is the result of identifying, isolating, describing, and interpreting interior design's methods of cultural production.

The thesis contributes to the theoretical consideration of the role of meaning in interior design, how the discipline creates that meaning, and how this production of meaning influences cultural production in general. In terms of the discipline's larger cultural role I concluded that the professional practice of interior design is the best located occupation to denote occupation, inhabitation, and identity in the public built environment; in addition the discipline communicates theoretical discourses through its cultural effluent.

The practical contributions of the thesis manifests in facilitating the production of meaning in new interior artefacts. The thesis makes provision for the inclusion of imaginal aspects in the discipline's production by strategically expanding the interior design process. The practical contributions can be summarised as a call for the inclusion of knowledge-based, empirical research practice in the interior design process. The thesis presents a design strategy to augment, but not replace, well-developed design intuition. This strategy is a novel contribution to interior design's production processes.

Keywords: Cultural Production; Design Strategy; Image; Meaning

## EKSERP

### 'n Beeldelike Interpretasie van Binne-ontwerp se Kultuurproduksiemetodes: Op Pad na 'n Strategie vir die Konstruksie van Betekenis

deur

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Die hoofprobleem was om binne-ontwerp se kultuurproduksiemetodes te bepaal. Hierdie tesis se oorspronklike kennis bydraes kan opsommend in die beeldelike binne-hipotese vasgevat word: "Binne-ontwerp produseer kultuur deur middel van sintese, nabyheid, assosiasies, tydelikheid, en tegnifisering".

Die studie was 'n aanvanklike ondersoek na binne-ontwerp se rol in die kultuurproduksieveld. Die oogmerke was om versteekte binne-ontwerpmetodes bloot te lê en het na vore getree met die veronderstelling dat binne-ontwerpers wat bekwaam is in die skepping van betekenis met kulturele en ekonomiese kapitaal daarvoor beloon word.

Die studie beskou kultuurproduksie as 'n iteratiewe praktyk wat saamgestel is uit die individuele aksies van skepping en vertolking en die groepsmanifestasie van betekenis. Binne-artefakte word binne hierdie domein as materiële voorwerpe in 'n semiotiese konteks beskou. Hierdie voorwerpe is funksioneel en hul primêre kommunikasiedoel is om daardie funksie uit te druk. Deur die skepping van kultuur as analogie vir die skepping van betekenis te beskou word ek toegelaat om die binne-artefak logies te ondersoek en in staat gestel om te spekuleer oor die rol van binne-ontwerp binne die groter kultuurdiskoers.

Die navorsing is geleë in 'n interpretivistiese paradigma. Dit neem 'n nie-positivistiese, sosiaal-konstruktiewe standpunt. Ek glo dat betekenis deur die navorsingsproses voortgebring word. Die navorsing het bestaan uit 'n literatuurstudie, die versameling van gepaste voorbeelde en die aflegging van kritiese analise. Die primêre navorsingsmetodes was konstruktiewe gegronde teorie en fenomenografie. Kwalitatiewe, interpretivistiese hulmiddele is ontwikkel en gebruik in die inhoudsanalise deur vertolking. Die analise het teorie konstrueer deur 'n proses van kodering en analitiese integrasie. Die analise is gebaseer op 'n nie-waarskynlike, vooroordelende steekproef van voorstellings van binne-artefakte wat saamgestel is om die substantiewe gebied met 'n mate van verteenwoordigheid en algemeenheid te verteenwoordig. Die korpus bevat fotografiese dokumentasie en meta-data van 72 binne-artefakte.

Die tesis het 'n teorie vir die konstruksie van betekenis in binne-ontwerp soos dit in die substantiewe gebied manifesteer het voorgelê. Dit is in 'n narratiewe formaat voorgelê waar die vyf beeldelike metodes beskryf is deur illustrasie en die bespreking van hul algemene eienskappe, die aksies wat dit onderneem en die uitwerking wat dit het. 'Sintese' beskryf die uitsoek van betekenisdraende komponente en om dit in 'n samehörige geheel te gebruik. 'Nabyheid' beskryf die plasing van voorwerpe in ruimte om betekenisvolle rangskikkings en patrone te maak. 'Tydelikheid' omvat gebruike en konvensies wat van vorige generasies geërf word en wat geskep en herskep word deur herhaling. 'Assosiasies' betrek gedagtesverbindings tussende komponente en ander metodes wat betekenis skep. 'Tegnifisering' behels die fisiese uitdrukking van betekenis. Hierdie teorie moet beskou word as die eerste respons op die navorsingsprobleem. Die teorie wat hier voorgelê word is die resultaat van die identifikasie, isolasie, beskrywing en vertolking van binne-ontwerp se kultuurproduksiemetodes.

Die tesis dra by tot die teoretiese oorweging van die rol van betekenis in binne-ontwerp, hoe die dissipline daardie betekenis skep, en hoe hierdie produksie van betekenis die algemene kultuurproduksie beïnvloed. Ten opsigte van die dissipline se groter kulturele rol het ek tot die gevolgtrekking gekom dat binne-ontwerp die bes geplaasde beroep is om besetting, bewoning, en identiteit in die openbare bou-omgewing te denoteer; verder kommunikeer die dissipline teoretiese diskoerse deur sy kulturele uitvloeisel.

Die praktiese bydrae van die tesis word gemanifesteer in die fasilitering van betekenis-skepping in nuwe binne-artefakte. Die tesis maak voorsiening vir die insluiting van beeldende aspekte in die dissipline se produksie deur die strategiese uitbouing van die binne-ontwerpproses. Die praktiese bydraes kan saamgevat word as 'n oproep tot die insluiting van kennis-gebaseerde, empiriese navorsingspraktyk in die binne-ontwerpproses. Die tesis stel 'n ontwerpstrategie voor om goed ontwikkelde ontwerpintuisie te ondersteun. Hierdie strategie is 'n nuwe bydra tot binne-ontwerp se produksieprosesse.

Sleuteltermes: Beeld; Betekenis; Kultuurproduksie; Ontwerpstrategie

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# CHAPTER 1

## THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

## 1.1. INTRODUCTION

In the title of the thesis, *An Imaginal Interpretation of Interior Design's Methods of Cultural Production: Towards a Strategy for Constructing Meaning*, two theoretical perspectives that play a role in understanding human phenomena are introduced: the first, alluded to by the word 'production', is Marxism with its interplay between production and consumption; the second, introduced by the terms 'cultural' and 'meaning', is (post)structuralism<sup>1</sup> with its associations of meaning and signification. An approach to combine the pragmatics of Marxism with the significance of (post)structuralism (or the synthesis of capital and meaning) is not novel; it is evident in the works of earlier theorists such as: Baudrillard (*The Consumer Society. Myths and Structures* (1998[1970]) and *The System of Objects* (1997[1968])); Bourdieu (*Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* 1984[1979]); and Douglas and Isherwood (*The World of Goods. Towards an Anthropology of Consumption* 1996[1979]) and led to the emergence of concepts such as 'cultural capital'. The study aims to provide initial insight into the methods used by commercial interior design in the production (and commodification) of meaning and by extension culture in the broadest sense.<sup>2</sup>

This thesis will consider the creation and maintenance of culture holistically and specifically judge the creation of ethnographic design expression as pastiche. Although ethnographic approaches may be relevant to inform the research, the study specifically tries to avoid ethnography's depiction of the 'Other' (as described by Saukko, 2003:55). Through the interpretation of visual and verbal texts (and other forms of representation) the study is hermeneutic in nature. The interpretations to follow will not simply be based on my developed sensibility as interior designer and researcher, but will seek to include rigorous empirical methods. It will consider the notion of 'curating cultures' which acts by creating narratives into which curated cultures are inserted (Isar & Anheier, 2010:7). In other words, cultural production may be based on the selection and synthesis of cultural codes. Isar and Anheier (2010:7) questions the role of globalisation and is concerned about the possibility of a 'one-way decoding' where the 'Other' is decoded and translated into a global *lingua franca* generating easily swappable pockets of virtual meaning. The study takes cognisance of this since this practice threatens the diversity of cultural expressions.

The study aims to remove the mystical overtones of creative expression and genius in order to make tacit interior design methods explicit. The study emerges from the assumption that interior designers (and students) who excel at the construction of meaning are rewarded for it and receives remuneration in the form of cultural and economic capital.

The research is preceded by my Masters dissertation, *Interior Design as Architecture's 'Other'*, which investigated the ontological relationship between interior design and architecture (Königk, 2010). The dissertation successfully resolved this relationship and proposed that interior design be considered as an architectural discipline.

- 1.) '(Post)structuralism' is used as an economic term to mean 'structuralism and poststructuralism'. Here I refer to poststructuralism as a continuation of the structuralist project in which poststructuralism cannot be considered as an intellectual movement against structuralism but one which represents a change of focus, *see*, 2.2 Cultural Production.
- 2.) At the outset the study aims to reach a Marxist and (post)structural understanding of interior design's role in this context, however, the study soon reaches a poststructural focus, although Marxism is never entirely neglected.

## 1.2 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT AND PREMISE

### 1.2.1 The Main Problem

The main problem is to determine interior design's methods of cultural production.

The research questions are:

- What are interior design's methods of cultural production?
- What is the role of the interior artefact in the larger cultural discourse?
- Can this role and these methods be synthesized in a design strategy to construct meaning in the design of new artefacts?

### 1.2.2 The Main Premise

The main premise is that interior design holds methods of cultural production. It is possible to identify, isolate, describe and interpret these and through their application develop a rigorous, systematic technique to construct identity and encode meaning.<sup>3</sup>

The research objectives are:

- To elucidate interior design's methods of cultural production by identifying, isolating, describing and interpreting these through the analysis of contemporary commercial interior design artefacts.<sup>4</sup>
- To speculate on the role of the interior artefact in the larger cultural discourse through theoretical grounding of the methods.
- To apply this role and these methods to develop a rigorous design strategy to construct meaning in the design of new artefacts.

3.) Although the premise is stated in the opening chapter of the thesis, it was formulated as a result of the CGT process. If the premise was formulated at the outset, it would represent a thesis statement which would contradict the objectives of grounded theory. See, 3.3.1 Constructivist Grounded Theory.

4.) See, 4.2 Selection Criteria.

### 1.3 THE MATERIAL AND ITS INTERPRETATION

At the onset of the study, 'culture' is considered as the entity encompassing all human phenomena not determined by biology. At commencement it is necessary to define this weighted, interminable idea as broadly as possible. In this way 'culture' includes all human endeavours: objects and artefacts, architecture, technology, knowledge, professions, institutions, religions, music, literature, etc. As the research evolves 'culture' will be defined succinctly and cultural practices may be portrayed through analogy. In this vein the study will follow a progressive, social constructivist meta-theory and considers the artefact holistically as cultural, legal, social and economic entity.

As the general purpose of semiotics is to understand that part of communication which is intuitive in order to improve the generation of new messages; and as early architectural theory aimed to make tacit architectural methods explicit so will the thesis investigate interior design's methods of creating and maintaining culture. A deliberate dualism is employed at this stage: interior design can be expressed as a discipline of creativity and spectacle; dialectically architecture can be contrasted as a discipline of human ecology (although both disciplines are concerned with the interaction of people and their environment). I recognise that interior design (as a discipline in the built environment) employs common architectural methods (e.g. planning, organisation and hierarchy), but the study is specifically concerned with those devices that are not generally employed by architecture. Interior design produces meaning through the identification, collection, editing, synthesis and reconstruction of cultural memes (mainly visual). Identity creation in interior design can be analysed with reference to empirical artefacts which serve as examples in support of the thesis. These are accessed through pictorial reproductions of interior spaces (or, in other words, the imaginal representations<sup>5</sup> of the artefactual residue of interior design).

Only pictorial reproductions from reputable, credible sources will be considered admissible. It is assumed that this is authentic and accurate evidence. Material (in the form of photographs and meta-data) will be sourced from design blogs (e.g. *Dezeen*<sup>6</sup> and *ArchDaily*<sup>7</sup>) and may be corroborated or enhanced through the use of secondary sources.

- 5.) Barthes (1983[1967]) calls this the 'iconic structure' of the artefact.
- 6.) [www.dezeen.com](http://www.dezeen.com)
- 7.) [www.archdaily.com](http://www.archdaily.com)

#### 1.4 RATIONALE IN SUPPORT OF THE STUDY

The study is undertaken as an initial study of the role of interior design in the field of cultural production; as such it is by necessity broad and general. Although it takes its starting point from documents aimed at consensus and is primarily concerned with the everyday practice of interior design, it does not exclude fringe movements or contradictions and takes cognisance of counter-movements, boundary conditions and emergent practices in the discipline.

The study has its origins in an initiative by the International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI) to define interior design and to reach a form of consensus regarding the procedures and responsibilities of the discipline as a practice and a profession. The Design Frontiers: Interiors Entity project (DFIE) culminated in the (unanimous) adoption of the *Interiors Declaration* (IFI, 2011) by the DFIE Global Symposium which was held in New York, 17-18 February 2011. The *Interiors Declaration* can be considered as a normative statement based on seven tenets (value, relevance, responsibility, culture, business, knowledge, and identity). There is a need to develop the *Interiors Declaration* to enable it to function as a living document which influences praxis and dogma.<sup>8</sup> The thesis considers 'culture' in this context and I wish to make a contribution in this area.

The study is further initiated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) documents aimed at protection and promotion of cultural heritage and expression (the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003) and the *Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression* (2005)).<sup>9</sup>

From a pragmatic perspective culture can be considered as a strategic element in developmental policies. Cultural activities, goods and services have an economic and commercial nature and convey identity, value and meaning (UNESCO, 2005:1-2). There is a deep seated interdependence between intangible and tangible cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2003:1). 'Cultural content' is the symbolic meaning, artistic dimension and cultural values that originate from identities (UNESCO, 2005:5). The 'intangible cultural heritage' are the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills and the instruments associated therewith (e.g. objects, artefacts and spaces) (UNESCO, 2003:2). *Id est* the intangible aspects of culture require a tangible vehicle for their expression (e.g. a song being played on a musical instrument or a story being told through voice). Social space is the vehicle for the cultural life of society to take place (Perolini, 2011:167). Social space is produced by and influences cultural interaction. Space encourages or discourages certain behaviours and interactions and gives form to social structures and ideologies (Perolini, 2011:168). This is an account of the recursive relationship in which cultural practices inform place-making, while place-making, in turn, construct and maintain cultural practices. Interior design offers the tangible cultural spaces which serves as vehicle for intangible cultural practices (e.g. a restaurant acting as vehicle for a waiter serving dinner, with associated meanings of servitude and social position and additional connotations of commodity and expense).

Globalisation (and the associated information and communication technologies) affords greater opportunities for cultural exchange, but this may threaten cultural diversity if imbalances between cultural expressions are not considered (UNESCO, 2005:2). Further, globalisation gives rise to

8.) It is recognised that, as consensus seeking documents, these three texts contain tacit compromises which limits their applicability in the formation of evocative definitions. Although they may be criticised as shallow they are ideological and aspirational and in need of critical interpretation.



threats of “deterioration, disappearance and destruction of the intangible cultural heritage” (UNESCO, 2003:1). The design industry is under threat of globalisation and the influence of the digital age leading to changes in design practice and informants. Design research must take greater cognisance of the designer, the content of design activity and the context of that activity (Dorst, 2008:7). There is a need to consider the designer’s role in the production of physical artefacts which serve as vehicle for intangible cultural practices. It must be recognised however that design has limited applicability and that the designer is not omnipotent; the designer is only one role-player in the larger ecology of production in which the manufacture and distribution of goods and materials are dependent on many facets.

The cultural industries are those industries that produce and distribute cultural goods and services; these are those activities, goods and services which embody or convey cultural expressions (UNESCO, 2005:5). It is necessary and expedient to consider interior design as firstly, a cultural activity (irrespective of its economic value) and secondly a cultural service or industry (with economic value).<sup>9</sup>

Interior design is influenced by, but in turn influences larger cultural discourses (e.g. race and gender) (Taylor & Preston, 2006:10). Interior design is a creative practice informed by intellectual scholarship of its cultural production. This may be elucidated through analysis to establish generative exploration (Taylor & Preston, 2006:12-13). Through the descriptive interpretation of interior artefacts signifiers can be placed in a larger framework; by a process of imaginative abstraction this may lead to new theoretical formulation. The thesis aims to generate interior design theory through the interpretation of interior artefacts in this manner.

Since the establishment of interior decoration as a full time occupation in the nineteenth century the interior is fashioned within the larger sphere of cultural production (Penner & Rice, 2007:267). As interior decoration professionalised and interior design emerged as a young profession in the 1950’s (which differentiated itself through its commercial applications, specifically retail, hospitality and office interiors in opposition to the residential realm of interior decoration) the interior is constituted as a relation between image and space (Rice, 2004:284). Interior design is reliant on spatial methods (e.g. hierarchy and symmetry) and imaginal methods. The synthesis of these two spheres represents interior design as a practice.

Interior design’s cultural aspects were described in the *Interiors Declaration* (IFI, 2011):

#### *CULTURE*

*As a creative enterprise, interior design is a mode of cultural production. It is a place-maker that interprets, translates, and edits cultural capital.*

*In a global world, interior design must play a role in facilitating the retention of cultural diversity.<sup>10</sup>*

The two paragraphs in the *Interiors Declaration* are in opposition: when interior design translates cultural capital, it facilitates cultural exchange which is a unifying and globalising force; this may threaten cultural diversity. It is obvious that when interior design services are rendered that a deeper understanding of the discipline’s cultural role (and the associated hegemonic agency) is necessary to mitigate these factors.

9.) This is an example of the pendulum swing between, and an effort to synthesise, Marxism and (post)structuralism.

10.) The text was edited to eliminate the term ‘interior architecture’.

Historically architectural theory was considered discrete but a shift occurred at the end of the twentieth century which considers the built environment in the domain of cultural theory (Leach, 1997:vii). This allowed architecture to become worthy of consideration by cultural theorists, philosophers and others. The theoretical shift places architecture within the broader cultural context and allows both debates from cultural theory to inform architecture and the built environment to offer rich analysis for cultural studies:

*By testing itself against a broader cultural debate,  
architecture might hope to acquire ... tools of self-criticism*  
(Leach, 1997:xiv).

As a discipline of the built-environment it becomes necessary to consider interior design within this broad cultural realm and to search for similar critical tools. These tools are aimed at methods to study the interaction of elements within interior design artefacts, to critically reflect on these and to consider the role of the interior artefact in the larger cultural discourse. The 'continuum principle' is the assumption that the built environment is the product of culture in the broader sense and that similar cultural production methods inform the built environment on a number of scales (e.g. the methods and discourses used to inform the design of large-scale infrastructure are similar to those employed in the design of single volume retail interiors). The continuum principle ignores the boundary condition of the interior and the peculiarity of volumetric design. There can be no homogeneous continuum of spatial principles and it becomes necessary to investigate the interior on its own terms. The interior represents the idiosyncrasies of cultural identity (Hillier & Hanson, 1984:143-145). In typical cases the interior represents a small scale artefact which has a short lifespan (as example a bijoux shop which only exists for one lease cycle).

In an effort to return to the conception of culture I refer to Geertz (2000[1973]:5) who, in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, states that culture is essentially a semiotic concept:

*[M]an is an animal suspended in webs of significance he  
himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the  
analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in  
search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning.*

To consider culture as a semiotic concept simply means that culture is considered as the sharing of information. Cultural gestures carry meaning and they can be understood by those who perceive them. Semiotics (and its paraphernalia, e.g. sign (signifier and signified), symbol, phoneme, techneme, syntagm, syntax, etc.) is taken as a theory to interpret the generation, dissemination and decoding of *meaning*. Cultural creativity is embedded in social and political phenomena and is related to specific configurations of structure, power and meaning (Anheier & Isar, 2010:5).

*Whatever else one may say about the vague and yet  
pervasive notion of 'meaning', its most obvious and striking  
quality is that it forms the very basis of culture. The study of  
meaning as Eco succinctly put it (1973) is the study of the  
logic of culture. The search for 'meaning' in the built  
environment entails looking at it as a cultural product*  
(Broadbent & Llorens, 1980:ix).

At this point the initial broad definition of culture is narrowed: culture becomes analogous to meaning. In 'Hegemony and Mass Culture: A Semiotic Approach' Gottdiener (1985:991) asserts that the situation is

established in which all cultural phenomena are reducible to semiotic phenomena. If interior design's methods of cultural production are considered it may also be asked: how does interior design construct meaning?<sup>11</sup>

Although the creation of meaning and identity is investigated as source for cultural theory (e.g. Bechtel, 1980; Broadbent & Llorens, 1980; Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1989[1981]; McKellar & Sparke, 2004; Vaikla-Poldma, 2013) there is no systematic, empirical study of the creation of meaning in interior design. Further, semiotics as analytical tool to study meaning in interior spaces receives limited scholarly enquiry (examples are: Tan, 2011; and Wilwerding, 2013:80-82). Eco (1997[1968]:182-202) considers the semiotic nature of architecture<sup>12</sup>: he regards architecture as primarily a *functional* technology which secondly *communicate* its functions. The human environment is often treated as a semiotic system of universal meaning. The environment is encoded with meaning which controls behaviour, integrates with other systems of meaning and regulates social norms (Tan, 2011:41). Symbols are social constructs that communicate cultural "values, beliefs, and attitudes" (Turner in Tan, 2011:43). It would be short-sighted to argue that the human environment is a system of universal meaning. Semiotics does not consider meaning to be stable or objective. The system (or method) may be considered as objective, but there is an inter-subjective basis to meaning (Gottdiener, 1985:985).

When viewing culture as a semiotic concept which fundamentally involves communication (or the generation, propagation and interpretation of meaning) then all artefacts<sup>13</sup> can be considered as 'texts'. During semiosis (the transfer of meaning) two creative acts are at play: the creative act of generating meaning and the second act of interpretation. Since the generation and interpretation of meaning is often temporally removed and may happen independently the author's intentions can be considered as separate of what a text actually says. This implies that texts are open and support multiple interpretations (Eco, 1990:41). The interpretation of a text is a creative act which is dependent on the attitude of the reader. The interpretation does not provide a unique and final meaning (i.e. the reader is complicit in the production of meaning).<sup>14</sup> The interpretation of texts therefore contributes to creative production. Thus production will fail if the reader does not participate in the process. This is supported by Geertz (2000[1973]:29) who states that a semiotic approach to culture is an interpretive approach to the study of it, but he provides the caveat that semiotic interpretation is contestable and can at best be a form of refined debate. This invalidates a positivist approach to the research of meaning, specifically considering the (unstable and subjective) connotations of the researcher. The interpretation of culture allows for two levels: semantic interpretation accepts the given meaning, while critical interpretation is a meta-linguistic activity describing and explaining the formal reasons for a response (Eco, 1990:77). The interpretation of an artefact can contribute to making tacit generative processes explicit; as such the purpose of semiotics is to understand a basically intuitive act with the intention to improve to future generation of texts. Meaning production

- 11.) Since the semiotic field covers the system of objects; aesthetic texts; and mass communication (Eco, 1979[1976]:9-13) it includes interior design (since these areas fall within interior design's traditional field of expertise).
- 12.) Eco (1997[1980]:182) defines architecture broadly to include the entire built environment.
- 13.) Here, 'artefact' refers to any cultural residue, whether material or intangible, in this case both a painting and a ritual can be considered as cultural artefacts.
- 14.) I take an essentially poststructural position for the thesis.

is an iterative process which relies on the actions of all the role players.<sup>15</sup> Meaning is formed at a text's inception and interpretation. An artefact's validity as a memetic construction is dependent on its acceptability to a reader with sufficient goodwill to accept the artefact as plausible. This study therefore is not concerned with connoted meaning, but with the study of the interactions of various devices and processes (i.e. with syntagms and semiosis). The production, circulation and transformation of cultural meaning must be studied throughout different stages of semiosis, specifically the transfunctionalisation of meaning in industrial contexts (Gottdiener, 1985:998). Cultural influences must be isolated and their interaction in cultural production understood, this will reflect the deep and complex cultural intentions altered in the process of hegemonic control (Gottdiener, 1985:999).

In 'A History of Aesthetics and the Structuring of Space' Wilwerding (2013:82) considers the difficulty interior designers face when constructing meaning: design elements may contain multivalent meanings; meaning construction is unstable; the entire project is not in the designer's control; interior design responds to existing spaces which will influence the generation of new meaning; the message must be supported by the client; and finally, the user may interpret or modify the meaning. It is not possible to compile a 'dictionary' of design elements since it becomes unfeasible to determine all possible connoted meanings or to arrange them taxonomically, but the difficulty of the task should not prohibit the search for more rigorous and systemic production of meaning in the design process. There is a creative relationship between the author and reader of a text (Crow, 2003:10-11). The non-positivist study of semiotic phenomena is supported by Eco (1979[1976]:16) in *A Theory of Semiotics* when he states that the interpretation of a sign is understood as a *possible* interpretation by a *possible* interpreter.

Use objects and spaces are important in defining the self and form a central part of the human condition (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1989[1981]:ix;17). This principle must include public spaces and the artefacts encountered there. Designed artefacts engage humans through their utility and cultural location (Birringer & Danjoux, 2011:51), but designers are not sufficiently aware of their role in the shaping of culture. The design and use of an artefact is a cultural activity (Birringer & Danjoux, 2011:51); as with all texts both the production and interpretation are creative acts. Meaning is generated in a variety of everyday ways (including through artefacts and spaces) but semiotic studies had a traditional linguistic bias and other semiotic resources are neglected (Owyong, 2009:191). Further, semiotic systems in interaction are not sufficiently studied (Owyong, 2009:192). The designed interior is a vehicle for the dissemination of meaning (as example a restaurant acts as a form of communication which enables a patron to make assumptions about price, food, quality and level of service on entering, in more subtle ways the restaurant may also have intertextual references to other interiors or cultural connotations to other artefacts, all of which constructs the restaurant's identity). Interior designers must understand how users evaluate an interior and how meaning is conveyed (Perolini, 2011:164-165). This study aims to study the interaction of semiotic devices in the designed interior. Through the analysis of designed interiors the study aims to systematically identify and describe these methods. An analytical tool<sup>16</sup> will be developed which aims to avoid the linguistic bias and after its application it is foreseen that the semiotic devices identified can be adapted to improve the generative processes of interior design.

15.) Author, text and reader.

16.) See, 3.4 Analytic Instrument.

It may be argued that the standardisation of design gestures will contribute to the standardisation of semantic space. This would require the study of representative samples of architectural environments (in lieu of case studies or precedent studies) (Bechtel, 1980:218). The practical limitations of such an approach prohibited its execution in architectural research. This study aims to investigate a broad, representative sample of interior artefacts (particularly those that represent the everyday commercial practice of interior design). The analysis will be superficial, which is appropriate since any interior must be 'decoded' and understood by a lay person in a very short time.<sup>17</sup> The believability of constructed texts requires the superficiality and goodwill of the reader (Eco, 1990:75). The possible limitations imposed by such a superficial analysis are counteracted by the scope and breadth of the sample; the selected artefacts will definitely not function as precedent studies. Further, a systematic analytical tool will be developed and deployed in the analysis to aid consistent interpretation. The interpretation of texts requires both the conscious and unconscious use of semiotics (Sturken & Cartwright in Shirley, 2008:8).

It was argued earlier that it is not possible to fully standardise semantic space or to predict all interpretation and connoted meaning since meaning is dependent on the creative act of a subjective reader; further in *The System of Objects* Baudrillard (1997[1968]:7) argues that a structural technological analysis cannot account for the system of objects. It is not viable to document all technical gestures ('technemes') since the system is unstable and will alter before the documentation is complete.<sup>18</sup> The connotation is arbitrary, subjective and unstable. The structure of meaning relies on cultural conventions which imply that sign elements are meaningless outside their context (Shirley, 2008:8). There exists the assumption, however, that to some extent meaning must be shared between participants. If meaning was entirely dependent on the arbitrary interpretation of various subjective readers, no communication would be possible. If culture is a transmitted pattern of meanings expressed in forms through which humanity construct, share and communicate its knowledge and attitudes towards life (Geertz, 2000[1973]:89) then a certain level of consensus or agreement must be inferred:

*One cannot run symbolic forms through some sort of cultural assay to discover their harmony content, their stability ratio, or their index of incongruity; one can only look and see if the forms in question are in fact coexisting, changing, or interfering with one another in some way or other ... The reason for this is, of course, that meaning is not intrinsic in the objects, acts, processes, and so on, which bear it, but ... imposed upon them; and the explanation of its properties must therefore be sought in that which does the imposing – men living in society ... [T]he nature of cultural integration, cultural change, or cultural conflict is to be probed for [in the social world]: in the experiences of individuals and groups of individuals as, under the guidance of symbols, they perceive, feel, reason, judge and act (Geertz, 2000[1973]:404-405).*

- 17.) This view is supported by Trigoni (2008:22-23) in her thesis *Home Visions: Representations of Interior Space in Wallpaper, Elle Decoration and Ideal Home Magazines*. She discusses the 'decoding' of advertisements by the viewer: the viewer must decode (or consume) the advertisement and supply the meaning, this correlation takes place visually and there is no explanatory text to direct this (after Williamson, 1978).
- 18.) This is deemed the 'uncertainty principle of semiotics'.

It is not possible to develop full descriptive and predictive theories of meaning in the built artefact (Broadbent, 1980:350). The analysis of built artefacts within a semiotic framework is aimed to generate knowledge about the execution<sup>19</sup> of meaning in built artefacts. The study of meaning requires non-positivist research methods. This study is aimed at improving the praxis of interior design and to refine the theoretical debate, not at identifying truths. The study aims to identify and isolate tacit design methods in order to describe them and make them explicit. The creation of design theory is reliant on a cyclical system that moves between tacit and explicit knowledge; if design methods are not made explicit the design professions will not adapt to the complexity of contemporary society (Friedman, 2003:520).

There is a need for interior design research focus to move away from professional identity towards a larger ontology aimed at an informed community of designers capable of leading change (Perolini, 2011:173). In other words it becomes necessary to not only understand interior design's hegemonic power, but to use it with care and responsibility in leading change. The evolution of the profession is dependent on the identification and development of the theoretical underpinnings of interior design (Clemons & Eckman, 2011:31). A greater understanding and a variety of approaches must be developed for interior design (Perolini, 2011:170). When building theory in interior design the research process must not only be analytical but must include creative processes (Clemons & Eckman, 2011:32). The interior design body of knowledge may be expanded if researchers make new connections between theories of behaviour, environment and semiotics (Tan, 2011:47). An in-depth understanding of meaning in interior space can benefit interior designers in their understanding of the user of space (Tan, 2011:47). If it is accepted that as a cultural practice interior design is a method of communication (specifically communicating with the user of the interior) then it must be assumed that a designed interior contains numerous semiotic devices. These devices act as signs<sup>20</sup> which are interpreted and understood by the user. In this way interior design acculturates the layperson to the system of sign-objects. Interior design is a method to interiorise the political economy of the sign (Tang, 1998:542). In other words, interior design places signs in volumetric space, where they become available for consumption by the layperson. The study aims to provide new insights on the functioning of this process. The study will identify semiotic methods in the literature; in addition it will search for their application in interior design artefacts.

In 'A Case for a Typology of Design: The Interiors Archetype Project' Jennings (2007:52) makes the assertion that there is a need for design research to focus on contemporary design. Although this study does not discredit the contributions of historical research it takes the position that contemporary design reflects the reality of everyday praxis in a way that historic interiors cannot. This has particular relevance for a young profession. This need to study the contemporary interior is supported when the large number of texts which consider the historic development of the interior is considered (e.g. Abercrombie, 2003; Ball, 1980; Kurtich & Eakin, 1993; Massey, 2001; Pile, 1988; etc.). Just as the architectural canon is shifting to include more works by 'new young firms' and marginal works<sup>21</sup> to reflect an expanding practice of architecture (Rattenbury,

19.) With 'execution' I mean the generation, distribution and interpretation of meaning, i.e. to carry meaning into effect, or to be the agent of meaning.

20.) A sign is a thing that stands for something else.

21.) Installations, exhibitions, artworks, etc.



2002:260), so will the study, in its focus on contemporary interiors, aim to incorporate the current everyday practice of interior design and the related changes in practice. The study aims to identify methods that will avoid superficial pastiche; this is based on Abimbola's (2001:57) finding that culturally sensitive design integrates people with their surroundings and is not a collection of cultural objects or references. The study is therefore aimed at contemporary interiors and will specifically focus at the era after the signing of the *Interiors Declaration*. It is foreseen that most of the artefacts included for consideration would be completed in the period from February 2011 to date.<sup>22</sup>

The study of higher-level design activities is under represented in the design research agenda (Dorst, 2008:6-7). Research on design methods is particularly focused on the student or design initiate, with little understanding of high-level design activities. This study, in its selection of published works, is based on the assumption that the interior artefact is designed by a firm of professionals and it therefore involves the participation of senior designers who perform higher-level design activities. The study does not aim to study the working methods of designers directly, but considers the effect of those activities in the completed artefact. The study takes cognisance that the artefact is the product of a complex ecology, and that the final artefact is not a full representation of the designer's intent. The study is focused on the designed artefact and the representation of meaning therein; it considers methodology as the application of meaning-carrying devices within the artefact.

The digital age creates a solipsistic and individualised world mediated by screens and digital communication. In this paradigm the built environment becomes oriented towards the fictive and imaginal. The hegemonic power of this may suppress the political and social (Leach, 2002:232-234). This is a dangerous situation of which designers must take note. The consumers of visual information are becoming highly sophisticated readers of semiotic content. It is important that designers understand the processes used to create meaning and how that meaning is interpreted (Crow, 2003:8-9). Images (and other pictorial representations) have become sites of "communication, miscommunication, mediation and intelligence" (Burnett, 2004:8). Images (as conventional artefacts) become 'intelligent instruments' which can be researched using a number of methods. It is the ubiquity and convenience of images that makes them so powerful. In this study, the image represents the primary empirical evidence. This is supplemented with other empirical material (e.g. secondary literature) as it becomes necessary.

The visualisation and spatial conceptualisation of the interior may be studied through the analysis and observation of interior design as artefacts (which may be considered as decorated and inhabited rooms) (Taylor & Preston, 2006:6). Mostafavi (2008:1) states that the study of photographs of the interior requires more attention. The relationship between visualisation and spatialisation (or between images and spaces) is worthy of theoretical investigation (Penner & Rice, 2007:267). This introduces the possibility of a distinction between the imaginal and spatial practices of interior design. A deliberate dualism was used in the introduction of this study.<sup>23</sup> The dualism contrasted interior design as a discipline concerned with the image, while in architecture space takes precedence.<sup>24</sup> I understand the practice of interior design to be dependent on a strong,

22.) The selection of artefacts will therefore be synchronically limited.

23.) See, 1.3 The Material and its Interpretation.

24.) This does not imply that spatiality is not important in interior design or that the image is neglected in architecture.

reciprocal relationship between visualisation and spatialisation. It may be argued that interior design, as a practice, represents the spatialisation of the image. Interior design may produce meaning by collecting visual memes, and through synthesis and reconstruction, interpreting these memes spatially. Images play a role in the social construction of the interior and the term 'interior' refers to both the space and the image of interior space (Penner & Rice, 2007:271).

The use of photographs as a conventional artefact is supported by Berger (1980:62) in *About Looking*; but merely using photographs as substitute for the actual artefact encourages atrophy of memory. Photographs can be considered as 'conventional' artefacts since all representations have their own biases, preferences, cultures and perspectives (Rattenbury, 2002:xxii). Images are consumed in architectural production and the field is flooded with images. The intensification of the visual in the design of the built environment places an overwhelming focus on form as vehicle for framing practice (Jones, 2009:2527). The photograph is a vehicle to transmit architectural knowledge into the culture of architecture (Serraino, 2002:135). As such, photographs are memetic devices and are agents of encoded cultural capital. Photographs therefore represent convenient and accessible substitutes for the actual artefact, but the research understands that the photograph is an artefact in itself, informed by its own conventions of production. The research process aims to isolate the methods to encode the cultural capital which is captured in the designed interior which is transmitted via the photograph. This assumption is based on my own creation of mood boards; which are used by a number of design disciplines and represent early design decisions regarding aesthetics, style, colour, products, brands and environments (Martin & Hanington, 2012:100). In my own use a mood board is a synthetic method to collect visual meaning; it serves as the initial visual concept. By implication, the final designed product reflects the meanings collected in the mood board; further designed artefacts carry meaning and are in some respects the synthesis of earlier memes.

The pictorial representation of the built environment contributes to what is considered as good, fashionable and popular. It is what is used when designers select what to represent and privilege about their work and it affects the interpretation and value of architecture (Rattenbury, 2002:xxii). It may be argued that architecture is what is represented and is distinct from the building (Rattenbury, 2002:xxii). If this is accepted, it supports the study of architecture *inter alia* through the study of its pictorial representations (visual texts). Since the interpretation of a text is dependent on the creativity of the reader (which may be temporally and spatially removed from the author) the intentions of the author can be considered as separate from what a text actually says (Eco, 1990:50-51). This allows the evaluation of the text in isolation without consideration for the author's intentions.<sup>25</sup> In *An Ecosystemic Role for Architectural Style: Bearing 'the Plan' in 'Mind'* Fisher (1992) studied the plan as 'persistent and economic' artefact to indicate the intentions of the architect. In contrast, I will study the photograph as economic artefact to indicate the meaning of the interior as constructed artefact (despite the author's intentions).

Phenomenography<sup>26</sup> is epistemologically oriented towards an 'object' and is concerned with identifying and describing relational, content-oriented and qualitative aspects of experience (Frantz, 2000). Since interior design offers the tangible vehicle for intangible experience,

25.) This is appropriate when considering the influence of external factors on the final product and its encoded meaning. Since the artefact is produced in a complex ecology the author's intentions are not necessarily accurately portrayed in the text.

26.) See, 3.3.2 Phenomenography.



phenomenography is a relevant research method. Phenomenography is augmented with constructivist grounded theory.<sup>27</sup>

#### 1.4.1 The Importance of the Study

In summary, the study is important for the following reasons:

##### 1.4.1.1 Theoretical importance

- Since culture is strategically important for human development and is a universal human characteristic; and since interior design is a cultural activity which provides the tangible vehicles for the expression of intangible cultural aspects there is a need to consider and understand interior design's role in this context.
- Since interior design has hegemonic agency (and specifically in its facilitation of cultural exchange and the translation of cultural capital may pose a threat to cultural diversity) there is a need to understand this to enable its application with circumspection, rigour and responsibility.
- Since interior design represents its own idiosyncrasies in the production of culture; and since these cannot be made homogenous with other spatial practices (e.g. architecture) there is a need to reach a discrete understanding of them.
- Since the use of semiotics as analogous to cultural production in general is supported there is a need for a systematic, empirical study of the generation of meaning in interior artefacts to indicate interior design's methods of cultural production.
- Since the designed interior acts as a vehicle for the dissemination of meaning there is a need to study the interior in this context.<sup>28</sup>
- There is an ontological need for interior design to move research focus away from the discipline's professional identity and to identify and develop its theoretical underpinnings.<sup>29</sup>
- Since there is a rich literature in interior design history and since the pictorial representation is so important in the age of mass communication there is a need to focus on research of contemporary design.

27.) See, 3.3.1 Constructivist Grounded Theory

28.) The photograph as economic artefact which serves as documentary evidence to investigate the creation of meaning in the interior is supported.

29.) This need is reflected in my own growth as interior design researcher: my dissertation was concerned with the discipline's professional ontology while my thesis focuses on theory.

#### 1.4.1.2 Practical importance

- There is a need to improve the praxis of interior design by identifying and describing tacit methods to generate meaning.<sup>30</sup>
- There is a need to expand the discipline's research methodology.<sup>31</sup>
- Finally, the study is important since it reviews the production methods of an emergent discipline.<sup>32</sup> There is a need to understand these systematically.

30.) Since the meanings themselves are contextually founded and unstable the study does not aim to create a structural system of meanings or to document all possible gestures. This supports the non-positivist and creative research design.

31.) The study of a broad, representative sample of artefacts is novel for the discipline. Further, phenomenography and constructivist grounded theory is supported as relevant research methods in this context.

32.) As a producer of encoded cultural material interior design plays a role in social construction, especially of identity.

## 1.5 DELIMITATIONS

The study is delimited in the following respects:<sup>33</sup>

- The study will focus on matters of identity and expression.
- The study is concerned with methods of making in interior design production and will deliver knowledge about the connotation these produce as initial speculation only.
- ‘Interior design’ and ‘architecture’ will be considered as distinct, autonomous disciplines of a single profession. Interior design is defined broadly and the candidate takes the position that ‘interior architecture’ does not exist as a distinct discipline, practice or profession (Königk, 2010).<sup>34</sup>
- Although the study is not limited to the Anglosphere, writings from other language communities will be accessed through translation.
- The study will consider events and personalities of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries only. The study will not attempt historical research; historical facts and personalities will inform the arguments only.
- The collection of data will not attempt to be synchronically or diachronically exhaustive.
- The collection of artefactual data is synchronically limited. However, if data outside the synchrony provides utility, it may be included.
- Literature is not synchronically limited.
- Material culture is considered in the design sense (opposing the archaeological sense)<sup>35</sup> and includes the investigation of handmade, craft-based, design-based and industrial interior artefacts within its paradigm.
- Architecture’s methods of cultural production are excluded from the study but may be referred to. In this case the research will be limited to literature review.
- The study will not produce a taxonomic classification of gestures, meanings or methods.
- The study will not produce a taxonomic classification or description of interior design discourses or theories which are implied by its production methods.
- The study does not aim to study the working methods of designers directly and it will not engage with designers.
- The study does not aim to produce new knowledge for the field of Semiotics which serves as theoretical background.

33.) The limitations to the application of the study will be stated after the selection criteria for material is determined, see, 4.4 Limiting the Application of the Study.

34.) ‘Interior architecture’ as title represents a misunderstanding of interior design (Dale, 2013:455).

35.) The term ‘material culture’ is used by “archaeologists, anthropologists, sociologists, geographers, historians and people working in cultural, design, and technological studies” (Tilley *et al.*, 2009[2006]:1). In the archaeological sense material culture aims to determine paradigmatic content through the analysis of material artefacts in isolation.

## 1.6 THE DEFINITION OF TERMS

All words have the meanings contained in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, except where otherwise indicated:

### 1.6.1 Image

The 'image' is pictorial and visual in nature: firstly it refers to Barthes' iconic semiotic structure<sup>36</sup>; secondly it is considered as a conventional artefact with self-evident content which allows for higher levels of abstraction (Burnett, 2004:14); drawings and photographs serve as examples.

### 1.6.2 Interior

The 'interior' represents the main artefactual type produced by interior design.<sup>37</sup> The interior is a contained volumetric space with a strong boundary condition; it is that which is situated within the architectural envelope. The boundary creates distinction between the interior and the world (Hillier & Hanson, 1984:144). The interior is a domain of social knowledge, and every interior reflects the experience and the idiosyncrasies of cultural identity (Hillier & Hanson, 1984:144-5). The boundary is a division between two adjacent but different places (Tan, 2011:46). Interior design artefacts (interiors) are part of the cultural system, and cannot exist independently, but their containment offer opportunity for contrived identity that exists only in that contained space.

### 1.6.3 Interior Design

As a practice 'interior design' is defined as "a mode of cultural production which engages in the design of enclosed spaces in existing structures, with emphasis on the design of volume" (Königk, 2010:60); as a profession it is defined as "the design of enclosed interventions in the built-environment for which documentation is produced" (Königk, 2010:60 *footnote*). The title is considered as the best description for the discipline and includes all synonyms and related disciplines (e.g. 'interior architecture' and 'interior decoration) (Königk, 2010). This study does not distinguish between interior design as a practice and a profession.

36.) The pictorial representation of the technological structure which is the actual constructed object (Barthes, 1983[1967]:7).

37.) Interior design produces other types of artefact (e.g. images and objects) too.

## 1.7 LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| CAQDAS              | Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software             |
| CGT                 | Constructivist Grounded Theory                                   |
| DFIE                | the Design Frontiers: Interiors Entity project                   |
| IFI                 | International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers        |
| Post(structuralism) | Structuralism and Poststructuralism                              |
| UNESCO              | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |

## 1.8 PRAGMATIC AND MATERIAL CONCERNS

### 1.8.1 Equipment and Resources

I have adequate access to computers and software. This includes word processing and spreadsheet software (Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel); presentation and graphic software (Adobe InDesign and Adobe Illustrator); and computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) (QSR NVivo) to collect and manipulate the data.

Additionally I have access to the University of Pretoria's library and IT resources.

I have adequate financial resources to support the study and acquired scholarships from the University of Pretoria. These include a staff rebate; post-graduate scholarship; and UP academic development grant. I secured study leave to complete the study. In terms of time resources to complete the study I am adequately supported by my employer (the University of Pretoria) who will ultimately gain valuable expertise from the success of the study.<sup>38</sup>

### 1.8.2 The Researcher's Qualifications

I am a Master of Interior Architecture (MInt[research]) graduate (2010) and currently a Lecturer in the Programme for Interior Architecture, Department of Architecture, University of Pretoria. Since commencing duties I acted as studio master for the Design 303 studio (Interior Design III) and am teaching courses in Design, Construction and Environmental Studies. My expertise in the discipline is recognised internationally, specifically through participation in the structures and initiatives of the IFI. I am a published author, a regular participant at international research events and juror in international design competitions.

38.) I wish to thank the University for its generous support.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

The research problem was introduced. A lacuna was indicated after a review of the relevant subject literature and the importance and relevance of the study was argued. Finally the pragmatic concerns were addressed.

## **CHAPTER 2**

# **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**



## 2.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to locate the theme, interior design's methods of cultural production within the larger thematic field, the production of culture (which is made analogous with the production of meaning). This chapter will consider the intersection between cultural expression and creativity or innovation. Innovation and creativity is distinguished whereby the former is the process whereby new ideas and artefacts lead to differences in behavioural practices, while the latter is the creation of novel ideas and artefacts (Isar & Anheier, 2010:4). Sunley *et al* (2008:685) states that creativity is generally considered as the ability to produce novel ideas and objects. In contrast, innovation is thus considered as an evolutionary practice following a collective process to encode cultural practices based on the original ideas generated by individuals. Creativity and innovation are not the acts of inspired individuals but is the result of an inherently social process. The judgment of an artefact as creative or innovative is dependent on social norms (Sunley *et al*, 2008:685).<sup>1</sup> 'Cultural expression' is contrasted with 'artistic creation' as the group manifestation of individual creative acts (Isar & Anheier, 2010:3).

In this case cultural production is considered as an iterative practice as it is comprised of individual creative acts<sup>2</sup> and group manifestation. Cultural production is dependent on both the processes of innovation and creativity. In this chapter 'cultural production' is introduced as a circular system of selection, curation and synthesis. The creation and maintenance of culture is presented as an iterative, collaborative project which is dependent on individual creative acts. These creative acts must be recognised as 'valid' or 'valuable' and be made available to the canon or corpus and disseminated.

In *Text. A Genealogy of an Antidisciplinary Object* Mowitt (1992:215) states that artefacts are constituted at the point where several cultural gestures converge. This is comparable to Flichy's (2006[2002]:188) description of 'boundary objects':

*These are objects situated at the intersection of several social worlds, which meet the needs of all worlds simultaneously ... A boundary object is the result of complex interaction between the different actors concerned. This is the exact opposite of the naive idea of innovation spawned ready-made by the inventor's mind.*

This implies that cultural artefacts will contain a multiplicity of meanings or meaning carrying gestures. Further, they exist ecosystemically in the paradigm (Fisher, 1992). It is possible that original ideas and artefacts may influence culture in the broader sense. Interior design, as a cultural activity and service,<sup>3</sup> produces artefactual residue with the potential to influence cultural production in general.

In the confluence between individual and collective production it must be remembered that artistic work in a number of disciplines (e.g. film, theatre, architecture) and in non-Western societies are considered as collective works (Isar & Anheier, 2010:3). The discipline of interior design must be considered as such a collective discipline. When architecture is considered, the 'plan' may be regarded as an economic artefact indicating the intention of the architect independently from the built form (Fisher,

- 1.) See, 2.2.4 Domain gatekeepers
- 2.) The generation and interpretation of texts.
- 3.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

1992:44). In this case this artefact (the plan) stands as testament to the individual genius of the designer. The photograph can then be placed in contrast. The photograph will then be the pictorial representation of the physical manifestation of the built artefact. As a source of evidence the photograph will be indicative of all the collaborative processes which contributed to the production of the built artefact. Since this thesis considers cultural production to be a collective undertaking the photograph as main empirical source becomes important in this context.<sup>4</sup>

The chapter introduces the broad theme, 'cultural production' and will discuss some of its constitutive topics: structuralism and poststructuralism are briefly introduced and the role of the domain gatekeeper is considered in this context.<sup>5</sup>

Following poststructuralism as a continuation of the structuralist project cultural production is made analogous with semiotics where the generation, dissemination and interpretation of meaning is considered as cultural acts which are sufficient to understand cultural production in its largest sense; placing semiosis as the empirical object of enquiry is a poststructural action (Posner, 2011).<sup>6</sup> Some semiotic devices are selected for discussion.

Finally Barthes' 'iconic semiotic structure' is isolated as structure for investigation as it will form the main empirical evidence for consideration and analysis.<sup>7</sup>

### 2.1.1 The Selection of the Literature

The theoretical domain under consideration is vast. Literature is selected which supports the thesis' poststructural position.

This position<sup>8</sup> is characterised by two components: 1.) its materialistic concern with objects,<sup>9</sup> and 2.) the focus of enquiry is the process of semiosis.<sup>10</sup> The thesis takes the position that the exchange of material goods, and the commodification of their secondary connotations, plays a central role in cultural production which is mitigated by design and the mass media. Semiosis itself has a material nature within the realm of objects: meaning is contained in material artefacts which is available not through deciphering but through intuitive interaction with artefacts (or 'texts').<sup>11</sup>

The thesis does not require radical renewal but is aimed at making modest improvements to the interior design process.<sup>12</sup> During this enquiry traditional ideas are not rejected, neither is there a search for prefabricated messages. If the making of meaning is not dependent on the coding and decoding of texts it emancipates the interpreter.<sup>13</sup> The danger exists that

- 4.) See, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure; and, see, Chapter 3 Methods.
- 5.) The domain gatekeeper (or tastemaker and cultural intermediary) is specifically important in this context since it informs my role as design researcher.
- 6.) "[The main interest is] no longer the sign ... but semiosis", see, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions.
- 7.) This will specifically refer to photographic records of interior design artefacts.
- 8.) My position here is influenced by Posner's (2011) discussion of (post)structuralism in a post-modern context.
- 9.) 'Objects' are considered as artefacts with a physical manifestation, see, 2.3.2.1, Artefacts, and, Objects
- 10.) Although the photograph is selected as the primary empirical evidence, see, 2.4.2 The Photograph, the object of inquiry is interior design's production processes (specifically those processes that contribute to making meaning).
- 11.) The purpose of interior design is to produce a physical inhabitable interior; its products are temporally spread during which the acts of generation, execution (dissemination), and interpretation is separated by the process to design, build, and inhabit the interior.
- 12.) Specifically as it influences, and is influenced by, semiosis, see, 6.2.2 Semiosis in Interior Design.
- 13.) In interior design the interpreter includes the designer and the inhabitant, see, 6.2.2 Semiosis in Interior Design.

these contributions can be misused to manipulate the inhabitant within spaces of consumption, this is mitigated by the objectives of poststructuralism which is to understand these processes and to exercise their hegemony with responsibility which “encourages every individual to test the possibilities for improving his or her own state,” (Posner, 2011).

Secondary sources are referred to which gives a general introduction to the concept of cultural production and its application in the realm of objects. Sources are also selected which will aid the thesis in the content analysis of interior artefacts.

It is important here to make a statement on my approach to academic literature included in the thesis in general. Although I aim to access primary sources as far as possible I also include secondary and tertiary sources. This thesis has a pedagogic knowledge interests, as such it considers textbooks as valuable (initial sources).<sup>14</sup>

Notable sources referred to include the following:

- Barthes, 1983[1967], *The Fashion System*  
Baudrillard, 1997[1968], *The System of Objects*  
Baudrillard, 1998[1970], *The Consumer Society*  
Bourdieu, 1984[1987], *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*  
Burnett, 2004, *How Images Think*  
Eco, 1979[1976], *A Theory of Semiotics*  
Eco, 1990, *The Limits of Interpretation*  
Gottdiener, 1985, ‘Hegemony and Mass Culture: A Semiotic Approach’  
Mowitt, 1992, *Text. A Genealogy of an Antidisciplinary Object*  
Sontag, 2001 [1973], *On Photography*  
Williams, 1976, *Keywords. A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*

Although interior design texts are included this chapter is mainly aimed at a general overview. Disciplinary specificity will be introduced in later literature reviews.

14.) I am aware that the inclusion of textbooks in a list of references at the doctoral level may be frowned upon and that the doctorandus that does so may be judged as ‘naive’. I further suspect that the convention to eliminate them may lead to dishonest practices which toe the line of plagiarism. My engagement in this theoretical domain was greatly influenced by the use of textbooks: they not only gave me a valuable initial instruction from which I could form a general understanding, but they also indicated which the influential original authors to include are. It is therefore with great humility that I include textbooks such as Lewis’s (2008) *Cultural Studies. The Basics*, and Malpas and Wake’s (eds.) (2006) *The Routledge Companion to Critical Theory* as source material. The doctorandus should not be assessed on his use of sources like these, but the critical use of them.

## 2.2 CULTURAL PRODUCTION

My study commenced with an essentially structural origin through the suspicion that there might be an underlying system which governs interior design's methods to produce culture. This suspicion was soon challenged and developed a poststructural focus. It is specifically in ideas such as the importance of interpretation; the primary role of the reader (with secondary (or scant) consideration for the author); an awareness of the instability of critical enquiry; and the belief that my own subjective view of the world informs the research process and construction of knowledge that the thesis is presented from a poststructural perspective.

As I stated in the opening of the thesis two theoretical perspectives inform the study. In the synthesis between meaning and capital I will spend some time on the Marxist underpinning of the thesis. This section will therefore consider production before focusing the discussion on the creation of meaning as analogous to the creation of culture. This section does not aim to offer original insights into the general theory of cultural production. It will present secondary evidence on the concept ('culture') and its production. This is placed in the milieu of social construction which is based on twentieth century structuralism and the more recent critical assessment offered by poststructuralism; throughout the generation of meaning is made analogous with the creation of culture in a broader sense. Finally, the domain gate-keepers are considered as this is beneficial to the future determination of the corpus under investigation.

### 2.2.1 Background

I initiate the discussion with a quote by Lefebvre (1991[1974]:68) from *The Production of Space*:

*There is nothing, in history or in society, which does not have to be achieved and produced. 'Nature' itself, as apprehended in social life by the sense organs, has been modified and therefore in a sense produced. Human beings have produced juridical, political, religious, artistic and philosophical forms. Thus production in the broad sense of the term embraces a multiplicity of works and a great diversity of forms, even forms that do not bear the stamp of the producer or of the production process.*

In this broad conception human production includes the banality of everyday material production and the high level generation of society in general. Lefebvre (1991[1974]:69) argues that the term ('production') is used so often that it loses all definition. A wide definition is expedient here, specifically when referring to the 'production of culture'. The study does not aim to reach a full Marxist understanding of 'production' and its social impacts.<sup>15</sup> If interior design's methods of cultural production are considered, culture must be defined broadly. Culture was defined broadly in the introduction to the thesis as "the entity encompassing all human phenomena not determined by biology".<sup>16</sup> A focused and succinct discussion becomes necessary at this point.

In *Keywords. A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* Williams (1976:77) describes culture "in all its early uses as a noun of process". The use of the word 'culture' as a noun (describing a specific ethnicity or people) has become common in twentieth century anthropology, but this extension to general use remained isolated (Williams, 1976:79). The thesis will prefer

15.) I further differentiate 'production' from 'manufacture' as it may be understood by the design professions which would be the process to make physical articles (designed artefacts).

16.) See, 1.3 The Material and its Interpretation

the former but takes cognisance of the complexity of the modern development of culture as concept (which the latter indicates). Williams (1976:80) defines three broad categories of usage:

- an independent, abstract noun describing a process of human development;
- an independent noun which indicates a particular way of life; and
- the independent, abstract noun describing the artefacts of intellectual and artistic activity.

During the twentieth century the word was met with hostility connected with uses involving superior knowledge and refinement and distinctions of class (Williams, 1976:82). The term developed and maintains associations with hegemonic agency which is contentious.

In twentieth century anthropology the idea emerged that culture is the sum of all human phenomena not determined by biology or genetics. This would include all language, literature, art, music, cuisine, science, technology, politics, attitudes, values, religion, beliefs, customs, artefacts and practices produced by all humanity. Since culture has an aspect of universal humanity, it may be possible that cultural goods may have instant meaning for different peoples (DFIE, 2011).<sup>17</sup>

Eco (1979[1976]:21-22) offered another definition of culture as signification and communication:

- the production and use of objects to transform the relationship between man and nature;
- kinship relations and institutionalized social relations; and
- the economic exchange of goods.

Eco's account can be synthesized as a 'moderate' hypothesis of culture which states that: "all aspects of culture *can* be studied as the contents of a semiotic activity" (1979[1976]:22).<sup>18</sup> To elaborate I refer to Lewis's (2008:396) description of culture as "an assemblage of meanings which are generated and consumed by a given social group". Culture can thus be defined as a system of meaning, and the generation of meaning can be analogous to the generation of culture.<sup>19</sup> Culture is "the conceptual forms and accumulated knowledge by which social groups organize everyday experience within social and material context," (Gottdiener, 1985:991).

In *Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation* Isar and Anheier (2010:5) present a more specific definition:

*Culture is the social construction, articulation and reception of meaning. It is the lived and creative experience for individuals and a body of artefacts, symbols, texts and objects. Culture involves enactment and representation. It embraces art and art discourse, the symbolic world of meanings, the commodified output of the cultural industries as well as the spontaneous or enacted, organized or unorganized cultural expressions of everyday life, including*

- 17.) The Design Frontiers: Interiors Entity project's (DFIE) unpublished discussion document ('Culture, Concept Investigation') which was prepared for the International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI) DFIE Global Symposium, New York, 17-18 February 2011 is referred to here. This document is important since it directly informed the tenet on 'Culture' which forms part of the *Interiors Declaration*. The *Interiors Declaration* serves as a catalyst for the thesis, see, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.
- 18.) The 'radical' hypothesis of culture states that: "the whole of culture *must* be studied as a semiotic phenomenon". I prefer the moderate hypothesis which considers culture as a *form of* communication and which does not state that culture *is essentially* communication.
- 19.) see, 2.3 Semiotic Interpretation

*social relations. It is constitutive of both collective and individual identity.*

Thus culture is the produced context in which human behaviour takes place. Isar and Anheier's definition is further convenient since it, too, represents the confluence between meaning and capital specifically in its reference to the 'commodified output of the cultural industries'. Although culture in itself is not a commodity it may be considered as the domain where goods attain social capital and increases in value. Culture thus has the ability to increase the economic value of commodified goods. Culture is a *collective* product; 'cultural expression' specifically puts emphasis on the expression of a joint group identity.<sup>20</sup> Cultural expression supplies the human contribution to the cultural economy:

*Culture is the system in which goods are created; or the sphere where creativity can take place. This may be compared to a monetary system which is the locus of wealth; but not a form of wealth. Wealth can be owned individually while a monetary system cannot. In this way culture is the background of our institutions, understanding and creative output (DFIE, 2011).*

From a structural perspective culture can be studied systemically if it is understood as a social product (Johnson in Burgess, 1990:145). In *Meaning in the Visual Arts* Panofsky (1955[1939]:6) draws an analogy between the humanities and science: whereas science is the attempt to transform chaotic natural phenomena into a 'cosmos of nature'; the humanities is concerned with the transformation of human records into a 'cosmos of culture'. The production and consumption of meaning is a cultural act that is useful in the development of further Marxist analysis (Burgess, 1990:145). From a Marxist perspective this 'cosmos of culture' can be portrayed as the system within which the capital class control the production of mass culture to accumulate wealth and to dominate the belief systems of the working class to reproduce its rule (Gottdiener, 1985:982). In this sense, the (re)production of culture has hegemonic agency which can be exploited or counteracted against:

*[Marxism is] a necessarily interdisciplinary system of thought in that it believes that historical processes shape the production of art, culture and ideas. Above all, Marxism stresses the interconnectedness of ideas and material forms, and argues that these interconnections are constantly shifting because of the dialectical development of society and culture, the process by which they enact and eventually resolve their internal contradictions (Moran 2010[2002]:112).*

Cultural producers are relatively autonomous. They gain power in "their own field by virtue of separation from other fields and other forms of capital," (Moran, 2010[2002]:64). In this context generation must be understood as separate from interpretation.<sup>21</sup> In Ritzer's introduction to Baudrillard's *The Consumer Society* he refers to the two 'entangled' social orders: the order of production and the order of consumption (1998[1970]:7).<sup>22</sup> Consumption is constrained on two levels: in the

20.) See, 2.1 Introduction.

21.) Refer to the creative act of the addressee (reader).

22.) Here (post)structuralism and Marxism become analogous; their entangled processes are also analogous where generation is akin to production and interpretation to consumption.

structural sense it is confined by the constraint of signification; in the socio-economic-politic sense the constraint of production is operable. Ritzer criticises Baudrillard since in his prioritisation of structuralism over Marxism (specifically in his emphasis on the production and manipulation of social signifiers) he is unable to present a theory of social revolution.

This thesis considers interior design as an agent both of the realm of capital and meaning. Like Baudrillard it does not aim to reach a revolutionary theory, but merely to reach a point where interior design's hegemonic agency is understood and applied with greater rigour. This represents a position of preference for cultural innovation in lieu of revolutionary individual creative acts or great leaps forward.<sup>23</sup>

Bourdieu divides the field of cultural production in two, he refers to 'small scale production' as oriented towards the manufacture of purely 'artistic' products and 'mass production' as oriented towards making 'commercial' cultural goods (Hesmondhalgh, 2006:214); they are distinguished by their degree of autonomy from the field of power. Small scale production enjoys greater autonomy from the field of power but is subject to the outside control, critique, and subsequent rejection or acceptance by the domain gatekeepers.<sup>24</sup>

Interior design is in a unique position since it does not produce purely 'artistic' artefacts, neither is it entirely geared towards the mass manufacture of commercial cultural goods. At best, interior design's products mediate between mass production and the consumer.

Although, initially, the general field of cultural production seems broad in scope it was speedily determined that cultural production may be studied by reducing the inquiry to the production of meaning. Meaning is generated and produced in cultures through phenomena used as signifiers. In this case interior design artefacts can be considered as 'texts' to be interpreted.<sup>25</sup> This indicates my own preference for structuralism and poststructuralism, in lieu of a Marxist understanding. I accept the criticism aimed at Baudrillard, but I do not aim or expect to generate a revolutionary theory either.

To consider the artefact as text it becomes necessary to consider symbolic knowledge:

*[C]reative industries require a specific symbolic knowledge base that deals with the creation of cultural meaning. Symbolic knowledge is marked by a reliance on tacit knowledge and craft and practical skills (Sunley et al, 2008:683).*

This study is partly aimed at reaching a greater understanding of interior design's 'reliance on tacit knowledge' and then making that tacit knowledge explicit. The discipline is adequately understood in term of its 'craft and practical skills'. This has bearing on Isar and Anheier's (2004:10) differentiation between innovation and creativity. Creativity is an individual act of creating novel ideas and artefacts, while innovation is an iterative, collaborative process that involves multiple players. I understand interior design (like culture in the broadest sense) to be active in both these realms and dependent on the interplay of both acts (innovation and creativity). Isar and Anheier (2004:4) summarise Csikszentmihalyi's systemic perspective of cultural production as such:

23.) The thesis aims to propose design strategies that will improve the everyday practice of interior design.

24.) See, 2.2.4 Domain Gatekeepers.

25.) See, 2.2.2 Structuralism.



*[T]he interactions between, first, the creative person, second, the domain (a specific cultural symbol system) and third, the field (defined as made up of domain gate-keepers such as art critics, gallery owners, star performers, etc.) are what determine the emergence and in particular the recognition of a creative act or product. The creative individual takes information in a domain and transforms or extends it; the field validates and selects new ideas and methods; the domain then in turn preserves and transmits creative products to other individuals, societies and generations.*

In other words, cultural production is a circular system of selection, curation, synthesis, preservation, and transmission. Cultural production is an iterative, collaborative project which is dependent on individual creative acts which are collectively mediated.

These creative acts must be recognised as ‘valid’ or ‘valuable’ and be made available to the canon or corpus (domain) and disseminated. To apply this to interior design: interior designers (creative persons) access cultural memes<sup>26</sup> from the existing canon or related disciplines (the domain), the creative work is peer assessed (by domain gate-keepers acting in the field) and if a dialectic exists between the order and novelty, the work is considered as the ‘new’, accepted and made available to the field for further iteration or rejected.<sup>27</sup> In *The Limits of Interpretation* Eco (1990:91) states that an aesthetically ‘well done’ work (in the modern conception of artistic value) has two characteristics:

- it achieves a dialectic between order and novelty (between scheme and innovation); and
- the dialectic is perceived by the consumer.

It becomes arguable that cultural production cannot be seen as a static process, neither is it remade every day. Culture is reproduced by daily activity through which cultural practices are conveyed and repeated between individuals. In this manner it is a traditive process. In addition, through individual creative acts and artefacts or through collective innovative acts and artefacts novelty is introduced in the cultural system. Novel acts and artefacts are either rejected after which they are no longer available for further reproduction, or they are accepted into the cultural domain and subject to further iteration. Cultural production is thus a traditive, innovative and iterative process which is mediated. To subvert this culture may be considered as a medium of agency and power. Its potential as hegemonic instrument is visible in the process whereby cultural capital is passed from person to person.<sup>28</sup>

Social construction focuses on the idea that objects function as vehicles of social meaning. If cultural studies investigate the ways in which cultural texts emerge and influence the paradigm (Saukko, 2003:99) then it

26.) The ‘meme’ is considered as the smallest unit of cultural information. The meme is analogous to the gene (as carrier of genetic information), but it has the ability to acquire characteristics before transmission. The characteristics can be acquired from the immediate present of distant past (Fisher, 1992:17). Since artefacts are memetic carriers they convey cultural information. Artefacts act systemically to produce and disseminate cultural information, and by extension, culture itself.

The meme is differentiated from the ‘sememe’ which is a unit of meaning carried by a morpheme (which is a meaningful unit of language which cannot be subdivided). The sememe then has specific linguistic applicability while the meme has a general cultural applicability. The terms will be applied in this manner in the thesis.

27.) The ‘new’ is not that which is fashionable, but the “variable creativity which arises out of social apparatuses,” (Deleuze, 1992[1989]:163).

28.) The purpose of cultural reproduction is to duplicate existing norms although variation may be allowed between iterations. The acceptability of the variations is dependent on the creativity of individuals or on a group’s inherent conservatism (DFIE, 2011).



becomes expedient to consider the artefact as an agent of encoded cultural information. The artefact is then a 'text' and it conveys social meaning. Considered on a larger scale, the artefact has the potential to influence the paradigm. Signifying and communication determine social organization and evolution (Eco, 1979[1976]:29). Artefacts are described as memetic devices or carriers of cultural information. The physical object becomes a sign connoting symbolic qualities which may be interpreted to convey information (Oppenrud, 2004:137). In *A Theory of Semiotics* Eco (1979[1976]:28) emphasises this notion by describing the reciprocity between semiotic and cultural phenomena:

*In culture every entity can become a semiotic phenomenon. The laws of signification are the laws of culture. For this reason culture allows a continuous process of communicative exchanges, in so far as it subsists as a system of systems of signification. Culture can be studied completely under a semiotic profile.*

To study the system simultaneously produces it; the medium of analysis will transform the reading (Mowitt, 1992:216). This highlights the impossibility of interpreting an artefact without altering our perception of it. It further opens the possibility to analyze an artefact by creating a new one. This is supported by Eco's (1990:23) method of analysing a text by generating a new one. The epistemological belief that there is an unseen system governing cultural production may be questioned since studying that system will interfere with it:

*...research creates or socially constructs the realities it studies (epistemology). Rather than view research as describing a reality from the outside, the perspective locates research within reality, as one of the processes that 'makes' realities (Saukko, 2003:26).*

Although social construction is limited as a contrived method (it cannot create realities at will, or change reality by retelling the narrative differently (Saukko, 2003:38)), it can be used as a method to encode more meaningful artefacts. In *Text. A Genealogy of an Antidisciplinary Object* Mowitt (1992:218) concludes:

*Why not labor to make education into an openly insurgent practice and break the hold that the vocational or professionally oriented disciplines have had on the commerce between the university and society?*

This echoes the calls for interior design to shift its research focus away from its professional ontology towards its theoretical underpinnings.<sup>29</sup> It is assumed that (as cultural producer) interior design carries hegemonic agency. If this is identified it may be utilised in a constructive manner not aimed at the commercial exploitation of interior design artefacts. When the instability of the system is contemplated it becomes necessary to step back and consider structuralism (and its search for understanding of this system and its focus on generation) before the continuation of this project through poststructuralism (which accepts the instability and practical limitations of a systemic understanding and its subsequent focus on interpretation) can be considered.

29.) Interior design's professional ontology also represented a research fascination for me and from a personal perspective I support this shift. I hope that my thesis can make a contribution to my own development in this area.

### 2.2.2 Structuralism

It has become clear by now that this study does not take a structuralist position but for the sake of clarity it becomes essential to spend some time on the topic.

The term 'structuralist' emerged in the human sciences of anthropology and linguistics. Structuralism has its roots in Saussurian<sup>30</sup> linguistics and gained popularity in the 1950s and 1960s (Moran, 2010[2002]:76). In its original usage it meant "little more than taking each language in its own terms, so as to discover *its* structure," (Williams, 1976:255). Structuralism is an interdisciplinary approach because it interprets a range of artefacts as 'texts'. A text can simply be considered as a vehicle for the production and dissemination of cultural meaning (Moran, 2010[2002]:77). If all artefacts are considered as texts the structuralist project is essentially extended beyond the study of language to the study of all cultural phenomena:

*This concept [structuralism] most often refers to the idea that invisible social structures provide the essential framework of a society. Such structures are carried through history by durable institutions and their belief systems, ideology and fixed meanings. Karl Marx, most famously, refers to social class as the primary and defining social structure of modern society. Many other social theorists have also seen society as being based upon social structures (such as patriarchy) and related institutions (such as the family). A number of language theorists (e.g. C.S Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure) believe that society is largely determined by structures and recurring patterns that are inherent in all language (Lewis, 2008:402).*

Structuralism is based on the notion that just as all humanity is biologically similar (and their organic function is similar) the ways of thinking will be similar and all humans will come to achieve similar results in their creative and problem solving activities (Broadbent & Llorens, 1980:337). In *The Consumer Society* Baudrillard (1998[1970]:79-80) expresses the system of production and consumption as essentially a structural system of meaning which can be interpreted through analogy with language:

*The circulation, purchase, sale, appropriation of differentiated goods and signs / objects today constitute our language, our code, the code by which the entire society communicates and converses. Such is the structure of consumption, its language [langue], by comparison with which individual needs and pleasures [jouissances] are merely speech effects.<sup>31</sup>*

The systems of meanings (systems of cultural units) are organised as structures which follow the same semiotic rules as determined for the

- 30.) With his focus on the 'signifier' and the 'signified' (as components of the 'sign') De Saussure had a particularly dialectic understanding of semiotic phenomena; this is later countered by the more complex triadic models of Peirce and Barthes, see 2.3 Semiotic Interpretation.
- 31.) Here Baudrillard refers to De Saussure's differentiation between language as a system (*langue*) and individual utterances (*parole*). *Langue* provides the structure without which meaningful expression would be impossible. The underlying system that controls all cultural forms may be studied by analogy with language (Leach, 1997:156).

structures of the sign-vehicle (Eco, 1979[1976]:27). Structuralism emerges from the idea that there is an underlying system that controls all cultural forms and that these cultural forms may be studied through analogy with language (Leach, 1997:163). Tudor (1999:50) states that the methods of constructing meaning in different cultural forms have 'obvious affinity' with approaches to study language. In other words, objects (artefacts) are social texts or texts of materiality (Mitchell, 2011:37).

Structuralism is further based on the notion that creativity<sup>32</sup> is not the result of individual genius but that creativity is paradigmatically founded. Creativity only has value in a specific context and meaning is dependent on that context. Moran (2010[2002]:76) described this in *Interdisciplinarity*:

*Structuralist approaches tend to emphasize 'intertextuality', the notion that texts are formulated not through acts of originality by individual authors but through interaction and dialogue with other texts, and so they question the attempt within literary studies to regard certain kinds of authors or texts as more valuable or worthy of study than others.<sup>33</sup> In structuralist analyses, literary texts tend to be positioned as part of the overall sphere of language and discourse, and thus as one type of text among many, including non-linguistic forms such as cinema, photography, music and fashion. These texts are then analysed 'structurally', emphasising the form that they share with other texts rather than their specific content.<sup>34</sup>*

The applicability of the analogy between the cultural system (the system of artefacts) and language is limited. To reduce all sign-systems to languages is termed the 'linguistic fallacy'. The linguistic fallacy states that, "since all languages are made up of words and all words are signs, all things made up of signs are language," (Krampen in Gottdiener, 1985:986). This fallacy is particularly insidious when it forms the basis of attempts to assign positivist definitions of meaning to artefacts. In *The Production of Space* Lefebvre (1991[1974]:221) questions the applicability of structuralism to the understanding of spatial systems. He states that semiological categories (coding) and symbolic explanations must be 'restrained'. A building is the outcome of a signifying practice but it cannot be reduced to a language or discourse or to the categories and concepts used in the study of language. A spatial work is a complex object fundamentally different from the complexity of a written text. In his comparison Lefebvre differentiates between 'texts' and 'textures'. A 'texture' (spatial/built work) is not read but acted; it does not have a 'signified' but a 'horizon of meaning'. Lefebvre's 'horizon of meaning' is an evocative concept which indicates that although the connoted meaning may be arbitrary and unstable it is contained in some way<sup>35</sup>; *id est* there is a limit of interpretation.

- 32.) I refer here to both creative acts: the act of generation; and the act of interpretation. This is essentially a poststructural way of thinking.
- 33.) I support this idea; the study is therefore not based on the historic or canonic method but based on the everyday. The data will be sourced from the everyday practice of interior design (although I will only include interior artefacts which I consider to be 'good') and my thesis is aimed at improving the everyday praxis of interior design (both in industry and the academy).
- 34.) After the poststructural turn the emphasis shifts from form to content, but the importance of the content is mediated by the realisation that the connoted meaning of the content is arbitrary and unstable which is further dependent on the creative interpretation of the reader (who may be temporally removed from the author). In contrast, structural analysis can be identified as a form of analysis which separates form and content giving form priority (Williams, 1976:258).
- 35.) I refer to Colomina's idea that "the horizon is an interior" (quoted in McCarthy, 2005:114), see, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production.

Particular actions may bring a multiplicity of meanings to the fore. The translinguistic application of semiotics may lead to superficial analysis where other sign systems (e.g. fashion and architecture) are endowed analogically with the “fallacious status of language” (Eco in Gottdiener, 1985:986). My original suspicion that there is an underlying system to interior design’s methods of cultural production is not proven false, but it becomes clearer that structuralism will not lead to a position where that system can be expressed or utilised in a practical way.

Methodologically, structuralism offers a convenient point of departure but it is limited to a point of departure only since design is not a linguistic activity (although it constitutes a system of coding) and the methods used in the analysis of language systems cannot be applied directly in the analysis of objects.<sup>36</sup> As Williams (1976:257) stated “in many cases the hypothesis of a structure, followed by its detailed analysis, has been very fruitful in investigation”. This is a strong argument for including a structural analysis as a point of departure.

In *The System of Objects* Baudrillard (1997[1968]:1-12) discusses the complexity of the artefactual system. Although some understanding of the system of objects is possible through structural analysis and analogy with language it is not feasible to catalogue the system (due to its complexity). The system of objects is also particularly unstable and subject to rapid progress in creativity and innovation. There exists a real possibility that significant changes will interfere in the system during its analysis.

Interior design artefacts are spatial, territorial and material and they are therefore subject to the same complexity and improbability to systemise. If this limitation is considered it does not exclude interior design’s cultural contributions but will limit the scope of consideration. If cultural production is reduced to the banal act of encoding meaning through signification a dangerous situation emerges which may lead to pastiche. The analysis must be sufficiently subtle to ensure that the complexity inherent in the artefact is not lost.

It is the inherent impracticality and limitation of structural analysis which introduces poststructuralism as a nuanced alternative.

### 2.2.3 Poststructuralism

*Poststructuralism proposes that the meanings of words, images, stories or other texts are not to be found elsewhere, in the mind of the author or in the world depicted. Since they have no external, extratextual guarantees, meanings are unfixed, discontinuous and unstable* (Belsey, 2006:43).

If structuralism is considered as an inductive approach, poststructuralism takes a deductive turn. Since this study is concerned with the designed interior as an artefact, or material text,<sup>37</sup> and not necessarily with the designer as author (of that material text) the position is accepted that meaning is not fixed and subject to a range of differentials.<sup>38</sup> The study accepts Leach’s (1997:283) assertion in *Rethinking Architecture* which considers poststructuralism not as a movement against structuralism, but a method to augment and improve the structuralist project.

36.) This has relevance to the ‘continuum principle’, see, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

37.) For a discussion on the object and the artefact, see, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies

38.) The interior artefact is manufactured by a number of role players, of which the interior designer is but one, the physical artefact can at best be considered as an interpretation of the (mediated) intentions of the designer; in this vein the study aims to avoid the personality cult of the designer.

In the structuralist framework the role of the addressee (reader) in interpretation can be seen as a 'disturbing intrusion'. If the structural, or systemic, basis of meaning is to be determined then the content of texts and its interpretation takes secondary importance while the form of the text is of primary consideration. If this approach is extended to non-linguistic forms of communication (e.g. design) then the assumed structure become more difficult to establish.<sup>39</sup>

Poststructuralism emerged when the domain of structuralism was extended in the humanities beyond linguistics (Posner, 2011). From the 1970's a pragmatic approach to reading emerged which considers the dialectic between 'author : reader'; 'sender : addressee'; 'narrator : narratee' etc. (Eco, 1990:44). Poststructuralism opposed the structuralist notion that a textual object (any carrier of meaning) is independent from its interpretations (Eco, 1990:48). The possibility exists that the intentions of the author is not translated to the text; thus the interpretation of the text by the addressee is a creative act which contributes to the production of meaning. This allows for the possibility to evaluate the text (artefact) only, with limited concern for the intentions of the author. The interpreter does not have to trace the original intention of the author; neither does the text (interpretation) have to provide a unique and final meaning (there are open texts supporting multiple interpretations (Eco, 1990:41)). Both the *generative process* and role performed by the *addressee* plays a role in the interpretation of texts (Eco, 1990:44-45):

*[T]he functioning of a text can be explained by taking into account not only generative processes but also (or, for the most radical theories, exclusively) the role performed by the addressee and the way in which the text foresees and directs this kind of interpretive cooperation. It must also be stressed that such an addressee-oriented approach concerns not only literary and artistic texts but also every sort of semiotic phenomenon including everyday linguistic utterances, visual signals, and so on.*

*In other words, the addressee-oriented theories assume that the meaning of every message depends on the interpretive choices of its receptor: even the meaning of the most univocal message uttered in the course of most normal communicative intercourse depends on the response of the addressee, and the response is in some way context-sensitive. Naturally such an allegedly open-ended nature of the message is more evident in those texts that have been conceived in order to magnify such a semiotic possibility, that is, so-called artistic texts.*

There are a number of important elements to consider in the text above: an interpretive approach is relevant for all semiotic phenomena; that the meaning and interpretation of a text is dependent on the response of the reader; and that although this is applicable to all texts there are certain texts that are generated specifically with this open-ended interpretation in mind.<sup>40</sup> If the intentions of the author are considered separately then the interpretation of a text becomes of primary importance (or in Eco's words, in the 'most radical' cases of exclusionary importance). It could be argued that the interpretation of a text is a major creative act which is dependent on the attitude of the addressee:

39.) Language has a determinable syntax, which design does not.

40.) It can be argued that in the generation of interior artefacts these processes are not generally and explicitly employed during the design process, but they will be tacitly present and there exist some interiors where these were explicitly used.

*In order to outline a fictional world in which many things must be taken for granted and many others must be accepted even though scarcely credible, a text seems to tell its Model Reader: 'Trust me. Do not be too subtle and take what I tell you as if it were true.' In this sense a fictional text has a performative nature ... Such an authentication assumes usually the form of an invitation to cooperate in setting up a conceivable world at the cost of a certain **flexibility** or **superficiality** (Eco, 1990:75) [my emphasis].*

In other words the 'reader' ('addressee') is complicit in the interpretation and must facilitate the production of meaning. In Mowitt's (1992:107) definition 'productivity' refers to the infrastructure of language through which functional meaning takes place. The interpretation of texts therefore contributes to the creative production of that text, and by extension to cultural production on a larger scale. Thus, the production of meaning will fail if the addressee is unwilling or unable to be complicit in the process (subsequently the author cannot guarantee the success of their attempt).

The interpretation of texts allows for two levels of interpretation: semantic interpretation accepts the given meaning, while critical interpretation is a meta-linguistic activity which describes and explains the formal reasons a text produces a specific response (Eco, 1990:77). Every text can be interpreted semantically and critically, but only some texts consciously foresee both kinds of reader. The 'model reader' will interpret the semantic narrative, while the 'critical reader' will interpret the devices critically:

*The Model Reader does not have to figure out each place and individual mentioned by the novel. It is sufficient he or she pretends to believe to know them. The Model Reader is not only required to display an enormous flexibility and superficiality, he or she is also required to display a consistent good will.*

*If the Model Reader behaves so, he/she will enjoy the story. Otherwise he/she will be condemned to an everlasting encyclopedic [sic] research. It can happen that there exist readers wondering how many inhabitants Saint-Guen-les-Toits could have had, or what the name of Charles Bovary's grandfather was. But such fussy readers would not be the Model ones. They are craving for maximal worlds, while fiction can survive only by playing on Small Worlds<sup>41</sup> (Eco, 1990:81-82).*

A text is produced, or meaning is formed, at its inception and its interpretation. When an artefact is created by a creative individual its validity as memetic construction is dependent on its acceptability to a reader with sufficient good will, flexibility, and superficiality to accept the artefact as plausible.

#### **2.2.4 Domain Gatekeepers**

The 'domain gatekeepers' are included in this discussion since they play a particularly important role in the mediated process of cultural production. The domain gatekeepers are those individuals who have attained enough cultural capital to empower them to determine if new artefacts, novel ideas, or creative acts are recognised as valid and made available for future

41.) I interpret a 'small world' to be a limited and contained, contrived and fictional, world. It is easy to make this small world analogous to a contrived interior with a strong boundary.



iteration.<sup>42</sup> In *The Tastemakers*<sup>43</sup> Millard (2001:13) describes the art establishment as it used to be:

*Culture was dull. It cost a lot, but that didn't matter because no one ordinary bought it. It was sold to institutions, most likely banks or galleries. It was unconcerned with popularity, so the populace was unconcerned with it.*

This changed when young British artists became “concerned with ease of comprehension rather than perplexing intelligence,” (Millard, 2001:25). This is an important shift for this study, just as young British artists became concerned with ‘ease of comprehension’ so is the communication of contrived meaning in the interior artefact dependent on explicit and obvious communication. In its essence the designed interior is created for its role as communication device (or as agent for intangible cultural practices) for the layperson. Interior design is not created for other interior designers or design critics and their ability of interpretation through ‘perplexing intelligence’.

The discussion of *grand art* is applicable to the more mundane practice of interior design since cultural production is not only dependent on cultural ‘pinnacles’, but on the everyday (Craig-Martins in Millard, 2001:135). It is implied that cultural production takes place in a hierarchical fashion, but it is assumed that culture moves up and down the hierarchy.

The ‘new’ is the source of creative production. The new is not the fashionable or the novel; as it emerges from the extension and transformation of cultural information the new represents variations in cultural output. In Isar and Anheier’s account (2010:5) creativity and innovation emerge at the intersections of social, cultural and political forces. They continue that the margins and boundaries are often more productive than the centre of the system and it is impossible to judge what is current and predict its future importance.

It is the role of the cultural intermediary or the domain gatekeeper to act as arbiter or mediator in the production process. The gatekeeper must provide validity to novel artefacts and practices. In essence it is the gatekeeper’s responsibility to move marginal artefacts to the centre. Domain gatekeepers are authoritative; their authority is dependent on the accumulation of cultural capital. The accumulation and synthesis of cultural capital was described by Bourdieu (1984[1979]:326) in *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*:

*The partial revolutions in the hierarchies which the intermediaries’ low position in the field of intellectual production and their ambivalent relation to the intellectual or scientific authorities encourage them to carry out, such as canonization of not-yet-legitimate arts or of minor, marginal forms of legitimate art, combine with the effects of the allodoxia resulting from their distance from the centre of cultural values to produce, through the mixture of ‘genres’, ‘styles’ and ‘levels’, those objectified images of the petit-bourgeois culture, juxtaposing ‘easy’ or ‘old-fashioned’ (i.e., devalued) legitimate products with the most ambitious products of the field of mass production – anthologies of ‘poetic’ songs, wide circulation ‘intellectual’ weeklies*

42.) I also include the discussion on domain gatekeepers since it has methodological importance for this study. During the selection of artefacts for analysis I will have to assume this role since I will select artefacts which I deem to be valuable for the thesis.

43.) For ‘domain gatekeepers’ the synonyms ‘tastemakers’ or ‘cultural intermediaries’ are also applicable (Philips, 2005).

*bringing together would-be authoritative populizers and self-popularizing authorities, television programmes uniting jazz and symphonic extracts, music-hall and chamber music, string quartets and gypsy orchestras, violinists and fiddlers, bel canto and cantata, prima donnas and songsters, the 'Pas de deux' from Swan Lake and Rossini's 'Cat Duet'. Nothing could be less subversive than these controlled transgressions which are inspired by a concern to rehabilitate and ennoble when they are not simply the expression of a misplaced recognition of the hierarchies, as anarchic as it is eager.<sup>44</sup>*

In Bourdieu's account his process of transcribing cultural capital between different levels of the hierarchy is not a one way process. It is promiscuous and subversive, it takes that which does not belong together and mixes it; this is a process of selection of memes from the cultural repository and their synthesis. It would be simpler to imagine this as a one way process where cultural capital move either 'up' or 'down' the social hierarchy. Douglas (1996:56) summarises Miller's theory of emulation as such:

*According to the theory of emulation, the envious lower classes keep copying the upper-class styles, and the upper keep trying to distinguish themselves, so the style for luxuries seeps down ... First happiness goes up as design travels down the social scale, then the upper class begins to be unhappy because its designs are no longer distinctive. It adopts a change, to outpace low-class emulators, and the emulators' happiness goes down, until they gradually catch up again.*

Bourdieu (1984[1979]4:323) stated it differently:

*This middle-brow culture (culture moyenne) owes some of its charm, in the eyes of the middle classes who are its main consumers, to the references to legitimate culture it contains and which encourage and justify confusion of the two.*

Phillips (2005:217) sums up the role of the 'tastemaker' as such:

*In Bourdieu's terms, the figure of the tastemaker can be understood as indeed a significant conduit for the formation of popular tastes, but in no way one that is democratic.*

In all three accounts design acts as a form of communication or carrier of information (i.e. design is a semiotic device) which is used in the process of cultural reproduction. It is utilised in the Marxist sense to differentiate social classes (or as a form of distinction). The cultural intermediary acts as an agent of change since this individual is empowered to translate cultural capital between classes and to make emergent practices acceptable, or to reject them.

44.) This brings to mind Jay Z's score for *The Great Gatsby* (Baz Luhrmann, 2013). Emeli Sandé and the Bryan Ferry Orchestra's cover version of Beyoncé's 2003 'Crazy in Love' specifically is a collection and synthesis of cultural references (including 1920's jazz, punk music from the 1970's, a millennial R&B hit and 2013 Afro-Scottish pop) to produce an unequivocally contemporary song.



As the creative individual acts within the field, so the field acts within the domain.<sup>45</sup> The field is the metaphorical space in which institutions, practices and discourses can be identified (Webb *et al*, 2002:86). Bourdieu (1993[1983]162-165) defines the field as an autonomous social universe, with its own laws. This 'universe' is inhabited by its particular institutions and particular forms of capital can be accumulated. The field has specific struggles particularly in defining questions about knowing who part of the field is. Change is introduced in the field by the intermediary or creative person who challenges the status quo:

*The speaker who can 'take the liberty' of standing outside the rules fit only for pedants or grammarians – who, not surprisingly, are disinclined to write these games with the rules into their codifications of the linguistic game – puts himself forward as a maker of higher rules, i.e., a taste-maker, an arbiter elegantium whose transgressions are not mistakes but the announcement of a new fashion, a new mode of expression or action which will become a model, and then modal, normal, the norm, and will call for new transgressions by those who refuse to be ranked in the mode (Bourdieu, 1984[1979]: 255).*

Domain gatekeepers carry designations such as *virtuoso*, *connoisseur*, and expert<sup>46</sup> to indicate a lifestyle freed from basic and material needs to which 'vulgar' people are sacrificed (Bourdieu, 1996[1992]:293). The lifestyle is geared toward aesthetic appreciation and expressions of 'good-taste'. Bourdieu continues that this is geared (along with philosophical investigations into the knowledge of objects) towards the social construction of the object (1996[1992]:294). In the history of capital emulation of the 'upper classes' is considered as the basis for consumption. Taste is established at the highest social level and it is attenuated and filters down through the social strata (Girling-Budd, 2004:27).<sup>47</sup> Taste is considered as an inescapable social aspiration (Millard, 2001:246). Although it is clear from the descriptions above that taste-makers and domain gatekeepers carry hegemonic agency, they provide a valuable role as cultural producers in their mediation between producers and consumers of cultural capital. It is through their selection, recognition, and dissemination of the new that validity is provided to cultural capital. This in turn makes it available for production on a larger scale. They are influential in determining popular taste and utilise fascinated media to disseminate ideas and to influence culture in general (but visual culture specifically) (Millard, 2001:27).

If creativity is more fruitful at the margins of the disciplines (or when established norms are deliberately questioned) the gatekeeper has a cultural function as arbiter of acceptability. The gatekeeper establishes the model for further emulation. Isar and Anheier's (2010:4; *above*) account of mediation in the cultural domain indicates that all novel ideas and artefacts are not considered as valuable. Bourdieu (1984[1979]:16) identifies a hierarchy of taste: legitimate taste; middle-brow taste; and popular taste. Although taste may be referred to as unique to the individual it is linked to social stratification (De Certeau, Giard & Mayol, 1998:182). Taste is acculturated. Once novel ideas or artefacts are validated by the

- 45.) For a brief discussion of the interactions between the individual, the field, and the domain refer to Csikszentmihalyi's systemic description of cultural production in the background to cultural production, *see*, 2.2.1 Background.
- 46.) What about 'designer'?
- 47.) This is a somewhat simplistic, structural description of the process which correlates with Douglas's (1996:56) account, *above*.

gatekeepers they are made available for further synthesis. They also form part of the corpus of artefacts worthy of emulation. These artefacts are placed in the canon (where they become part of the domain).

In 'What's in a Canon?' Attiwill (2007:58) describes the interior design (or architectural) canonic works:

*[C]anonical works are exemplary works exhibiting characteristics worthy of emulation or possessing attributes deemed valuable to understand by an architect who might reuse or reinterpret aspects of the knowledge embedded in the work.*

She continues that the significance of built objects is in their status as cultural objects established through critical discourse. Works are included in the canon through selection, recognition and publication which is disseminated by journals, exhibitions and teaching (Attiwill, 2007:58-9). I would include digital dissemination as method.<sup>48</sup>

Bourdieu (1984[1979]:77) elegantly describes the role of the interior artefact in this context:

*Every interior expresses, in its own language, the present and even the past state of its occupants, bespeaking the elegant self-assurance of inherited wealth, the flashy arrogance of the nouveaux riches, the discreet shabbiness of the poor and the gilded shabbiness of 'poor relations' striving to live beyond their means ... Experiences of this sort would be the material of a social psychoanalysis which set out to grasp the logic whereby the social relations objectified in things and also, of course, in people are insensibly internalized, taking their place in a lasting relation to the world and to others, which manifests itself, for example, in thresholds of tolerance of the natural and social world, of noise, overcrowding, physical or verbal violence – and of which the mode of appropriation of cultural goods is one dimension.*

The domain gatekeepers play a role in the dissemination of cultural memes from legitimate culture to popular culture (a similar role is played in the propagation of memes amongst peers, e.g. interior designers referring to each other's works). Ultimately they determine a canon of artefacts worthy of emulation. These artefacts are memetically encoded; as such they are the carriers and propagators of cultural information.

### **2.2.5 Section Summary**

This section gave an account of the process of cultural production as it will be applied for the purposes of the thesis. It did not aim to offer new insights on Marxism and (post)structuralism and is merely aimed at the use of these social theories in the research and analysis. The thesis is conducted from a point of synthesis between the forces of capital (Marxism) and meaning ((post)structuralism).

Structuralism was summarised as a way of thought and analysis which emerged from linguistic studies. Structuralism supposes that there is an inherent structure to all languages and that this can be extended to culture in general (if culture is considered as a semiotic concept). Structuralism is

48.) In this way the role of gatekeepers and tastemakers in the establishment of a canon becomes clear: the domain gatekeeper selects what is worthy of emulation and makes it available to creative producers through dissemination.

mainly concerned with the generation of texts which it studies through canonic interpretation of form.

Poststructuralism is accepted as a continuation of structuralism but with some important changes of focus which emerged from the impracticalities and limitations of structuralism. Poststructuralism accepts the inherent structure of language and culture, but unlike structuralism it does not try to elucidate this system as it is viewed as unstable and subject to interference; further the system is too complex to comprehend which makes its analysis impractical. Poststructuralism is mainly concerned with the interpretation of texts. Since the interpretation is removed from the generation the most radical poststructuralist position asserts that a text can be interpreted without any concern for the author's intentions. This thesis adopts that position and will apply it in future in the analysis of artefacts (considered as texts) without reference to the intentions of the designer.

It is accepted however (and this is from a structural point of view) that in the creation of artefacts the author must bear the eventual reader in mind. In its analysis of artefacts the thesis is poststructural; in utilising that analysis to improve the future generation of new artefacts it assumes a structural position.<sup>49</sup>

Finally the section illustrated the important role of the domain gatekeepers in the mediation of marginal (or novel) practices and artefacts. The gatekeeper will select 'new' work created by the creative individual and may make it available to the domain, from which it will be disseminated. Although this thesis is not specifically aimed at the analysis of marginal works<sup>50</sup> I will assume the role of domain gatekeeper in my selection of artefacts for inclusion in the study.

49.) The apparent contradiction is removed when poststructuralism is considered not as a movement against structuralism, but as a continuation of it.

50.) See, 4.2 Selection Criteria.

## 2.3 SEMIOTIC INTERPRETATION

In its most elementary definition semiotics can be described as the exchange of messages (Adamo, 2011). Semiotics specifically refers to the study of signs and communication. A message is a sign, or string of signs containing a coherent meaning (a 'syntagm') transmitted from the sign producer (who generates the message) to the receiver (who must interpret the message). The process of transmission is termed semiosis. When cultural production is considered in the (post)structuralist realm then the contemplation of the creation, transmission, reception and interpretation of meaning as a process is insightful. To carry meaning it is essential that this process takes place within a specific context; this implies that there are four active role players: the sign producer, the addressee, the artefact ('text') and society.

### 2.3.1 Background

In 'Hegemony and Mass Culture: A Semiotic Approach' Gottdiener (1985:985) contrasts the semiotic approach to culture with other forms of cultural analysis:

*The essential difference between the semiotic approach to culture and those better known in the United States (such as ethnomethodology and symbolic interaction, which also focus on symbols and social interaction) is the emphasis in semiotics on objective systems of signification and the intersubjective basis of meaning. That is, following Saussure, the production of meaning takes place only by virtue of a social relation, because language is a sui generis social construction. Although other approaches focusing on interacting subjects use a situational conception of social interaction, the object of analysis in semiotics is the socially sustained system of signification, including its material objects and their inter-dependencies, that produces and sustains meaning through socio-structural interaction.*

When referring to 'objective systems of signification' and the 'sustained system of signification' he takes an essentially structuralist stance, this is mediated by the poststructural reference which indicate the instability of interpretation, i.e. 'the intersubjective basis of meaning'. In Gottdiener's account the process of signification<sup>51</sup> is objective, and it can be surmised universal, while the process of interpretation is subjective and idiosyncratic. During the production and dissemination of meaning (and by extension culture) the act of interpretation should not be under evaluated and it should be balanced with an understanding of the act of generation. All three acts<sup>52</sup> committed during the transfer of meaning are creative acts that contribute to culture in its broadest sense. In *A Theory of Semiotics* Eco (1979[1976]:24) describes the recursive relationship between semiotics and culture; once society exists, every functional object is automatically transformed into a sign of that function: this is only possible while culture exists, while the existence of culture is dependent on this function. All cultural phenomena are reducible to semiotic phenomena (Gottdiener, 1985:991). In Baudrillard's 1997[1968]) terms, all non-semiotic events can have 'sign value'.<sup>53</sup>

51.) *Id est* the generation of meaning.

52.) Generation, transmission and interpretation.

53.) In this case there is no such thing as a 'non-semiotic event'.

A sign is considered as anything that stands for something else (Peirce in Eco, 1979[1976]:16, and Opperud, 2004:138). In the Saussurian dualistic sense a sign is produced when the signifier and signified are brought together in a single meaning carrying entity, “a word became known as a signifier and the object it represented became the signified” (Crow, 2003:18).<sup>54</sup> Peirce suggests a more subtle triadic model where a sign is the interrelationship between three components:

- the *representamen* (the concrete physical aspects);
- the *object* (the impression evoked in the addressee); and
- the *interpretent* (the subjective meaning, constructed by the addressee connecting the representamen and object in context) (Eco 1979[1976]:15, and Opperud 2004:139).

The interpretent in turn may become a new representamen, this process can continue indefinitely, constructing a series of connected meanings (Crow, 2003:36-7).

In *The Fashion System* Barthes (1983[1976]:5-6) identifies three semiotic structures for any particular object (artefact):

- the technological structure (actual constructed object),
- the iconic structure (pictorial representations such as photographs or drawings of the object), and
- the verbal<sup>55</sup> structure (verbal descriptions of the technological structure or the iconic structure. The verbal structure acts as language relay between the technological or iconic structure and the reader).<sup>56</sup>

Both Peirce’s and Barthes’ triadic semiotic relationships offer the possibility of subtlety in analysis which Saussure’s dialectic relationship does not. A sign analysis based on the ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ may lead to a superficial and banal listing of intertextual links, without further critical analysis. Mowitt (1992:214-215) describes this as the ‘homogeneous tissue’ that constitutes the hermeneutical field.

Gottdiener (1985:988-9) identifies two semiotic traditions. In the first emphasis is placed on the symbolic life of objects in society and culture is viewed as a discourse about objects.<sup>57</sup> In the second it is acknowledged that culture cannot be simply reduced to signs since artefacts possess a material existence and they only communicate meanings when they are used to signify second-order meanings. The semiotic interpretation of artefacts therefore implies greater complexity and subtlety than the mere identification of denoted and connoted meaning. Since artefacts are not simply a form of language and are produced ecosystemically fulfilling other requirements (e.g. functional requirements) their use as

54.) Saussurian semiotics (with its strong correlation between ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’) was discussed by Trigoni (2008:22-24) in her thesis *Home Visions: Representations of Interior Space in Wallpaper, Elle Decoration and Ideal Home Magazines*. This approach was deemed valid in the application of the analysis of representations of interior space. I feel that this dialectic approach lacks the subtlety which Barthes and Peirce enables. In contrast Trigoni (2008:91-93) considers the use of dialectic semiotics (with its arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified) as ideological and instead decides to adopt a design approach which she links with the social semiotics of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1995). She applies this in the consideration of three-dimensional spaces that are constructed to be represented as two-dimensional objects and considers the constitutive parts of the images themselves (e.g. “lines, colour schemes, angles of view, perspective, patterns”). This supports the separation between the expressive and experiential aspects of the built artefact, which I aim to avoid.

55.) The word ‘verbal’ is used since it was used by Barthes. In this case ‘verbal’ is concerned with words and includes both the written and spoken word. In semiotics the term is consistently used in this way.

56.) I will return to Barthes’ structures later, see, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure.

57.) Baudrillard’s (1997[1968]) *The System of Objects* (which serve as a source for the thesis) may be considered as an example.

communicative devices is mediated. There is thus an implied conflict between the abstract form of communication and the base function.<sup>58</sup>

*If semiotics, beyond being the science of recognized systems of signs, is really to be a science studying all cultural phenomena as if they were systems of signs – on the hypothesis that all cultural phenomena are, in reality, systems of signs, or that culture could be understood as communication – then one of the fields in which it will undoubtedly find itself most challenged is that of architecture (Eco, 1980[1968]:11).*

In 'Function and Sign: The Semiotics of Architecture' Eco (1980[1968]:12) continues that architecture poses a particular challenge to semiotics since although architectural artefacts<sup>59</sup> are firstly functional they still include a communicative purpose.<sup>60</sup> At the most functional level this communicative purpose promotes the function which the artefact must fulfil (Eco, 1980[1968]:13).

To bring this general theory to the discussion of interior design I refer to Tang's (1998) article, 'Decorating Culture: Notes on Interior Design, Interiority, and Interiorization'. Tang (1998:542) characterised interior design's semiotic methods as cultural production methods:

*[I]nterior design, by instilling a sign-consciousness in our most private and personal sphere, serves to acculturate us to the system of sign-objects - namely, to interiorize the political economy of the sign. At this point, the discourse of interiority gathers not only a legitimizing impetus from the market but also a concreteness that promises to atomize and undermine the metaphysical dimension of the interior. Instead of articulating a spiritual or psychic structure of depth, interiority may now describe a new frontier market for customized products of sorts.*

In Tang's characterisation a major cultural contribution of interior design is its ability to interiorise semiotic phenomena. Interior design becomes a practice of spatially expressing the sign, or the synthesis between space and image.

### 2.3.2 Semiotic Devices

In this thesis the focus of investigation would not be the sign (and definitely not its connoted meaning) but the process of creating and transmitting meaning (semiosis). To investigate this process a number of semiotic devices are selected and discussed in greater depth. Semiotic assemblies are discussed first, followed by semiotic functions:

- 58.) Eco (1980[1968]:14) questions the difference between 'stimulus' and 'communication'. If an artefact merely induces a response due to its inherent nature (e.g. a wall prohibiting passing or an open door allowing entry) it only elicits a base biological or physical response and its only communicative value is that it serves as a stimulus for the organism. Communication is of a higher order and allows the transfer of abstract meaning. I will argue that the stimulus is still a form of communication, albeit a low-order function. If Peirce's hierarchy (indexical connection, iconic connection, symbolic connection) is considered it may be useful to arrange sign-vehicles in the following hierarchy: stimulus, index, icon, symbol (see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods).
- 59.) Eco defines 'architecture' sufficiently broadly to include nearly all three-dimensional artefacts ranging in scale from industrial design to urban design; this of course includes interior design. Although here Eco is guilty of subscribing to the continuum principle (see, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study) his arguments hold ground and are accepted as supporting the thesis.
- 60.) see, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions

### 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies<sup>61</sup>

The semiotic assemblies<sup>62</sup> that are selected are included in this section since they play a particular role in the application of semiotic theory in the realm of objects, i.e. outside linguistic semiotics (they are analogous to linguistic phenomena: e.g. artefacts are as texts and technemes are as phonemes). Three assemblies are selected and treated hierarchically.

#### Artefacts

Tan (2011:42) portrays artefacts as objects of human creation but implies a tangible manifestation (“the term artifact [sic] is adopted to describe a symbol manifest in the physical environment”). The physical nature of artefacts is further supported by Mitchell (2011:37) who describes artefacts as social texts of materiality.

When Mowitt (1992:214-215) describes the ‘antidisciplinary object’ he alludes to certain immaterial aspects of the artefact:

*Insofar as the artifact [sic] is meaningful to a particular social group, it is because its members continue to support the disciplinary structures (many of which are not ‘merely’ academic) which read the artifact [sic] on their terms. ‘Intrinsic value’ is, in fact, one such term and not simply because it alludes to something valuable that is realized within a particular text, but because, on top of that, it necessarily implies that texts have, presumably by virtue of their ‘natures’, clear and distinct insides.*

The artefact then also consists of that which is external to the artefact and it becomes necessary to consider the artefact more broadly: the artefact can act as agent for a cultural schema. Through its memetic content the artefact is a cultural agent encoded within its paradigm: “[a]s such the artefact is active within the cultural system,” (Fisher, 1992:17). The memetic content of an artefact can be interpreted and decoded at a later time, permitting the possibility of reintroducing anachronistic content in a novel fashion (Fisher, 1992:18): “The greatest significance which the artefact can achieve is as cultural agent within the socio-cultural domain,” (Fisher, 1992:22).

In Fisher’s and Mowitt’s descriptions the artefact can be considered as a device with cultural agency and intangible aspects; if this is synthesized with Tan’s criterion that artefacts are of human creation then the artefact can be described as ‘a device of human creation with cultural agency’. This would include all human production as artefacts. I would prefer this more open definition which also considers intangible human creations (e.g. songs and stories) as artefacts. In this case the artefact can be considered holistically as cultural, legal, social and economic entity.

Artefacts have a semiotic nature since they have sign functions, and cultural functions are sign devices (Eco (1979[1976]:28). When an artefact is used it acquires symbolic value connoting external meaning: the object becomes a semiotic device of its function or type, but also of its possible uses and types.<sup>63</sup>

For the purposes of this thesis I consider artefacts as all cultural residues.<sup>64</sup>

- 61.) The ‘semiotic assemblies’ included here will be referred to again in the thesis, see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods.
- 62.) An ‘assembly’ is considered as a construction made up of smaller parts; this term is chosen to differentiate the semiotic assemblies under discussion from Barthes’ semiotic structures.
- 63.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions.
- 64.) *Id est* intangible artefacts may not have material form but is included.



### Objects

Objects are considered as that sub-set of artefacts with material form; as such all other characteristics of artefacts apply. Since objects are tangible artefacts they are made up by three constituents:

- the material form;
- the idea or subject; and
- the content (Panofsky, 1955[1939]:16).

It is the combined appreciation of all three that is realized in the aesthetic experience (Panofsky, 1955[1939]:16). Objects serve as tangible vehicle for intangible cultural practices (i.e. objects are tangible artefacts which allow intangible artefacts to be expressed).

Baudrillard (1998[1970]:25) states, somewhat positively, that “[o]bjects are neither a flora nor a fauna”.<sup>65</sup> They are the product of human activity (i.e. are ‘artefacts’) and are not dominated by natural ecological laws but by the laws of exchange value (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:26).<sup>66</sup>

Even though objects are tangible (or material) artefacts they maintain the characteristic of all artefacts that they have cultural agency. If they have cultural agency then it may be inferred that they may be studied as semiotic activities (i.e. as carriers of meaning). Eco (1979[1976]:12) includes objects as communicative devices (or the ‘system of objects’) within the realm of semiotics. Objects range in scale from architecture to general use objects.

In Baudrillard’s (1997[1968]:4) *The System of Objects* he argues that in the analysis of objects they should not be defined by their functions or categories into which they may be sub-divided for analytical purposes but rather with the processes through which they relate to people and the subsequent human behaviour and relationships that result from them. Although this method of understanding may be more difficult to apply I find it useful and appropriate. Especially for very complex artefacts (such as interior artefacts) merely categorising them or analysing them functionally would have little practical application. However, understanding the (interior) artefact as agent of meaning seems more fruitful. In the interior environment the interaction between the environment<sup>67</sup> and objects generates layers of meaning. Meaning is not always the direct result of the object but based on the symbolic interaction between space, object and user (Clemons & Eckman, 2011:42).

### Technemes

Technemes are the smallest unit of technical or technological information (Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:7); they are analogous with phonemes in language, genes in biology and memes in culture. As nested phonemes (sounds) produce words and sentences so do technemes nest together into larger technical objects (artefacts). Since every object becomes a sign of its own function<sup>68</sup> (Barthes in Gottdiener, 1985:986), it must be assumed that technemes carry the memetic information to enable this signification. The interplay of technemes (as simple technical elements different from true objects) is the basis of technological innovation (Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:7).

65.) In a conventional sense it could be argued that objects are material things that can be touched, or it can be stated that stones and trees are objects. This is possible and in that case artefacts could have been differentiated as those objects that are of human creation. For the purposes of this thesis this possibility is noted but Baudrillard’s criterion that objects are human made is accepted. Another term for the ‘things of nature’ may be necessary but since it will have no relevance for this study I will not attempt to find one.

66.) Natural and ecological laws can never be ignored in the realm of material objects but are considered to fall outside the scope of investigation.

67.) The volumetric interior itself should be considered as an object.

68.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions



Although technemes form the basic unit through which information is encoded in technical objects they offer little value as object of study. Baudrillard (1997[1968]:7-8) discusses the limited use to study technemes in depth with the purpose of reaching an exhaustive description with semantic classifications:

- the technological system is continually disturbed and modified by actions on it; and
- the rationality of the technical use of objects must be synthesised with the irrationality of human needs;

This contradiction provides a system of meanings that seek to resolve it. It would be more fruitful to concern ourselves with the idea of meaning than searching for a technical model.

Hamon (1992:xv) lists architectural technemes as “doors, windows, walls, corridors,” etc.); he (1992:201) later lists the technemes composing a passage as: “outside, inside, window, mantelpiece, mirror, painting, displayed relic, and the gleam of the jewels”. Broadbent (1980:336) describes the elements that allow architecture to enclose space (and by extension create interiors): “rooms, corridors, staircases, and so on which by their size, shape, and adjacencies may facilitate activities or inhibit them”. The elements that Hamon and Broadbent describe may function as a techneme in a larger object (e.g. a window forming part of a façade) or they may be considered as true objects composed of smaller technemes (e.g. a window is composed of mullions, panes, hinges and catches).<sup>69</sup>

It is possible, and necessary to distinguish clearly between objects and technemes. Just as the gene has little agency outside the organism, so does the techneme serve little purpose outside the object. Technemes are the carriers of memetic information regarding the technical function of an object.

### 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions

In linguistics Saussure differentiated between language as a system (*langue*) and individual utterances (*parole*). *Langue* provides the structure without which meaningful expression would be impossible. The linguistic analogy<sup>70</sup> is limited when applied to the system of objects:

*Apart from pure technical objects, with which as subjects we never have anything to do, we shall see that the two levels of objective denotation and connotation (whereby the object is cathected, commercialized and personalized, whereby it attains utility and enters into a cultural system) are not, under today's conditions of production and consumption, separable in the way that the levels of language [langue] and speech [parole] are separable in linguistics (Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:9-10).*

Poststructuralism represents a change in focus from the generation of texts in order to understand the underlying system (*langue*) to the interpretation of the content of individual texts (*parole*). This represents a theoretical movement from *parole* to *langue*; or from form to content. If Baudrillard's statement is accepted it may move some way in explaining why it is so difficult to separate a structuralist viewpoint from a poststructural one in the analysis of objects. Once it is understood that the relationship between the Saussurian dialectic components of the sign

69.) The obfuscation of objects and technemes become more significant when Hamon (1992:38) describes 'technemes' as "preferred objects". He discussed the 1.) window; 2.) stained-glass window; 3.) the door; 4.) the shop window; 5.) the wall; and 6.) the mirror as six objects that entered a relationship of opposition or resemblance to the other five objects on the list.

70.) The underlying system that controls all cultural forms may be studied by analogy with language.

(signifier and signified) are arbitrary<sup>71</sup> then a structural understanding of this relationship is no longer possible. In the technological object, which is both semantically and functionally informed, this relationship does not achieve the level of arbitrariness that is present in language therefore it is not fully possible to complete the poststructural turn.

The semiotic functions<sup>72</sup> that are selected are included in this section since they are important in this context.

Four<sup>73</sup> functions are selected and treated non-hierarchically.

### Duality

Duality accepts the arbitrary relationship between meaning and form. The effect is that the concept and the symbol<sup>74</sup> may be separated from each other without affecting each other. The division between meaning and form is called duality (Crow, 2003:19).

The arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified is not so clearly determined in objects.<sup>75</sup> A functional object is in the first instance a sign of its function or type. When the functional object is considered as a sign of its function there is a logical relationship between the signifier and the signified. But objects also acquire secondary meanings. There is functional separation in all artefacts. Everyday practical objects shift in meaning between their technical structures towards their secondary meanings. Barthes (1983 [1967]:8) states that they are in flight “from the technological system towards a cultural system”. Objects may be isolated in terms of their function but the user will determine the role of the object in the cultural system.<sup>76</sup> It is possible that duality exist between an object’s function and its second-order meaning.

If duality is considered as indicative of the arbitrary nature of meaning it then becomes necessary to consider transfunctionalisation as the mediation between arbitrary and logic meaning.

### Transfunctionalisation

*On the social level the object, as object, already has its own sign function, and therefore a semiotic nature. Thus, the second hypothesis, according to which cultural phenomena are the contents of a possible signification, already refers back to the first hypothesis, according to which cultural phenomena must be seen as significant devices (Eco, 1979[1976]:28).<sup>77</sup>*

When an artefact is used it acquires symbolic value which connotes external meaning (such as social status) (Eco, 1979[1976]:28). The object becomes a sign-vehicle not only of its function or type, but also of all its

- 71.) There is not a natural relationship between a word (signifier) and the thing it refers to (signified); this is evident in the different words used by different languages to signify the same concept.
- 72.) A function is considered as ‘a mode of action or activity by which a thing fulfils its purpose’ (e.g. a mathematical function); this term is chosen to differentiate the semiotic functions under discussion from the term ‘process’ which is used extensively in this chapter.
- 73.) ‘Denotation and Connotation’ is considered as a single function.
- 74.) There exists inconsistency in the use of the words ‘symbol’ and ‘sign’ between disciplines (e.g. in interior design a *symbol* is a graphic representation used in construction documents). What is important to consider in the use of these terms is that they refer to a relationship between image and concept (Tan, 2001:41) (or between sign and referent or signifier and signified).
- 75.) In non-dualistic systems this arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified is not so clear; e.g. in Peirce’s sense indexical connections have a physical link between signifier and signified and in iconic connections the signifier and signified are similar in visual or onomatopoeic appearance but symbolic connections are arbitrary. It seems that duality or arbitrariness is a characteristic of higher-order signs.
- 76.) All artefacts exist ecosystemically (Fisher, 1992).
- 77.) Eco’s two hypotheses of culture are discussed in the background to cultural production, see, 2.2.1 Background.

possible uses and types which exceeds its mere technical functions (or base functions). A distinction is made between the use of an object to fulfil its immediate function and the socially sustained use of the object which produces a second-order meaning for the object. The secondary use is the result of a social process which creates signification (Gottdiener, 1985:998). If this second-order meaning is present it can be said that the object has been transfunctionalised.<sup>78</sup>

In the interior the process of transfunctionalisation is represented by the act of inhabitation. An individual inhabits or take possession of an interior by providing personal values (in lieu of use values) on objects (Rice, 2004:277). The interior is transfunctionalised and attains significance which exceeds its type and function. The material thing becomes the bearer of non-material significance (Kingwell, 2006[2002]:175).

The second-order message transcends the linguistic message (usually the text itself or its Saussurian signification) and carries connoted meaning (Crow, 2003:75). When an object is designed to carry second-order meanings it is said to contain intentionality as well as signification (Gottdiener, 1985:988).

Meaning is the product of transfunctionalisation. Here there must be distinguished between objects as indicators of function and objects that carry meaning. Although any non-semiotic status of an object could be converted to sign value, transfunctionalisation is an active process and not inherent in the object itself (Gottdiener, 1985:992). It is only when objects are used to signify second-order functions that they communicate meanings.<sup>79</sup> It is assumed that the communication is “manipulated by the intentionality of the sender” when the object becomes a communicative act (Gottdiener, 1985:989).

In essence transfunctionalisation is the process of attaching secondary significance to functional objects and it implies intentionality. Transfunctionalisation is also the process through which differentiation is possible between the denotation and connotation.

#### Denotation and Connotation

To consider the denotation and connotation is important in visual and spatial research. In *How Images Think* Burnett (2004:14) questions the meaning of images. Although the content of images may be self-evident (and provides the empirical evidence) higher levels of abstraction is necessary. In *Doing Visual Research* Mitchell (2011:41) unequivocally states that both the denotative and connotative meaning of objects is important in visual research.

Eco (1979[1976]:85) distinguishes between denotative markers and connotative markers: a denotative marker constitutes and isolates the cultural unit as a sign-vehicle on which all other connotations are reliant. Connotative markers are those that contribute to the formation of other cultural units external to the preceding sign. They differ only “insofar as a connotation must rely on a preceding denotation”. A denotative marker is a correlation between signifier and signified without previous meditation, while a connotative marker establishes a connection between a sign-function and a new semantic unit.

This ambiguity in the distinction between denotation and connotation offers little utility for the thesis. This is supported for the general theory of sign production by Eco (1979[1976]:85) when he states that “one should

78.) Eco (1980[1972]:214) differentiates between the primary and secondary functions of architecture. The primary functions are those that the functionalist tradition would recognise as functions in the true sense of the word. The secondary functions are those that the art historians and iconologists would classify as the symbolical values of architecture.

79.) Otherwise they are merely acting as stimuli, although this could be considered as a lower form of communication, refer to the background to semiotic interpretation, see, 2.3.1 Background, footnote.

clearly distinguish denotation from connotation". Opperud (2004:138) introduces a distinction between the denotation and connotation of objects; regarding denotation he states:

*[W]e structure our experience in mental schemata, containing mental prototypes that represent the attributes that a particular product should display to belong to a certain mental category. A product is considered to belong to a category, if its attributes match those of an archetype of that category over a certain level.*

For Gottdiener (1985:991) there are different ways in which meaning is attached to objects; the denotative signification would indicate an object's function and the connotative signification the object's transfunctionalised second-order meaning. Burgess (1990:146) differentiates the denotation, as the definition<sup>80</sup> of the technological structure<sup>81</sup> from the connotation as the diverse range of meanings associated with an object (or text).

If a sign is considered as something that stands for something other than itself, then the denotation includes all the attributes that may function as triggers for the impressions of an artefact (including all the concrete physical aspects of the design) (Opperud, 2004:138-139). The denotation is the stable meaning attributed to a code (Eco, 1979[1976]:56). *Id est*, in the Peircian sense the denotation is the representamen and its conventional meaning. In the architectural sense "the first meaning of a building is what one must do in order to inhabit it," (Eco, 1980[1968]:20). The denotation is the way an object communicates its primary utilitarian function. This is done conventionally according to cultural codes (Eco, 1980[1968]:21).

Besides the communication of its primary function<sup>82</sup> (denotation) the object can also indicate a certain ideology of its function or of its possible uses (connotation) (Eco, 1980[1968]:23-24). The connotation is the communication of second-order meaning.<sup>83</sup> The connotation is unstable (Eco, 1979[1976]:56) and includes the spontaneous impression (evoked in the reader) and the subjective meaning (Opperud, 2004:138). The connotation is a coded image generated when the reader plays a creative part by applying their own knowledge and understanding (Crow, 2003:75). The connotation is all second-order meaning and all transfunctionalisation. In Peirce's triadic structure the connotation involves the object and interpretent.

Eco (1979[1976]:86) offers a more technical differentiation:

- (a) *a denotation is a cultural unit or semantic property of a given sememe which is at the same time a culturally recognized property of its possible referents;*
- (b) *a connotation is a cultural unit or semantic property of a given sememe conveyed by its denotation and not necessarily corresponding to a culturally recognized property of the possible referent.*

80.) Or the 'mechanical recording' of the artefact (Burgess, 1990:147). This may be interpreted as the methods to describe or capture the attributes of the sign.

81.) See, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure

82) 'Primary function' is used here since the second-order meaning is also 'of use' or 'functional' and it informs the functional life of the object in society.

83.) Tan (2011:41) calls connotation the 'second order signs'.

The connotation is dependent on a pre-existing denotation; i.e. without the denotation there can be no connotation. The denotation is the content of a text (or object) and the connotation is the content of a sign-function (Eco, 1979[1976]:86).

In summary, the denotation is considered to be the stable and observable empirical evidence (content), while the connotation is the unstable and subjective interpretation (meaning). In the analysis of artefacts the denotation and connotation will be indicated as such.

### Semiosis

Semiosis is the process through which meaning is transferred. It is the act of signifying. Semiosis is not a one-way process of fixed meaning; it is in part a creative process between the sign and the addressee or reader (Crow, 2002:36).

The source of meaning is from one of three possibilities, sign value, use value, or exchange value:

*Under the constraints of the semiotic approach, however, the sources of codes can derive from only three modes of social interaction: the ascription of social status that is in part a historical process, that is, sign value per se; use value transfunctionalized [sic] to sign value, through the variety of separate cultural activities; and exchange value transfunctionalized [sic] to sign value, especially under capitalist relations of production (Gottdiener, 1985:992).*

Semiosis is the interaction between the sign, its object and its interpretent (Peirce in Eco, 1979[1976]:15) Since Peirce's definition is reliant on three abstract semiotic entities and not human subjects they do not demand that the qualities are intentionally emitted and contrived (Eco, 1979[1979]:15). Signs are comprehended through their relationships with other signs; this may create an endless chain of semiosis (Myers, 2006:516).<sup>84</sup> Poststructuralism does not provide a new semiotic theory but it changes the focus of attention from the sign (the relationship between signifier and signified) to semiosis (the process of creating meaning (Posner, 2011).

Gottdiener (1985:993-998) identifies three stages of semiosis of cultural goods:

- objects are produced for their exchange value and consumers acquire them for their use value;
- everyday objects with practical function are transfunctionalised by their users into sign values; and
- meanings are created by producers themselves. In this case the process is complete when transfunctionalised sign value (ascribed by consumers in everyday use) is utilised and encoded into artefacts by producers from the onset.

In all three stages transfunctionalisation plays a role where objects acquire second-order meaning. In *The Role of the Reader* Eco (1979:176) highlights the possibility for infinite analysis which is generated by the process of interpreting meaning:

*[A] semiotic expression (be it a verbal item or any type of physical utterance) conveys, according to linguistic conventions, an organized and analyzable content, formed*

84.) If, in the Peircian sense, a sign is something that stands for something else then the 'object' of interpretation gives rise to the 'interpretent', which can immediately become a new representation ('representamen') which gives rise to new objects and interpretents...

*by the aggregation (or hierarchy) of semantic features. These features constitute a system, either closed or open, and belong to different contents of different expressions in different arrangements. Compositional analysis should describe and define a virtually infinite number of contents by means of a possibly finite ensemble of features, but this exigency of economy gives rise to many aporias.<sup>85</sup>*

Since this thesis is the undertaking of an empirical study limits must be placed on this possibly endless process of semiosis and its implied plethora of objects and referents, transfunctionalisation and subjective connotations. How can the process of semiosis be understood to be of value in determining interior design's methods of cultural production?

In 'Nigerian Dress as a Symbolic Language'<sup>86</sup> (Adamo, 2011) provides a possible answer by simplifying semiosis:

*A message is conveyed when communication and understanding take place. For this to happen, the message must have gone through a process of semiosis. At the heart of semiotics is semiosis and the center [sic] of semiosis is the stand-for relation. There are two obvious ingredients in this stand-for relation, i.e., the sign and the referent. But it is important to note that there is a missing ingredient. We need to ask how a particular sign stands for a particular referent or how is it that anything can stand for anything? The missing ingredient is the community, individual or organism that invokes the stand-for relation, which uses an object (sign) to stand for another object (referent). So there are three features involved in semiosis--these are the sign, the referent, and the user.*

For the purposes of this thesis it is sufficient to understand semiosis in this way. Semiosis is the process of creating and transferring meaning, it is dependent on three role-players: the sign, the referent and the user.

### **2.3.3 Section Summary**

This section gave an introduction to semiotic interpretation as it will be applied for the purposes of the thesis. The analytical methods that emerge from this will be developed further in Chapter 3 Methods.<sup>87</sup> The section did not aim to offer new insights on semiotics and is merely aimed at the use of this theory in the research and analysis.

Semiotics is introduced as the study of signs and communication facilitated by four active role-players: the sign producer, the addressee, the artefact (considered as 'text') and society.

Following Eco's moderate hypothesis of culture the position is taken (and defended) that culture may be studied as a form of semiotic activity. This is mediated by stating that culture cannot be simply reduced to signs since objects possess a material existence. The semiotic interpretation of artefacts therefore implies greater complexity and subtlety than the mere identification of denoted and connoted meaning. In this context interior

85.) Eco continues that this leads to the conclusion amongst some scholars that semantic representation must be presented in the form of an *encyclopaedia*, but that this has little analytic potential. The analysis could be infinite without reaching conclusions.

86.) It is expedient to accept the continuum principle for the time being, see, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study, and, see, 2.2.2 Structuralism footnote, and the background to semiotic interpretation, see, 2.3.1 Background footnote.

87.) See, 3.4 Analytical Instrument

design is considered as a practice of spatially expressing the sign or the synthesis between space and image.

Since the thesis is aimed at the study of the generation of meaning in interior design through reference to its artefactual residue semiotic devices which support this analysis are identified. They are categorised as either semiotic assemblies or semiotic functions.

Three semiotic assemblies were selected and treated hierarchically. The selected assemblies play a particular role in the application of semiotic theory in the realm of objects (i.e. outside linguistic semiotics). Artefacts are considered as the cultural residue of human creation (whether tangible or intangible); objects are considered as a product of human activity with a material existence (i.e. a specific type of artefact); finally technemes are presented as the smallest unit of technical information contained in the object.

Four semiotic functions were selected and treated non-hierarchically. The selected functions represent a movement in focus from form to content which cannot be completed in the analysis of objects since the connection between the sign and the referent does not reach the level of arbitrariness that is present in language. Duality is presented as the division between form and meaning (arbitrariness); transfunctionalisation is the process through which a technological object acquires second-order meaning beyond its own function; denotation and connotation are presented as a single function in which the denotation is the observable, stable empirical evidence (content) while the connotation is the unstable and subjective interpretation (meaning); finally semiosis is the process of creating and transferring meaning, it is dependent on three role-players: the sign, the referent and the user.



## 2.4 THE ICONIC SEMIOTIC STRUCTURE

There may be concerns that the application of (post)structural semiotic analysis may represent a visual bias that places certain analytical limitations on the study of objects (particularly complex, spatial artefacts). These limitations were alluded to earlier in the discussion on the duality between form and content. In linguistic texts the arbitrary connection between a sign and its referent can be complete; this can never be the case in a material object in which meaning is partially imposed by the object's function. This semiotic approach to the built artefact is described by Bunt (1980:421) as the opposition between the 'expressive' dimension of architecture and the 'experiential' dimension which the individual will encounter when inhabiting the actual artefact.<sup>88</sup>

This thesis does not aim to separate the expressive dimension from the experiential dimension. Neither does it consider either the imaginal or spatial aspects of interior design to be of greater value. It merely takes its starting position from the methodological advantage offered by the photograph as empirical evidence. I stated in the introduction to the thesis<sup>89</sup> that this thesis partly originated from my own creation of mood boards which serve as an initial visual concept. Although the aesthetic realm plays an important role in the creation of the interior artefact it is not the only determinant. The interior is created through the manipulation of volume and material often with an identifiable purpose of inhabitation. It is contentious that this is not discernible in the photographic record. It is the position of this thesis that in lieu of the actual artefact<sup>90</sup> all forms of notation have limitations; but the photograph (as an example of the iconic semiotic structure) has methodological advantage.

This section will present the (post)structural semiotic approach of this thesis as a focus area.<sup>91</sup> Barthes' 'iconic semiotic structure' is isolated and discussed and the photograph defended as empirical evidence and conventional artefact.<sup>92</sup> The thesis takes the position that it is a myth to consider the analysis of three-dimensional artefacts through its pictorial representation as two-dimensional (or in other words that it is not possible to perceive three-dimensionality in the photograph).<sup>93</sup> The photograph is selected as economic artefact and empirical evidence; it will be deployed for the purposes of content analysis through interpretation, aimed at the identification, isolation, description and interpretation of interior design's methods of cultural production.

### 2.4.1 Background

Any visual image or linguistic text will connote a range of diverse meanings (Burgess, 1990:146). In the study of semiotics the bias is towards language with the result that other semiotic resources are often under

- 88.) Eco (1980[1972]:215) states that the semiotic analysis of architecture is limited by an aesthetic fallacy which draws a distinction between 'building' and 'architecture'. According to this fallacy architecture is somewhat elevated above mere building (which is purely functional) since it contains secondary architecturally reflective meaning; this meaning is primarily expressed as 'space' (or 'spatiality'). To go some way in removing the limitations of this fallacy it is valuable to consider architecture (or other built artefacts, such as interiors) as merely objects which requires transfunctionalisation (see, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions).
- 89.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.
- 90.) Or Barthes' 'technological semiotic structure'.
- 91.) This must not be considered as a visual bias as it is referred to by Diaz (2009) in 'The Visual Bias of Structuralism in Architecture'.
- 92.) The defence of the empirical material continues in Chapter 3 Methods.
- 93.) The critics of the photograph also fall victim to what Eco (1980[1972]:232) calls the 'semantic illusion of verbal language' where architectural sign-vehicles and meanings are expressed by means of other types of notation such as verbal description (Barthes' 'verbal semiotic structure').



analysed. The social construction of reality and power is often most subtle in understated messages (Owyong, 2008:191).

Panofsky (1955[1939]:5) states that humankind is the “only animal to leave records behind him, for he is the only animal whose products ‘recall to mind’ an idea distinct from their material existence”. Human records contain duality since they “express ideas separated from, yet realized by the process of signalling and building,” (Panofsky, 1955[1939]:5). This duality is incomplete and only present in transfunctionalised artefacts. Much later Isar and Anheier (2010:7) declare that, “[i]mages and pictorial representation have never been more dominant in day to day life”.

I wish to return to Barthes’ (1983[1967]) three semiotic structures (the technological, the iconic, and the verbal).<sup>94</sup> Since this logical disputation between objects and their pictorial and textual representation is evident it is important to consider the relationship between them. In his analysis of the system of fashion<sup>95</sup> Barthes (1983[1967]:6) writes:

*In our society, the circulation of Fashion thus relies in large part on an activity of transformation: there is a transition (at least according to the order invoked by Fashion magazines) from the technological structure to iconic and verbal structures. Yet this tradition, as in all structures, can only be discontinuous: the real garment can only be transformed into ‘representation’ by means of certain operators we might call shifters, since they serve to transpose one structure into another, to pass, if you will, from one code to another code.*

Meaning is thus transferred between different semiotic modes. There are three kinds of shifters:

- from the real to the image;
- from the real to language; and
- from the image to language (Barthes, 1983[1967]:6).

The ‘transformation’ described here is only considering the representation of an existing object. During the design and manufacture of designed objects an image is created of the future object, which is then manufactured according to the recorded intentions of the designer. In this case a fourth shifter is introduced: from the image to the real. Once a fourth shifter is introduced the process is no longer discontinuous, especially if new icons become representamen of other objects and interpretents.

*[T]he means of producing, circulating and exchanging cultural products and processes have been dramatically expanded in our time through new media technologies and the information revolution. Directly, a much greater proportion of the world’s human, material and technical resources than ever before goes into the ‘cultural’ or ‘creative’ industries sectors, while indirectly these have become the mediating element in every other process (Isar & Anheier, 2010:5).*

94.) Refer to the background to semiotic interpretation, see, 2.3.1 Background.

95.) *The Fashion System* (Barthes, 1983[1967]) is considered as a seminal work in the structural analysis of the production and meaning of designed objects. Barthes isolated the verbal structure and analysed the fashion system as it is depicted in the written descriptions of garments in fashion magazines. In choosing the linguistic part of the system Barthes is guilty of what is perceived as the linguistic bias of structuralism (and semiotics). Methodologically Barthes makes a major contribution in his decision to concentrate on only one of the semiotic structures; this study supports that and hopes to make a contribution through its focus on the iconic structure.

According to Duxbury and Murray (2010:211) Lefebvre locates the representation of space in signs, discourses and objectified images of spatial order. This of course includes Barthes iconic structure ('signs' and 'images') and verbal structure ('discourses'). I decided to focus the thesis on the iconic semiotic structure since the pictorial representation became so important and ubiquitous. Images are the predominant conveyors of the canon and thus the canon's embedded knowledge. Images become the substitute for the actual object and through their ease of transfer will reach a greater audience. There are in fact two parallel canons: 1.) the canon of artefacts; and 2.) the canon of images (Downton in Attiwill, 2007:59).

If the canon of images is considered, differentiation must be made between images that record an existing object (e.g. drawings or photographs of built artefacts) and images that convey future intentions (e.g. design proposals). The selection of images for study in this thesis will only consider existing interior design manifestations. In other words, it will be recordings (photographs) of built work which records the artefact in its final condition (not the intention of the designer). The corpus chosen, established, or assembled will offer value judgments on interior design as a practice, and will contribute to answering the ontological question (Attiwill 2007:65).<sup>96</sup>

*[I]mages are increasingly intelligent instruments that can be used for so many different purposes that a titanic shift may be needed in the discourses that are used to examine them. It is not possible to be a part of Western culture without some reference to the impact of images on everyday life. By extension, the meaning of the term 'image' has to be carefully rethought. In other words, it is not possible or desirable to talk about the social construction of meaning and messages without reference to images as sites of communication, miscommunication, mediation, and intelligence (Burnett, 2004:8).*

If interior design artefacts are considered as 'texts' and the definition of an 'image' is reconsidered, then interior artefacts can be interpreted as spatial images. As with the interpretation of meaning, the viewing of images is not a passive act. Viewing an image happens at the intersection between creativity, viewing and critical reflection (Burnett, 2004:14).

#### **2.4.2 The Photograph**

The photograph is selected as the primary empirical evidence. Although the photograph is arguably a two-dimensional artefact which represents a three-dimensional one, photographs are not 'flat'. They are a representation of a formal or volumetric artefact; *id est* they are a spatial representation. It is possible to discern space, form and volume from a photograph. Photographs provide evidence of the relationships between objects, and their relative placement in space (what is in front, or what is behind, what is close together and what is far apart, etc.). Photographs are not orthographic.<sup>97</sup>

The photograph is an object of exchange, created to share social meaning (contained in the images) amongst participants (Edwards, 2009:338). They circulate as 'memory-texts'. When Edwards (2009:340)

96.) When this corpus is taken into consideration it may be more useful to ask 'how' as distinct from the ontological question ('what is?'); i.e. 'How does interior design produce meaning?'

97.) This is attested to by the conventions used to make photographs appear more architectural, e.g. limiting perspective, indicating facades on elevation, etc (refer to Serrano, 2002, and Trigoni, 2008).

describes the photograph as a material object in 'Photographs as Objects of Memory' it becomes apparent that the photograph can be considered as conventional artefact which will contain duality once they are transfunctionalised:

*The material object [photograph] constitutes an intersection between social context and codified, connotative ideologies of social practice (the form of the content) on the one hand, and material production of the artefact within object-worlds on the other.*

This duality between the object as technical artefact and its second-order meaning is reflected in a form of duality that emerges from the discrepancy between the photograph as record and the actual artefact.<sup>98</sup> The discrepancy between the expressive and experiential dimensions is voiced when Attiwill (2007:59) questions the validity of the photograph as method to collect and document interior design practice. She argues that interior design's experiential nature distinguishes it from object based practices. I have argued earlier that to place architecture in a special category of object studies leads to some of these problems. If built artefacts are merely considered as any material artefact (object) the aesthetic fallacy which distinguishes architecture from buildings (i.e. material objects) is negated.

In *Rethinking Design and Interiors* Caan (2011:51) criticises the visual experience of space in the following way:

*The experience of space is arguably, not solely visual; instead, vision acts in concert with other senses. Smell, sound, temperature, and touch alter and change our perception of space. They are all contributors to our comfort and well-being and reach elements of our psyche and memory that cannot be reached by purely visual sensations. In contrast, many current design trends use a single, stylized image as a metonym for an entire project. We are expected to judge the merit and value of the built environment from a lifeless transposition onto the pages of magazines or in what flutters across television screens. This development is deeply troubling: the human being is often entirely missing from consideration, and the end result is an empty stylistic shell. Such an approach turns the designed environment into a depopulated space that more often succeeds only as an image.*

Caan's criticism is valid. To utilise the image as metonym for a volumetric projects has clear limitations. These limitations do not imply that the photographic record is not valid to study spatial objects. The value of the photograph is supported by others.

In the introduction to *Intimus. Interior Design Theory Reader* Taylor and Preston (2006:6) declares that visual artefacts representing the interior offer an important resource for analysis and observation of the interior.

In *On Photography* Sontag (2010[1973]:168) declares that photographs may elevate the emotive aspect of the real. In this manner they offer ways of understanding and analysis which the direct experience of space may not. Since, in this case, the photograph becomes a conventional artefact in its own right it becomes necessary to understand that the photograph will colour that which it captures.

98.) This was discussed above, see, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure.

So will using the photograph. In *About Looking* Berger (1980:64) adds that the photograph must be considered in a 'constructed' context. This context is created when the photograph is placed in an 'ongoing text of photographs and images' or in a context constructed with words.<sup>99</sup> Sometimes photographs are used in a unilinear way or tautologically (when it only repeats that which is said in printed text):<sup>100</sup>

*If we want to put a photograph back into the context of experience, social experience, social memory, we have to respect laws of memory. We have to situate the printed photograph so that it acquires something of the surprising conclusiveness of that which was and is* (Berger, 1980:65).

Photos are easy to produce, reproduce, accumulate, store and disseminate (Sontag 2010 [1973]:3). As such they are convenient artefacts to consider when the dissemination of cultural information is investigated. Further, they have a close connection to their subject which other pictorial depictions do not. Berger (1980:54) states the limitations of drawings: "No painting or drawing, however naturalist, belongs to its subject in the way that a photograph does". These factors contribute to the convenience that photographic evidence offers as empirical evidence. Photographs create the sense that the world may be understood as an anthology of photographs (Sontag 2010 [1973]:3). The collection and selection of photographs is a method to establish a canon. This is specifically valid if the canon is differentiated as a canon of images and a canon of objects.

Sontag (2010[1973]:3) considers the photograph both as a document and as an artefact. During the analysis of pictorial representations of interior design artefacts, this dual life of the photograph must be considered. I will discuss the photograph as evidence and as conventional artefact, before attempting a synthesis of these overlapping roles by concluding that the photograph is a memetic device:

#### 2.4.2.1 The photograph as evidence

Photographs serve a documentary function (Serraino, 2002:129) and they furnish evidence (Sontag 2010 [1973]:5). Photographs give information, make an inventory and they are valuable to information specialists (Sontag 2010 [1973]:22).

When considering photos of built artefacts they may differ depending on their intended audience. The pictorial depiction of the artefact can serve as documentary, technical and celebratory (if it is aimed at fellow designers) or it could indicate consumption and lifestyle (if it is aimed at the lay person) (Serraino, 2002:127). This difference in the evidence that is furnished should be considered when photographs are analysed:

- Images targeted at designers are analytical, abstract and editorial. They reinforce the profession's identity, set normative benchmarks and set the paradigmatic norms for spatial representation. They often mimic architectural drawing convention (e.g. camera positions are parallel to the built form to mimic elevations).
- Images for lay readers transform the space into a display of desirable objects; it should appeal to the social elite who use design as a form of social distinction (Serraino, 2002:127-8).

99.) This has relevance on the research methods chosen for this thesis. When we are actively engaged with the data we *construct* codes and understandings based on our subjective view of the world (Charmaz, 2006:47), see, 3.3.1 Constructivist Grounded Theory.

100.) This is an example of the shift from image to language (Barthes, 1983[1967]:6).

When considering the representation of space, specifically the conventional communication of design intent, Lefebvre (1997[1974]:144) declares:

*[The architect] has a representation of [his own] space, one which is bound to graphic elements – to sheets of paper, plans, elevations, sections, perspective views of facades, modules, and so on. This conceived space is thought by those who make use of it to be true, despite the fact – or perhaps because of the fact – that it is geometrical: because it is a medium for objects, an object itself, and a locus of the objectification of plans.*

Just as it is relevant to conceive and represent architectural space by 'non-spatial' means (not being the 'true' inhabited space), so is it relevant to study space through representations (this was done previously, for example Fisher (1992) investigated architectural space through the study of the plan in *An Ecosystemic Role for Architectural Style: Bearing 'the Plan' in 'Mind'*). The photograph represents another non-spatial, or pictorial, representation of architectural space which may serve as documentary evidence. However, it may be argued that the everyday space is lived and not represented or conceived (Lefebvre, 1997:145).<sup>101</sup> This introduces a dialectic between the everyday lived experiences and represented space (as a conception of intent or document of fact). If it is accepted that lived experience is subjective, can the representation of space then be accepted as 'rational' and 'objective' empirical evidence?

When the limitations of the representation are considered this is clearly not so; the photograph is a constructed representation of reality. When photographs are considered as evidence it must be approached with care. The photograph is considered as the primary empirical evidence for the study.<sup>102</sup> However, the other structures (i.e. the verbal structure or different versions of the iconic structure e.g. drawings) are not excluded. These may be useful to ascertain other production techniques of the discipline, but will be considered as in addition to the main argument. Since the study is concerned with interior design's cultural production methods (not its production methods in general) the dissemination of cultural information by the discipline is of most importance. Most lay people are rarely exposed to designer's drawings; they would therefore not constitute a significant direct contribution to cultural production.<sup>103</sup>

#### 2.4.2.2 The photograph as conventional artefact

The image exists in a representational triangle of object, image and viewer; the creative intervention of viewers can be seen as a disruption of the intentions of the image creator (Burnett, 2004:15). This is significant if images are considered as texts and the poststructuralist interpretation of the creative role of the addressee in the creation of meaning is considered. In her consideration of the photograph Sontag (2010[1973]:3) states it explicitly that a photograph contains some of the essential characteristics of the artefact:

101.) Here Lefebvre makes use of the opposition between the expressive and experiential aspects of architecture.

102.) Trigoni (2008) used photographs of interiors as the main empirical evidence in her analysis of the production and consumption of meaning in images of domestic interiors. The research conducted by Trigoni can be categorised as 'content analysis through statistics' while my study can be distinguished as 'content analysis through interpretation' (although the coding practices she adopted was interpretive in nature).

103.) The logical conclusion to this argument is that the best evidence is the physical interior artefact itself. This may be the case but that may limit the scope of the thesis to a small geographical area, or extend its execution over a longer timeframe.

*In teaching us a new visual code, photographs alter and change our notions of what is worth looking at and what we have the right to observe. They are a grammar and, even more importantly, an ethics of seeing.*

The photograph is imbued with its own 'grammar' and 'conventions of seeing'. There are cultural conventions which inform the creation of photographs; the photograph should be considered as a conventional artefact. Mitchell (2011:11) confirms this when she asserts that photos should be considered as objects with their own material culture. In this way the photograph exceeds its purpose to serve as documentary evidence. Since the photograph is also an object it is not only a representation of the world but part of the world (Sontag, 2010[1973]:4). In *Visual Impact. Culture and the Meaning of Images* Wright (2008:17) refers to Barthes by saying the photograph is the 'natural' witness of 'what has been'. This initial introduction (as the photograph as evidence) is speedily mediated, then altered.

Conventionally the photograph is accepted as the standard for realistic visual representation; this introduces the assumption that photographs are easily understood by their viewers (Wright, 2008:33); but in visual arts criticism the idea is present that "picture perception is a learned activity" (Wright, 2008:45).<sup>104</sup> Wright (2008:47) concludes by declaring:

*At a basic level the research suggests that although photographic images, as such, may be easily recognizable, additional socio-cultural understanding may need to be taken into account. And this awareness should be heightened in the use of systems that do not employ linear perspective or rely upon symbolic representational forms. It further suggests that images do not work independently and cannot be accepted at face value. They operate within a system, and the system itself can introduce and exploit novel means of communication through pictures.*

Just like architecture, the photograph should not be considered as an idiosyncratic artefact. The photograph is a material object that is generated and which can be transmitted and interpreted. Its interpretation is dependent on the social milieu and subjectivity of the reader. The photograph, like any artefact, is a text.

#### 2.4.3.3 The photograph as memetic device

An attempt at categorising the characteristics of the photograph as either evidentiary or artefactual will fail. To propose a consideration of the photograph as the synthesis between these aspects become necessary.

A memetic device is considered as any item that conveys ideas (or cultural content) amongst humans. This is a simple definition and may be considered so broad that it includes all human production. If the meme is "understood as being the smallest recognizable cultural schema" then the artefact acts as an agent for these schemata and is encoded with them during its generation (Fisher, 1992:17). The definition may be broad and simple but it is significant since it removes the artefact from the Mechanistic paradigm (where it is merely a curiosity) and is energised in the Ecosystemic mindset (Fisher, 1992:18). The photograph is such a cultural agent and is selected for the purposes of this thesis for exactly that reason. As 'evidence' the photograph will be a recording of memetic material and as 'artefact' that will also be the case. This is mediated by a

104.) This supports a "theory of the social construction of reality" (Wright, 2008:45).



lingering sense that photographs can lie (Burnett, 2004:16); or at least that their content may not be so self-evident.

It is important to return the photograph to the larger realm of images. For Burnett (2004:28) the photograph is merely a recording which only exists until they are seen and interpreted, at that moment they become images. This is relevant if photographs (or images) are considered as texts in which their interpretation is an important creative act.

In 'Iconic Pictures' Rattenbury (2002:57-8) discuss iconic pictorial representations of architecture, regarding the photograph she states that photographs could be considered in their own right, stripped from the cultural conventions which produce them; this is aimed at determining the "codes, constructions and ideas" about design that are embedded within them. This enables the design researcher to take note of the photographic conventions but to see past them and isolate the memetic content recorded in the photograph. This is echoed by Burnett (2004:44-45):

*As more and more forms of image production have arrived on the cultural scene and as images have become vehicles not only for the communication of meaning but for the creation of environments, the problems of developing critical discourses to understand these phenomena have grown.*

This is an important consideration. If these accounts are considered two important aspects become important: 1.) images contain cultural information which is embedded in their content and creation; and 2.) the opposition between the expressive dimension and the experiential dimension in the built artefact can be removed. If the subject/object distinction that is maintained in the viewing of images are allowed to dissolve then images can be linked to a continuity of viewing and experience which allow for a middle ground of comprehension and reflection (Burnett, 2004:53):

*Images don't operate in an autonomous fashion outside of the relations established between their various modalities and the humans who interact with them.*

In summary, the photograph is a powerful memetic device. As such it represents the photograph both as source of evidence and as conventional artefact in which both the generation and interpretation of the text are creative acts. Since the photograph is an actual trace of its subject it belongs to its subject in a way that no drawing could (Berger, 1980:54).

### **2.4.3 Section Summary**

This section considered the iconic semiotic structure which is the pictorial representation of the material (or 'technological') object. The iconic semiotic structure is isolated as the major empirical evidence for the thesis. Since this may represent a visual bias this decision is defended as a focus area of the thesis. The pictorial representation is of particular importance in the realm of cultural production in the current era due to its ubiquity. When the artefact is considered meaning may be transferred between different semiotic modes: from the real to the image; from the real to language; from the image to language; and from the image to the real. Since the image is so important in the generation of designed artefacts it becomes appropriate to study the designed artefact through its representations.

The photograph is introduced as an example of the iconic structure. The photograph is approached as a contentious source of evidence when spatial artefacts are considered. I attempted to mitigate this by stating that photographs are convenient artefacts to consider since they are easy to produce, reproduce, accumulate, store and disseminate (after Sontag).

Photographs also serve as constructions which elevate their use as evidence and it is particularly powerful in constructing narratives (after Berger). Sontag considered the photograph as a document and an artefact; I attempted a synthesis of these overlapping roles by presenting the photograph as a memetic device.

Photographs serve a documentary function and furnish evidence. They provide information, make an inventory and are valuable to information specialists. The photograph is defended as source of information on designed artefacts since designed artefacts are conceived, developed, and the design intent communicated using pictorial means (e.g. drawings).

Photographs are also images and therefore act as a conventional artefact which exists in a representational triangle of object, image and viewer. Like any text their interpretation is a significant creative act which contributes to the making of meaning. The photograph is conventionally considered as the standard of realistic representation but additional socio-cultural understanding may be required to understand it. The photograph (like any artefact) is considered as a text.

Finally, the photograph is presented as a memetic device which is considered as any item that conveys ideas amongst humans. The photograph is a recording of memetic content (as evidence) but it is also imbued with memetic content (as artefact). In this vein it is possible to remove the opposition between the expressive and experiential dimensions of space as it may be recorded in the photograph. In the absence of the material object the photograph is an actual trace of its subject and it belongs to its subject in a way that no drawing could (after Berger).

The photograph is therefore selected as primary empirical evidence.



## 2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I introduced the theoretical background to the thesis and isolated the form of the empirical evidence from a theoretical perspective.

Cultural production is considered as an iterative practice comprised of the individual acts of generation and interpretation and the group manifestations of meaning. Cultural production is approached as the synthesis between meaning and capital. Culture is introduced as a 'noun of process' which includes all human production not determined by biology. If culture is considered as a social product it can be studied systemically. It was speedily determined that cultural production may be studied by reducing the inquiry to the production of meaning. Culturally, meaning is generated and produced through phenomena used as signifiers. This is synthesised in Eco's moderate hypothesis which asserts that all aspects of culture can be studied as semiotic activity.

Structuralism and poststructuralism are introduced as theoretical approaches which are primarily concerned with meaning (in lieu of capital). Structuralism (and its search for understanding the cultural system, and its focus on generation) was introduced first before the continuation of this project through poststructuralism (which accepts the instability and practical limitations of a systemic understanding, and its subsequent focus on interpretation) was considered. Although some understanding of the system of objects is possible through structural analysis and analogy with language, it is not feasible to catalogue the system: the system of objects is particularly unstable and subject to rapid progress in creativity and innovation and there exists a real threat that significant changes will interfere in the system during its analysis. It is the inherent impracticality and limitation of structural analysis which introduces poststructuralism as a nuanced alternative.

The domain gatekeepers were included for their particularly important role in the mediated process of cultural production. They facilitate the dissemination of cultural memes from legitimate culture to popular culture (a similar role is played in the propagation of memes amongst peers) and provide recognition for novel artefacts and practices. Ultimately they determine a canon of artefacts worthy of emulation. Canonic artefacts are memetically encoded; as such they are the carriers and propagators of cultural information. I consider the design researcher as a domain gatekeeper; through the selection of artefacts for inclusion in the thesis I will accept the responsibility of this role.

The thesis is not aimed at the semiotic analysis of artefacts but it considers this field (as the study of signs and communication) important in the research. The particular challenges of material objects in a semiotic context are considered: objects are functional and their primary communicative intent is to portray their function. Since objects possess a material existence culture cannot simply be reduced to signs (as would be the case with language). Since the thesis is aimed at the study of the generation of meaning in interior design through reference to its artefactual residue, semiotic devices which support this analysis are identified. They are categorised as either semiotic assemblies or semiotic functions. Three semiotic assemblies were selected and treated hierarchically. Four semiotic functions were selected and treated non-hierarchically.

Finally Barthes' iconic semiotic structure was discussed. The iconic structure is the pictorial representation of the material object and can be distinguished from the technological structure and the verbal structure. The thesis' possible visual bias was defended as a research focus in this context. The photograph was introduced as an example of the iconic structure. Photographs are convenient artefacts to consider for the research since they are easy to produce, reproduce, accumulate, store and disseminate. Photographs also serve as constructions which elevate their use as evidence and it is particularly powerful in constructing

narratives. I attempted a synthesis of the overlapping roles of the photograph (as evidence and as artefacts) by presenting the photograph as memetic device. In this chapter I attempted (from a theoretical perspective) to clarify my intention to refer to the photographic record of interior artefacts as main empirical evidence in order to identify, isolate, describe and interpret interior design's methods of cultural production (by content analysis through interpretation).

The theoretical approaches highlighted in this chapter will enable me to conduct critical interpretation of the data and findings later in the thesis. Making the generation of culture analogous to the generation of meaning allows me to assess the interior artefact from a logical point of view and it enables me to speculate on the role of the interior artefact in the larger cultural discourse.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODS

### 3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will formally introduce the methods employed for the research of this thesis.

The purpose of this study is to determine interior design's methods of cultural production. This will specifically be ascertained through the analysis of the photographic record of interior artefacts. The research aims to identify, isolate, describe and interpret cultural production methods as they are recorded in photographs of interiors. This is aimed at speculating about the role of the interior artefact in the larger cultural discourse and to develop design strategies to encode meaning in the design of new artefacts. From a theoretical perspective the production of meaning is considered as analogous to the production of culture.

The study is conducted as a form of material culture, which is the study of culture through its material artefacts (i.e. objects) in the absence of direct human participation. The study is further conducted with a focus on interior design (as an abstract entity) and not interior designers. Therefore the interior artefact (and not the person) is the structure under consideration. This is relevant since structuralism is, in essence, the study of texts; and poststructuralism develops this further by stating that the author's intentions are different to what a text actually says. The thesis is therefore strongly focused on the artefact (which is considered as a text) and takes a radical position (after Eco) by stating that the author can be ignored in the interpretation.

The research design and methods are chosen to reflect my meta-theoretical perspective and as such are aimed at reaching a deeper level of insight and not delivering truth.<sup>1</sup> It is expected that the research methods will result in reaching the aims of the thesis (mainly to identify tacit methods to create meaning as it is employed in contemporary interior artefacts; after identification these can be expressed explicitly).

The chapter will firstly indicate the research approach and the selected research design (which can be classified as content analysis through interpretation which is augmented by literature review and synthesis).

Secondly, the main research methods are presented. The majority of the research is conducted using constructivist grounded theory (CGT) as described by Charmaz (2006); the purpose of CGT is to offer an interpretive portrayal of the world. CGT is augmented with phenomenography which has an empirical approach and has its origins in pedagogical research (Marton & Säljö in Bowden, 2000:1).

Thirdly, the analytic instrument (developed for the analysis of photographs) is presented; this includes the analytic protocol, *in vivo* codes,<sup>2</sup> and analytic integration.

Finally, the ethical considerations are taken into account.

- 1.) On reflection it is clear that, although I tried to avoid that position, my stance is influenced by positivism and the logico-deductive method that is prevalent in our Department; this is influenced by the Department's origins in a faculty of natural and agricultural sciences and its current location in an engineering faculty. I wish to make a contribution to the completion of the qualitative turn.
- 2.) The *in vivo* codes are derived from a literature review; this could be considered as a continuation of the main literature study of the thesis.

### 3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The research is located in the interpretivist paradigm. It takes a non-positivist, social constructive stance and believes that meanings are emergent from the research process. The research process itself informs and constructs the phenomena under investigation. This is located in relativist ontology and a subjective epistemology. The research design and constitutive research methods reflects this.

The research will follow a reflexive approach with centrality of the subjectivity of the researcher. This is situated in a poststructuralist context where built artefacts are the outcome of signifying practices, yet they cannot be reduced to a language or discourse or to the categories and concepts used in the study of language (Lefebvre, 1997[1974]:140). The results of the study should therefore be nuanced and complex, and as such it will avoid the dangers of pastiche or ethnographic encoding. In *The Interpretation of Cultures* Geertz (2000[1973]:29) asserts that cultural analysis can only ever be incomplete and its findings debatable. He continues:

*There are a number of ways to escape this – turning culture into folklore and collecting it, turning it into traits and counting it, turning it into institutions and classifying it, turning it into structures and toying with it. But they **are** escapes. The fact is to commit oneself to a semiotic concept of culture and an interpretive approach to the study of it is to commit oneself to a view [that is] ‘essentially contestable’.*

In the search for interior design’s methods of cultural production I commit myself to reach such an incomplete and contestable result. I do not aim to deliver the truth, merely to offer a deeper understanding in the hope of improving the practice of design.

The research will consider generative and interpretive aspects in the analysis. To photograph an interior places it within the canon. Through a rapid evidence assessment a corpus of interior design works will be compiled through the assembly of published photographs of contrived (designed) interiors. The photograph is an object of exchange, created to share social meaning amongst participants. They circulate as ‘memory-texts’ and may be considered as ‘objects’ with their own material culture.<sup>3</sup> The community under investigation (interior designers) holds a positive attitude to public dissemination of their work (specifically through the photographic record). The photographic record is a convenient and timely way to study the designed interior. The study aims to harvest data from the interior design repository,<sup>4</sup> to isolate the discipline’s cultural production methods, and to develop a rigorous design strategy to construct meaning.

The corpus will offer the opportunity to deliver value judgements on interior design as a practice, and will contribute to answering the ontological question (*what is interior design?*). The study will contribute to the discipline’s production methods and will have the potential to reach pedagogical relevance.

The research methodology is informed by pragmatic constraints. Temporal and financial constraints limit direct access to suitable artefacts; I therefore opted for the analysis of their pictorial representations. The thesis aims to identify tacit methods to construct meaning in interior artefacts and works from the assumption that the designers that employ them are not necessarily explicitly aware of their use in practice. In this case, if interviews were conducted the extracted tacit information may be

3.) See, 2.4.2 The Photograph

4.) Specifically the internet and popular interior design media; the collection of primary data is discussed in Chapter 4 Data.

unreliable or of poor quality.<sup>5</sup> An interpretive analysis of the artefact (within a theoretical framework) is therefore considered as more appropriate. It is also the appropriate approach for a (radical) poststructural position.

The research is comprised of a literature review, the collection of suitable examples, and the conduct of critical analysis in support of the thesis. The research design can be categorized as content analysis through interpretation which is augmented by literature review and synthesis. The recursive relationship between these two approaches is an important consideration; there is a constant movement between inductive and deductive ways of thinking.

### **3.2.1 Content Analysis Through Interpretation**

Content analysis through interpretation is used in the analysis of the primary data. The content analysis is aimed at qualitative descriptions of interior design's methods of cultural production as they are documented in photographs. Methods of cultural production will be identified, isolated, described and interpreted. The analysis is aimed at the description of the form and content of the photographic records, and not at quantitative analysis.

The texts I include for analysis can be categorized as 'extant texts' (Charmaz, 2006:35); these are "documents that the researcher had no hand in shaping".

The content analysis will be conducted with an inductive objective; as such it is aimed at reaching general conclusions from specific cases. Methodically the initial analysis is deductive in manner, being based on codes that are derived through the literature review prior to the initial analysis.<sup>6</sup> The secondary analysis is inductive in nature; being based on concepts and categories that are derived, developed, and gradually established based on the research process.<sup>7</sup>

### **3.2.2 Literature Review And Synthesis**

Literature reviews are conducted for the selection and interpretation of secondary sources. Their purpose is to locate the content analysis within a theoretical framework, to inform the content analysis by providing analytic instruments, and finally, to ground the analysis theoretically.

Some of interior design's methods of cultural production may already be documented in the secondary literature. A literature review will inform this and these methods can then be used to identify similar and related methods through the content analysis, or they can be confirmed through the content analysis.

The approach to the literature review is considered as inductive; the theoretical framework and codes used for the analysis was derived from the literature and did not exist prior to the reading. In general the literature review is aimed at the application of general concepts on specific cases.

- 5.) Charmaz (2006:55) claims that the grounded theorist brings an 'analytic eye and disciplinary background' to the analysis of data and that this particularly can make fundamental processes explicit of which respondents are not aware.
- 6.) See, 3.4.1 Analytic protocol for the content analysis of artefacts.
- 7.) See, 3.4.3 Analytic integration.

### 3.2.3 Research Programme

The research programme followed six stages:<sup>8</sup>

#### 1. Determine the semiotic structure

This stage was aimed at the determination of an appropriate semiotic structure to study the represented artefact. Since the semiotic structures can be studied in a discrete fashion Barthes's iconic structure was isolated.<sup>9</sup> The study of the representative structures (iconic or verbal) has methodological and practical advantage (Barthes, 1983[1967]:7). Emphasis was placed on the separation between semiotic structures but if the research methods required it reference was made to the verbal structure.<sup>10</sup>

#### 2. Determine the corpus

Barthes (1983[1967]:10) argues that fashion magazines constitute the best corpus to study the fashion system. In contrast I argue that electronic media is more convenient and efficient than printed media to distribute memes. It is not necessary to study the entire corpus diachronically if the determination is the structural/systemic analysis (Barthes, 1983[1967]:10); it was more efficient to limit the corpus synchronically. Since I believe that interior design is a contemporary discipline with a high degree of temporality the corpus was synchronous with the study. The collection of photographic data was synchronically limited in an arbitrary fashion to the period after the signing of the *IFI Interiors Declaration* (February, 2011).

The inclusion of artefacts in the corpus was further determined by selection criteria (based on a literature review and the objectives of the thesis).<sup>11</sup>

#### 3. Collect the data

Once the synchrony and selection criteria were determined the data was collected, selected and catalogued during a rapid evidence assessment (REA). The inclusion and exclusion criteria was based on the selection of the corpus but tacitly fine-tuned during this stage for technical reasons (e.g. limitations of reprographic techniques and the availability of high resolution photographs).<sup>12</sup>

#### 4. Describe and code the data

The purpose of this stage of the programme was to arrive at a structure of codes of description (*gráphō*) of phenomena<sup>13</sup> and to apply this to the data sample. If phenomena are studied, and this structure of codes is determined, it may be used to encode future interior design projects with cultural meaning. (The categorized data will be published in a digital repository that will form an addendum to the thesis. This will be a contribution of the study in its bequest to the interior design canon.)

This stage was deductive in nature.

- 8.) Unlike the remainder of the thesis, this sub-section is presented in the past tense. I employed this tense to reflect on the process as it is already complete. The thesis is mainly presented in the present tense, but it indicates text to follow in the future tense and that which occurred before in the past tense.
- 9.) See, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure
- 10.) For the results of this stage of the research refer to Chapter 2 Theoretical Background.
- 11.) For the results of this stage of the research, specifically the selection criteria, see, 4.2 Selection Criteria.
- 12.) For the results of this stage of the research refer to Chapter 4 Data.
- 13.) To see the 'codes of description of phenomena', see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods.

#### 5. Analyze the data

Since the research method is phenomenographic and the theory grounded,<sup>14</sup> the analysis commenced during earlier phases of the programme. The data was marked with *codes* (during Stage 4) which enabled me to organize them in similar *concepts*, finally these were organized in *categories*<sup>15</sup> (refer Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006; and Glaser & Strauss, 1999[1967]).

This stage was inductive in nature; the concepts and categories were derived, developed, and gradually established based on the research. The constant aim was to generalize theory from specific cases.

#### 6. Formulate conclusions

The thesis had two aims, the narrower and superficial aim of improving praxis (both pedagogic and in industry by enabling interior designers to apply knowledge of the generation of cultural meaning to greater advantage), and the broader and deeper aim of improving the discipline's knowledge base.

The study aimed to conclude with strategic proposals to allow interior designers to rigorously and strategically encode meaning in the designed interior while avoiding pastiche and ethnographic encoding. The construction of this strategy was reliant on the research methods used in the study.<sup>16</sup>

14.) See, 3.3 Research Methods.

15.) The description of categories of interior design's methods of cultural production represents significant research findings of the thesis; refer to Chapter 5 Interior Design Methods.

16.) For the strategic outcome refer to Chapter 7 Towards a Design Strategy.



### 3.3 RESEARCH METHODS

The two primary methods employed are introduced in this section. They are chosen from the interpretivist paradigm and have empirical application. This section will introduce the methodical approach from a theoretical perspective; while the application of the methods will be discussed later in the chapter.<sup>17</sup>

#### 3.3.1 Constructivist Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is described by Strauss and Corbin (1994:273) in 'Grounded Theory Methodology. An Overview' as:

*Grounded theory is a **general methodology** for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed. Theory evolves during actual research, and it does this through continuous interplay between analysis and data collection.*

The grounded theory method is summarized from Goulding (1999:17) in this fashion: The analysis is based on a coding strategy in which the data is separated into meaningful components which are labelled conceptually. These concepts are grouped into explanatory categories; these are compared and evaluated to determine their interrelationships. This process is context bound and both "theory laden and value laden".<sup>18</sup> The presentation of grounded theory typically follows a three step process: 1.) data is collected and it is illustrated where early concepts are derived from; 2.) the concepts are abstracted and theoretical meaning is searched for. During this stage additional theoretical literature could be included to ensure 'fit' between the theory and the broader context; and 3.) the theory is presented by uniting the concepts "into categories which have explanatory power".

The majority of the research for this thesis is conducted using the reinterpretation and development of this method described as constructivist grounded theory (CGT) by Charmaz (2006). Charmaz reinterprets classical grounded theory and proposes a constructivist alternative. Grounded theory contains both positivist and interpretivist inclinations. She (2006:127) asserts that Glaser's treatment of theory contains positivist leanings; specifically in his search for 'explanatory power'; Strauss and Corbin have positivist leanings but they accept the researcher's worldview and interpretation as an 'unavoidable limitation'; and an interpretive stance should develop "frames from which to view realities," (Alasuutari in Charmaz, 2006:128).

This illustrates the development of grounded theory as an initial attempt to introduce a more rigorous, systematic approach to dealing with qualitative data and the subsequent introduction (and limitations) of positivism in an interpretivist realm. Grounded theory was developed in an attempt to avoid highly abstract sociology (Goulding, 1999:6). An important consideration in classifying a method as grounded theory is that analysis of the data commences during early stages of data collection (Goulding, 1999:6).<sup>19</sup>

"An objectivist grounded theorist assumes that data represent objective facts about a knowable world. The data already exist in the world; the researcher finds them and 'discovers' theory from them," (Charmaz,

17.) See, 3.4 Analytic Instrument.

18.) I employed the organisation of codes into concepts and categories during Stage 5 of the research process, see, 3.2.3 Research programme; also refer to Chapter 5 A Theory of Interior Design's Methods to Construct Meaning.

19.) How my own analysis commenced during the collection process is discussed in the analytic method below, see, 3.4.1 Analytic protocol for the content analysis of artefacts.

2006:131). This goes some way to describe my research process: I do not participate in the creation of data; I collect data from the world; and I aim to interpret it to propose theory. However, I am not an objectivist since I believe the data itself to be a social construction.<sup>20</sup> Further, I admit that in the research process I will interact with the phenomena and will attempt to locate them in “a web of connections and restraints” (Charmaz, 2006:187).

When we are actively engaged with the data we *construct* codes and understandings based on our subjective view of the world (Charmaz, 2006:47). The purpose is to offer an interpretive portrayal of the world:

*Interpretive theory calls for the imaginative understanding of the studied phenomenon. This type of theory assumes emergent, multiple realities; indeterminacy; facts and values as linked; truth as provisional; and social life as processual* (Charmaz, 2006:126).

The constructivist grounded theorist is imaginative and understands that as the world is a construction, so is their understanding of it.<sup>21</sup> A constructivist approach sees data and analysis as created from shared experiences. Constructivists study *how* meaning is constructed in specific situations (Charmaz, 2006:130). In a similar vein the thesis will investigate *how* meaning is constructed in interior design artefacts.

CGT was used by McDonnell (2010) in her thesis *Engaging Art with Learning Democracy: A Study of Democratic Subjectivity, Aesthetic Experience and Arts Practice amongst Young People*. I include the discussion of the method here since I chose to use CGT for similar reasons. Like McDonnell I selected grounded theory since it allows me to take an open approach to the data and through the engagement with the data to build up theories and interpretations (McDonnell, 2010:114). In its traditional use, grounded theory avoids a deductive process (in which a hypothesis is stated and tested)<sup>22</sup> and follows an inductive approach. Like McDonnell I do not follow a purely inductive approach and the research is informed by objectives based on existing literature. Charmaz’s approach of grounded theory allows for the impact of “broader theoretical perspectives on research”, and she reframes grounded theory as a process of ‘construction’ rather than ‘discovery’ (McDonnell, 2010:110).<sup>23</sup>

For the purposes of this thesis knowledge is generated in the form of theoretical interpretation of artefacts (research *about* design). As grounded theory is aimed at the creation of abstract theory through the analysis of specific cases, so will the thesis generalize universal methods through the analysis of specific artefacts. Constructivist grounded theory is

20.) See, 1.3 The Material and its Interpretation, and, see, 2.4.2 The Photograph.

21.) This can be labelled as a ‘non-dualistic’ ontology where there is no separation between the actual and the experienced world, see, 3.3.2 Phenomenography.

22.) This is the conventional approach followed by the Department of Architecture at the University of Pretoria (even for purely qualitative studies); for examples I refer the reader to my own Master’s dissertation (König, 2010, *Interior Design as Architecture’s ‘Other’*) and the Doctoral theses of Fisher (1992, *An Ecosystemic Role for Architectural Style: Bearing the ‘Plan’ in ‘Mind’*.) and Barker (2012, *Heterotrophic Syntheses : Mediation in the Domestic Architecture of Gabriel (Gawie) Fagan*). In all three cases hypotheses are stated and defended; following a mechanistic (or ‘scientific’) paradigm. All three texts are based on qualitative interpretation and the use of this ‘method’ is purely stylistic. My suspicions are that this convention has its origin in the Department’s current location within an engineering faculty, and its historic origin in a faculty of natural science and agriculture. In this context I feel the need to defend some decisions that would normally be generally acceptable for a qualitative study such as this one. Charmaz (2006:154) stated (somewhat wittily): “Residuals of positivist dominance cast shadows over how we frame our research reports – sometimes long shadows. Required formats often presuppose a traditional logico-deductive organization,” ...

23.) In this instance CGT takes a deductive turn; the inclusion of a research premise in this thesis serves as example, see, 1.2 The Problem Statement and Premise.

underpinned by a relativist position which states that the researcher constructs theory as an outcome of their interpretation of the data (Mills *et al*, 2006:7).

### 3.3.2 Phenomenography

CGT is augmented with phenomenography which aims at the description, analysis and understanding of experiences. There are two phenomenographic perspectives: the first-order perspective aims to describe various aspects of the world while the second-order perspective aims to describe people's experience of these aspects (Marton, 1981: 178). The thesis is presented from the first-order perspective. In phenomenography there is a shift from the researcher as 'detached, objective observer' to having an 'empathetic understanding' (Webb, 1997:197). This shifts both the research method and the perspective of the researcher and represents my subjective, interpretivist stance to the data and its analysis. In 'An Interpretive-Contextual Framework for Research In and Through Design' Frantz (2000) describes phenomenography:

*In ontological terms, the basic tenet of phenomenography is the assumption that experience encompasses a dialectic (non-dualistic) relationship between a person and some aspect of the world (abstract or concrete, living or inanimate).*

Phenomenography is epistemologically oriented towards an 'object' and is concerned with identifying and describing relational, content-oriented and qualitative aspects of experience (Frantz, 2000). Since interior design offers the tangible vehicle for intangible experience and in this way can be expressed as an 'object' mediating the 'qualitative aspects of experience', phenomenography is a relevant research method. The non-dualistic ontological perspective implies that there is no separation between an observable, objective world and a subjective world of 'mental representations'; there is only one world, "a really existing world", (Marton, 2000:105). In other words, my experience of culture (as revealed through my analysis in this thesis) is an actual and real interpretation of culture.

The phenomenographic method is summarized from Bowden (2000:11) in this fashion: Quotes from the data are organized into groups. Borderline cases are examined which allows the researcher to develop attribute criteria for each group. In this way the groups are re-arranged and narrowed into categories which can be defined in terms of their core meanings. Finally the categories are described using quotes from the data.

Through an inductive process, a generalized list of categories may be determined by studying specific examples (a general theoretical movement from the specific to the general takes place). This may be applied in the reverse order (deductive) to generate specific new examples (in this instance the theoretical movement is from the general to the specific). The first phase of phenomenographic analysis is the determination of "selection procedure and criteria of relevance" (Marton in Bowden, 2000:11). The focus then shifts from individual subjects to embedded meaning. Meaning is brought together in categories in terms of similarities; categories are differentiated in terms of differences.<sup>24</sup>

For the purposes of this thesis phenomenography is applied in understanding the relationship between a person and some aspect of the world as it can be expressed through the interpretation of interior design's

24.) The analytic similarities between phenomenography and grounded theory are apparent: data is broken into recognisable units of meaning, which are coded and brought together in categories with the aim of generating a new, general theory.

contributions to culture (which can be considered as mediation between people and the world).

If the relationship between phenomenography and phenomenology is considered as similar to that between iconography and iconology then phenomenography can be described as the more cursory approach which aims to create descriptions of phenomena while phenomenology is the study of the knowledge of consciousness of phenomena.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, iconography is the description of icons or symbols while iconology deals with the knowledge of the underlying system of symbols and has a much broader knowledge base.<sup>26</sup> Marton (2000:102-103) differentiates phenomenography from phenomenology as the approach which is aimed at “describing conceptions of various specific things”, while the latter is aimed at “formulating general principles”.

The phenomenographic method can be applied to study any phenomenon with the aim of ‘understanding more or less powerful ways of seeing’ the phenomenon (Marton, 2012). The aim is to expedite more powerful ways of seeing and thus have a pedagogic knowledge interest. In a similar manner, the aim of this thesis could be expressed as the desire to understand more powerful ways of constructing meaning and (through that understanding) to promote the construction of meaning in more powerful ways in the design of new interior artefacts. This knowledge can be applied in a pedagogic context.

This thesis aims to propose design strategies to generate meaning and to encode this in future interior design products in a more powerful way (thus to improve the practice of one of interior design’s fundamental actions).<sup>27</sup>

### 3.3.3 Augmentation of Methods

It is not in my nature to follow a strictly technical (or process driven) approach to design and I extend this to the research process. Phenomenography is criticized that it lacks hermeneutic depth (lacking ‘care’ and ‘authentic openness’ to the ‘Other’) and that its initial phases are concerned with a “quest for positivist generalization” and not hermeneutical understanding (Webb, 1997:197-198). CGT is at times too structured which may hinder qualitative analysis and description. Other qualitative methods may overcome this shortcoming; heuristic enquiry is included throughout the research programme. I take the liberty to augment the research process with data and methods which are beneficial to the study. This may be facilitated with a hermeneutic circular approach, with constant movement between the surface (signifier) and the deep (signified), back and forth, leading to greater understanding (Webb, 1997:207).<sup>28</sup>

- 25.) This thesis takes no interest in this philosophical concept (phenomenology) and merely takes note of it for the sake of comparison.
- 26.) This should not be considered as a value judgement on my part.
- 27.) The perceived superficiality may be appropriate in *praxis*, but in *dogma* a deeper understanding is necessary. I hope that the deeper dogmatic understanding is expressed elsewhere in the thesis.
- 28.) The hermeneutic circle can also be described as understanding a text through constant comparison between the text as a whole and individual components of it.

### 3.4 ANALYTIC INSTRUMENT

This section details the analytic instrument. This instrument is firstly developed to conduct the content analysis through interpretation; and secondly to analytically integrate the content into theory.<sup>29</sup> The following items summarize the main theoretical points which must be remembered when approaching the analytic instrument:

- The interpretation of an artefact can explicate tacit generative processes.
- Artefacts are considered as material texts, and are analyzed through three processes: denotation, connotation and semiosis.
- Meaning is transferred between the artefact and its visual and verbal representations. These structures provide content for later artefacts; the process of generating meaning is iterative.
- The photograph is selected as primary empirical data source. Photographs can be analyzed through systematic content analysis.
- The highest form of interpretation involves studying methods. Through sequenced analysis (observation, interpretation, coordination) design methods (devices) can be identified and their syntagmatic relationships illustrated.

A technique to conduct content analysis is proposed which allows for the critical interpretation of designed artefacts that exceeds semantic description. This technique is specifically developed to support visual research. In *Doing Visual Research* Mitchell (2011:11) offers the following advice:

*The process of working with the data can draw on a range of practices that may be applied to other types of transcripts and data sets, including content analysis and engaging in coding and developing thematic categories.*

To commence the discussion of this technique it can be argued that the methodological problems encountered to order the 'cultural cosmos' is analogous to the steps used to organize the natural world. The first step is the observation of phenomena (the collection of empirical material); secondly these must be interpreted (or 'decoded'); finally the results must be classified and coordinated in a coherent system or theory (Panofsky, 1955[1939]:7).

Since the protocol is based on a synthesis between grounded theory and phenomenographic approaches it would not be accurate to describe the study as either a 'grounded theory' or a 'phenomenographic study'. It is more accurate to state that analytic methods from these methodologies were applied.<sup>30</sup> Both methods follow a structured research programme with an allowance for flexibility in approach as the analysis generates the conceptual understanding of the data. The two methods differ in their use of the terms 'code', 'concept', and 'category', but the principle of identifying units of meaning from the data, abstraction from those and the development of theory with descriptive or explanatory power is shared.

The steps proposed by Panofsky, those used by phenomenography and those of grounded theory follow the logical order of observation, analysis and coordination in theory. These approaches are the main

29.) This application is synthesised from the research methods (constructivist grounded theory and phenomenography) and the theoretical background (a semiotic understanding of cultural production).

30.) Bowden (2000:14) specifically highlights the need to make this distinction; the aim is to reduce misinterpretations of the methods, false criticism and incomplete understandings.

drivers for the analytic instrument used for this thesis. In summary, the analytic method will follow this sequence: 1.) observation (through the collection of photographs); 2.) interpretation; and 3.) coordination (to create a coherent theory). Through systematic content analysis methods to create meaning will be identified and their syntagmatic relationships illustrated. The collection of data is detailed in Chapter 4; this section specifically deals with the interpretation and coordination of theory from that data. This section will detail three-subsections:

In the first the analytic protocol which is utilized in the content analysis of individual photographs is described. This is specifically aimed at identifying and isolating methods of constructing meaning as they are presented in the records of the interior artefacts.

The second section contains a list of *in vivo* codes and their descriptions. These are used to inform and guide the coding procedures. They are also methods to produce culture or construct meaning that are identified and isolated from design literature. The description of *in vivo* codes serves as an initial illustration of production methods; this can be considered as a synthetic finding of the thesis.

Finally, the analytic integration which is applied after the initial coding to derive a set of concepts and categories is discussed. This final step in the analysis is geared towards greater abstraction after the methods of cultural production were identified, isolated and described. During this final analytic step the methods will be interpreted and finally described to facilitate the construction of an emerging theory.

#### 3.4.1 Analytic Protocol for the Content Analysis of Artefacts

This protocol is developed for the analysis of individual photographs. Initially it was foreseen that the artefacts would be analyzed through a process of 'semiotic analysis'. This was abandoned (and content analysis opted for) for strategic reasons:

Firstly, the scope, complexity, and difficulty of semiotic analysis<sup>31</sup> would prohibit the analysis of a broad sample of artefacts and would then require the analysis of selected (canonic) precedent studies; this undermines the research objectives of the thesis.<sup>32</sup>

Secondly, (as Baudrillard indicated regarding the study of technemes in the system of objects) a semiotic analysis would have little practical advantage in determining interior design methods and the real danger exists that the system will be altered during the analysis. This alteration is due to technological innovation during the time of analysis and due to the analytic interference in the system.

Thirdly, semiotic analysis would not deliver an original knowledge contribution for the discipline of interior design. One of the main research aims of this thesis is to elucidate interior design's methods of cultural production by identifying, isolating, describing and interpreting the discipline's methods to construct meaning through the analysis of contemporary commercial interior design artefacts. The type of analysis which a 'semiotic' analysis would produce does not support this.

To reach the research objective of the thesis a protocol is developed to enable me to conduct content analysis through interpretation. The protocol is developed using a number of informants: The first being the two main research methods (constructivist grounded theory and

31.) For an example I refer to Eco's (1980[1972]) componential analysis of one architectural sign, the /column/. A single meaning carrying component is analysed in a paper of several pages in length. Eco develops a graphic notation method and attempts linguistic notation of architecture; he criticised both as inadequate in the analysis of architecture (1980[1972]:231-232). Eco indicates that the connotations of semantic units are potentially infinite (1980[1972]:220). Finally he produced a diagram to notate the componential analysis; but repeats the caveat that the analysis is incomplete.

32.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

phenomenography); the techniques and procedures of these two research methodologies are utilized throughout to inform the protocol. Secondly, the protocol is informed by methods identified from the theoretical context.

The qualitative, interpretivist tools utilized in the content analysis, and the procedures and techniques are discussed below. The individual components and their development will be expressed in detail. The following steps indicate this process:<sup>33</sup>

1. An interior artefact is selected and captured.
2. A memo is written at the time of selection.
3. A visual association is captured (demonstrating a representamen and interpretent of the object). The purpose is to stimulate the researcher's emphatic response.
4. Methods to construct meaning are denoted on the photograph; theoretical discourses are indicated.
5. 'Unstable' and subjective connotations are made explicit.
6. Codes and their syntagmatic relationships are diagrammed.
7. Semiosis is interpreted and described.

The content analysis is completed on an electronic form in Adobe InDesign.

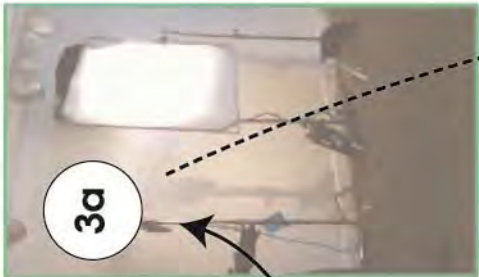
(An example of a completed form (and the order of completion) is indicated in the figure below.)

**Figure 3.4.1** (overleaf):  
Electronic form for content analysis of photograph. The form is completed in the following way:

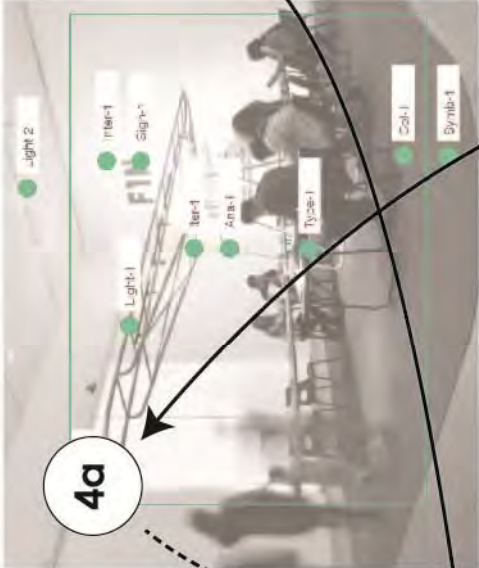
- 1a.) A photograph is captured.
- 1b.) A second photograph is captured.
- 1c.) Selection criteria are confirmed.
- 1d.) Meta-data is recorded.
  
- 2.) A memo is written.
  
- 3a.) A visual association is captured.
- 3b.) Meta-data is recorded.
  
- 4a.) Methods to construct meaning are coded on the photograph.
- 4b.) The code is described.
- 4c.) Discourses are indicated.
  
- 5.) The connotation is indicated.
  
- 6.) A syntagmatic diagram is completed.
  
- 7.) A memo of semiosis is written.

33.) Steps 1-3 are completed for each artefact at its selection; thereafter each step is completed for all the artefacts before continuing to the next step. This is to allow for greater consistency in the coding.

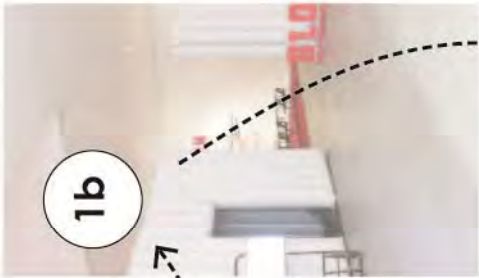




3a



4a



1b



1a

007 Blockbuster

**2**  
The title of the exhibition immediately evokes images of film production, studios, sound stages, video, etc. This is due to the popular, referral to a 'superblockbuster' as a 'blockbuster' and the well known video rental company.

The installation uses a number of interesting elements, such as a discussion space. The armature carrying lighting and pieces of equipment used in film production. Colour is used minimally, giving the red carpet and signage on old theatres.

1c

1. Commercial Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
8. Contrived/Fictional
9. Blood Redding
10. Iconic of Gilt
11. Cultural Context
12. Small Scale Production
13. Media
14. Expert typerson
15. Semiotic
16. Critical Installation
17. New Dominant Centre
18. The South
19. Alpha City
20. New/Young Firms
21. Value Judgement
22. Utility
23. Table
24. Gender
25. Privacy/Interiority
26. Non-Canonical

**1d**  
Blockbuster Art (MUAC), Pretoria, 2012

Blockbuster Art (MUAC), Pretoria, 2012. <http://www.pretoriaart.com/2012/10/blockbuster-art-at-muac/>

**DENOTATION**

Methods  
Arm-1  
Coh-1  
Casi-1  
Aer-1  
Iste-1  
Lase-1  
Sign-2  
Sig 1.1  
Symb-1  
Type-1

**4b**

Camera only  
table  
equipment  
Fin - references ending of movies  
Artificial: spotlighting on armature  
Artificial: spotlighting, ceiling mounted, on track  
Red carpet  
Morphology: User: Council table

**CONNOTATION**

The analogy is vague and partial. synecdochic

**5**

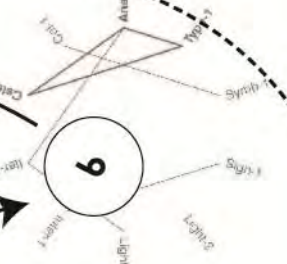
Movie processes  
Armhouse / Intellectual movies  
Ceremonial: formal

**SEMIOSIS**

Synecdoche can be used as a method of expression to avoid superficial and different applications. reactions provide

**7**

recovery



**6**

Case-1  
Sign-1  
Subject-1  
Arm-1

**3b**

Discourses  
Epistemology  
Form  
Interiority

<http://www.pretoriaart.com/2012/10/blockbuster-art-at-muac/>



#### 3.4.1.1 Selection of the artefact

An interior artefact is selected based on selection criteria.<sup>34</sup> The artefact is considered as a case and a unique code is applied to distinguish the artefact from all others. Cases are numbered sequentially in the order of selection and named; the case code is therefore comprised of two parts, [number][name].<sup>35</sup>

Two photographs are selected from the digital publication and captured: The first photograph will act as empirical document and serves as evidence in the content analysis. The second photograph is included to show another aspect of the interior artefact;<sup>36</sup> both photographs are considered as conventional artefacts.

The compliance with the selection criteria is ascertained and recorded.<sup>37</sup>

The meta-data is recorded.<sup>38</sup>

#### 3.4.1.2 Memo at capture

Grounded theory requires that the analysis of the data commences at the collection of the data. Charmaz (2006:72) states that “memo-writing constitutes a crucial step in grounded theory because it prompts you to analyze your data and codes early in the research process”. I included this step not only in compliance with the method, but also to include my thoughts and ideas about the artefact at the moment of selection. The selection of artefacts is based on their applicability<sup>39</sup> and the researcher’s role as cultural intermediary.<sup>40</sup>

#### 3.4.1.3 Visual association

The visual association is indicated by the researcher finding and capturing another image (photograph). It serves to document the “spontaneous impression that the product evokes” in the researcher (after Opperud, 2004:139); the ‘product’ in this case is the interior artefact in its entirety (i.e. the Peircian representamen).

The purpose of this step is to stimulate the researcher’s emphatic response. It is acknowledged that the design researcher will not be a ‘model reader’<sup>41</sup> but a critical one. This step is intended to simulate the visual response of a model reader with superficiality and good-will. The researcher must make and select a visual association as uncritically and as fast as possible. This step was included intuitively with the purpose to

34.) See, 4.2 Selection Criteria.

35.) E.g. ‘019 Martian Embassy’, and ‘053 Camper Granada’. Although the case code reflects the title of the project it is not an exact repetition. The case code should be descriptive enough to remind the researcher of the project but should also function to equalize the value of projects. The case code further functions to distinguish projects as ‘case nodes’ when they are transferred to computer assisted qualitative data analysis software.

36.) This is included since the artefact is three-dimensional and a single photograph cannot act as metonym for such an object (Caan, 2011). The second photograph is an attempt to compensate for some of the limitations of pictorial representation, see, 2.4.2 The Photograph.

37.) See, 4.2 Selection Criteria.

38.) This includes: Project title; Typology; Design practice (and designer if indicated); Suburb (if indicated); City; Date of construction; URL Photograph 1; Photographer Photograph 1; URL Photograph 2; Date of publication.

39.) See, 4.2 Selection Criteria.

40.) In essence I make a value judgement and consider the specific artefact as ‘good’; I also exercise a judgement of taste, see, 2.2.4 Domain Gatekeepers.

41.) I refer to Eco’s (1990:81-82) description: “The Model Reader does not have to figure out each place and individual mentioned by the novel. It is sufficient he or she pretends to believe to know them. The Model Reader is not only required to display an enormous flexibility and superficiality, he or she is also required to display a consistent good will.” See, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

evoke spontaneity and creativity in the researcher. This second image can be considered as a form of connotation and it demonstrates a Peircian object of the representamen. The collection of visual associations further serves to illustrate the researcher's frame of reference, taste, wit, associations, etc. (The Peircian interpretent is not recorded.)

The meta-data is recorded.<sup>42</sup>

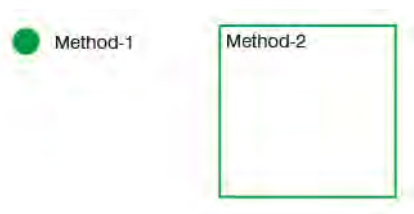
#### 3.4.1.4 Denotation

The denotation is considered as the stable and observable empirical evidence which is manifest as the content of the photograph. The denotation occurs in two steps: firstly, methods are indicated; secondly, discourses addressed by the artefact are indicated. The second step can be considered as an intermediary step since it opens speculation on the transfunctionalised meaning which may be contained in the artefact.

##### *Methods*

The denotation of methods represents the focused coding phase of grounded theory. The denotation is considered as the concrete, physical aspects of the design that may function as triggers for the impressions of the artefact (after Opperud).<sup>43</sup>

A piece of data (or unit of meaning) is identified and marked with a code. This is a short name that simultaneously accounts for and summarizes the piece of data (Charmaz, 2006:43). The code is marked on a black-and-white copy of the photograph and numbered. Thirty-eight codes were predetermined from the literature.<sup>44</sup> These codes are used here with a similar approach as that taken by Tan (2011) regarding the archetype, not as ideas onto themselves but categories of ideas. The codes are applied to ensure consistency of meaning and to connect concepts and keywords. This allows for consistency in the exploration of interior artefacts that manifest in various ways and vary greatly depending on their socio-cultural context (Tan, 2011:45).



**Figure 3.4.2:** *In vivo* codes are marked on the black and white photograph with either of these symbols.

The numbered code is repeated on the analytic form and described; the comments are brief and specific. The researcher is encouraged to work fast and with spontaneity; “[w]orking quickly can spark your thinking and spawn a fresh view of the data,” (Charmaz, 2006:48).

##### *Discourses*

The indication of discourses represents an initial analytic step to determine possible transfunctionalised second-order meaning and to assist in the speculation of the role of the interior artefact within the larger cultural discourse. Eight discourses are identified from the literature.<sup>45</sup>

42.) This includes: URL Photograph 3.

43.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions.

44.) The compilation of these codes represents the initial coding phase of grounded theory, see, 3.4.2 Coding.

45.) See, Chapter 6 Modes of Cultural Production in Interior Design.

### 3.4.1.5 Connotation

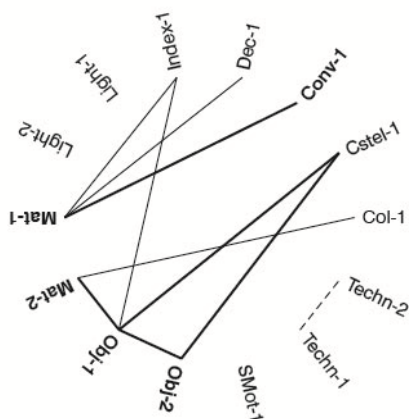
The connotation is considered as the unstable and subjective interpretation of meaning. The connotation is marked after the denotation since “a connotation must rely on a preceding denotation,” (Eco 1979[1976]:85).

All denotation does not possess connotation, connotation is dependent on the presence of duality and the process of transfunctionalisation which imparts second-order meaning.<sup>46</sup> The connotation is dependent on the reader applying their knowledge, understanding or interpretation of the systematic coding of the denotation (Crow, 2003:75).

The indication of connotations is based on the knowledge and subjective understanding of the researcher. They serve to indicate *how* a code functions, not specifically *what a code means*.

### 3.4.1.6 Syntagmatic diagram

The syntagmatic diagram lists all the codes that were marked in the photograph. Important codes are printed in bold, and codes that work together to form syntagms are linked with lines. These lines indicates causal, incidental or assumed linkages between codes. A solid line indicates an associative relationship; a dashed line a dissociative relationship. The purpose of this diagram is to indicate connections between codes, or to indicate codes working together. The diagram is limited in purpose however; it is only there to assist the researcher in writing a memo of semiosis and to identify syntagms.



**Figure 3.4.3:** Syntagmatic diagram. The diagram is completed from the 3 o'clock position. Identified codes are indicated in alphabetic order in a counter-clockwise fashion. Prominent codes are marked in bold, associations and disassociations are indicated.

The use of the diagram is informed by a similar device used by Taylor and Preston (2006) in their compilation of interior design theory texts. They use their diagram as a surveying instrument and ordering device to catalyze insight (Taylor & Preston, 2006:8-9). I intend these syntagmatic diagrams to fulfil a similar function.

Since the diagrams are dependent on a range of variables they are not comparable with each other and their internal form carries little meaning.

### 3.4.1.7 Memo of semiosis

The purpose of this step is to express my understanding of meaning creation in the artefact. This step represents a second memo. Writing this memo is a way to encourage the researcher to develop ideas about the creation of meaning early in the research process (after Charmaz,

46.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions

2006:82). The memos created here have the added benefit of becoming part of the data of the thesis and will be included as part of the findings in the final write-up of the thesis. On reflection, they are sometimes written in a positivist manner; this will be addressed and softened to enable me to generate design strategies to encode meaning (in lieu of a systematic technique).

The preceding steps lead to a level of greater abstraction with less direct reference to the interior artefact, and more specific reference to the methods employed and the semiosis of meaning. This final memo is generated with specific reference to the syntagmatic diagram but also from reflecting on the analytic form in its totality.

### 3.4.2 Coding

Charmaz (2006:42) indicates coding as the 'first analytic turn' in the grounded theory process. When the protocol I proposed for the analysis of individual artefact is considered it initially seems that my first analytic action is the writing of a memo at the time of selecting the artefact. It must be remembered that as this thesis uses a grounded theory research approach the analysis in fact started before the collection of data, and continued during and after the collection process. When reflecting on my research practice it becomes evident that coding was in fact the first analytic turn. Charmaz (2006:42) identifies at least two phases to CGT coding: initial coding and focused coding. The utilization of predetermined codes to denote the photograph (step 4 of the protocol) represents the focused coding phase. I will now reflect on the preceding phase.

During initial coding the data is studied for analytic import. I employed this phase in the study of secondary literature to determine interior design methods to construct meaning that are already documented. These documented methods may be explicit (if they state that they are concerned with the construction of meaning, e.g. 'symbolic motif') or implicit (if they are referred to but not identified in this context, e.g. 'material'). "While engaging in focused coding, we select what seem to be the most useful initial codes and test them against extensive data (Charmaz, 2006:42)." Charmaz continues that we may use 'extant theoretical codes' if they are indicated in the emerging analysis. During the review of literature these codes emerged and became an expedient tool to support the analysis. It must be stated clearly that this action represents consistency with grounded theory practice and its emphasis on emergence (Charmaz, 2006:45) and does not represent the application of an earlier theoretical framework on the data sample.

Although grounded theory (like phenomenography) may be used in the analysis of various types of data, it must be remembered that it is conventionally applied in the social sciences in the analysis of verbal data (as text, conversations, interviews, transcripts, observations etc.). Grounded theory can then isolate vocabulary from the data itself, this is not so straightforward in the analysis of visual texts. To benefit from the method I needed to make strategic adaptations to the conventional grounded theory approach. This is why this study must be approached as one that uses the analytic methods of grounded theory (and phenomenography) and not a grounded theory (or phenomenographic) study.

During the initial coding we 'create' codes from what is evident in the data. This allows the researcher to interact with the data to reach a deeper understanding through our linguistic interaction with the empirical world (Charmaz, 2006:46). The list of codes that is presented here was compiled in such a manner. The codes emerged from the literature as an open

process where codes were identified and compared and gradually synthesized to reach the list that is presented.<sup>47</sup>

Grounded theorists are encouraged to use the words of the participants (from interviews or transcripts) when coding qualitative data (Wiener, 2007:301). These codes ('living within' the data) are referred to as *in vivo* codes. *In vivo* codes have the benefit that they provide useful analytic points of departure and they preserve the meanings and views expressed in the data (Charmaz, 2006:55). The use of *in vivo* codes helps to 'ground' the theory by providing a vocabulary which emerges from the data and support consistency in coding practice. They enable the researcher to transmit ideas synoptically.

The codes presented here do not offer complete descriptions. They are merely used to ground my analysis in the existing knowledge of the discipline, but as far as they are incomplete descriptions, they indicate where further research is needed. The initial coding used to develop the list of *in vivo* codes presented here is also an attempt to meet the criteria of 'fit' and 'relevance' of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006:54):

*Your study fits the empirical world when you have constructed codes and developed them into categories that crystallize participants' experience. It has relevance when you offer an incisive analytic framework that interprets what is happening and makes relationships between implicit processes and structures visible.*

The *in vivo* codes allows the researcher to develop a deeper understanding of the actions that take place and they anchor the analysis in the world of the research (Charmaz, 2006:56). It must be noted at this point that there is a danger of placing too much emphasis on identifying codes (to the point where it becomes the exclusive feature of using grounded theory) without relating the codes to each other in a larger theory (Goulding, 1999:18).<sup>48</sup>

#### 3.4.2.1 The selection of literature

When photographs (and other visual texts) are analyzed they cannot generate *in vivo* codes. However, the benefits of using these codes are difficult to ignore. To support the analysis a list of *in vivo* codes was compiled; these were specifically constructed to support the analysis of interior design artefacts. CAQDAS was used to derive *in vivo* codes from interior design and literature of social theory.<sup>49</sup> During the review of the literature units of text were initially marked with the term 'interior design methods', which was a sub-category of 'cultural production'. As I developed greater insight specific methods emerged and were synthesized.<sup>50</sup>

- 47.) The codes were also adapted (e.g. the code 'style' and its application was revised as I reached a clearer understanding of the different categories of styling), added (e.g. 'analogy') or eliminated (e.g. 'building and making' which was incorporated into the codes 'craftsmanship' and 'tradition'; and 'function' which was incorporated in the code 'use') during the analysis of artefacts.
- 48.) How the codes are made to relate to each other and to the categories and concepts are explained later, see, 3.4.3 Analytic integration.
- 49.) This specifically refers to the 'code and retrieve' and 'conceptual linking' functions of QSR International's NVivo 10. In this process text sources are imported into the program where it is read and discrete sections of text are manually marked with an identifying marker that "[exemplifies] the same theoretical or descriptive idea[s]". These markers ('nodes') serve as containers for categories, ideas or topics (Sulaiman & Baldry, 2011:148). Later these containers can be accessed and the collected texts read. (NVivo 10 supplies auto-coding functions; I did not utilise these.)
- 50.) This revealed the hierarchical tree: 'Cultural Production' / 'Design' / 'Interior Design Methods' / [code].

This component of the literature study aimed to introduce more interior design specificity but some general sources were still included. The sources were selected and read through the lens of generating and interpreting meaning; they are coloured by my subjective interpretation in this way.

Notable sources referred to include the following:

- Caan, 2011, *Rethinking Design and Interiors*
- Edwards, 2011, *Interior Design. A Critical Introduction*
- Haverkamp, 2013[2012], *Synesthetic Design. Handbook for a Multisensory Approach*
- Hillier & Hanson, 1984, *The Social Logic of Space*
- Intypes, sa, *Interior Archetypes Research and Teaching Project, Cornell University. 1997-*
- Jennings, 2007, 'A Case for a Typology of Design: The Interiors Archetype Project'
- Kleinman, Merwood-Salisbury & Weinthal (eds.), 2012, *After Taste. Expanded Practice in Interior Design*
- Leydecker (ed.), 2013. *Designing Interior Architecture. Concept Typology Material Construction*
- Mostafavi, 2008, 'Architecture's Inside'
- Rice, 2004, 'Rethinking Histories of the Interior'
- Sparke, Massey, Keeble & Martin (eds.), 2009, *Designing the Modern Interior. From the Victorians to Today*
- Tan, 2011, 'A Review of Environmental Symbolology: Origins and Contributions Toward a Theoretical Framework'
- Taylor & Preston (eds.), 2006, *Intimus. Interior Design Theory Reader*

#### 3.4.2.2 In vivo codes for methods

The *in vivo* codes are used to identify interior design methods to construct identity but it is noticeable that these codes are not actions (methods) but nouns.<sup>51</sup> Glaser (in Charmaz, 2006:49) advises using gerunds to direct the coding to processes and to gain a sense of action and sequence. "The nouns turn these actions into topics." This could easily be done but results in a style of language which is not reflected in the academic literature of the discipline (e.g. the noun 'colour' could be substituted with the gerund 'colouring' or 'form' with 'forming'). These codes represent interior design actions (or methods) in their use;<sup>52</sup> avoiding the use of gerunds ensures greater fit with the discipline.

The codes are presented synoptically and alphabetically. They are introduced with their dictionary definition;<sup>53</sup> thereafter references from the literature are demonstrated.

#### *Analogy*

*n.* **1** correspondence or partial similarity. **2** a process of arguing from similarity in known respects to similarity in other respects. **3** the imitation of existing words in forming inflections or construction of others, without the existence of corresponding intermediate stages.

51.) The verbs 'use' and 'inhabit' are the only exceptions.

52.) E.g. 'interior design constructs meaning through the use of the <boundary object>'; or 'interior design produces culture by employing <tradition>'; etc.

53.) *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*. Homonyms and variations in meaning are included if they are relevant; otherwise they are omitted. Definitions for idiosyncratic subject and technical terminology are omitted, e.g. 'boundary object' and 'indexical connection'.

In the case of design (Sunley *et al*, 2008: 685) refers to analogy as the transfer of ideas from other spheres.

### *Archetype*

*n.* **1 a** an original model; a prototype. **b** a typical specimen. **2** (in Jungian psychology) a primitive mental image inherited from man's earliest ancestors, and supposed to be present in the collective unconscious. **3** a recurrent symbol or motif in literature, art, etc.

Jennings (2007:49) states that the archetype is an ideal example of a historical or cultural practice from which other models are iterated. Tan (2011:44) defines archetypes as categories of ideas open to subjective interpretations. Since all objects are iterations of earlier objects (Baudrillard, 2009:53) it must be inferred that all objects have an archetype.

The 'Intypes (Interior Archetypes) Research and Teaching Project' identified 85 interior design archetypes; amongst others: 'bifurcated plan'; 'black out'; 'dual desk'; 'incubate'; 'padded perimeter'; 'pendant play'; 'specimen'; 'spectrum'; and 'white box' (Intypes, *sa*).

When 'archetype' is denoted the most appropriate 'intype' is used as the description.<sup>54</sup>

### *Boundary*

*n.* **1** a line marking the limits of an area, territory, etc.

When an interior is created the boundary creates distinction between the interior and the world (Hillier & Hanson, 1984:144). Interior design artefacts are part of the cultural system, and cannot exist independently, but their containment offer opportunity for contrived identity that exists only in that contained space. The interior is a domain of social knowledge, and every interior reflects experience and the idiosyncrasies of cultural identity (Hillier & Hanson, 1984:144-5). The boundary offers the opportunity for decoration (on the interior surface); in this sense interior design is both a spatial and image based phenomenon (Rice, 2004:276).<sup>55</sup> The boundary is a division between two adjacent but different places (Tan, 2011:46).

### *Boundary Object*

A boundary object exists at the intersection of several social worlds and is the reaction between several different actors (Flichy, 2006[2002]:188). They also indicate an iterative process of cultural production and negate the idea of innovation spawned in the inventor's mind (Flichy, 2006[2002]:188). They are related to all artefacts which are constituted where several cultural gestures converge (Mowitt, 1992:215). Some objects fall outside the technical system and answer other semiotic demands (such as witness, memory, nostalgia, etc.) (Baudrillard, 2009:41).

Boundary objects are denoted to indicate an object that exists in multiple disciplines, or which lends itself to multiple and ambiguous interpretations.

### *Colour*

*n.* **1 a** the sensation produced on the eye by rays of light when dissolved as by a prism, selective reflection, etc., into different wavelengths. **b** perception of colour; a system of colours. **2** one, or any mixture, of the constituents into which light can be separated as in a spectrum of rainbow, sometimes including (loosely) black and

54.) I will consider the terms 'archetype' and 'intype' as synonyms throughout the thesis; however, for the sake of specificity 'archetype' will refer to the general characteristics and method, while 'intype' will be used to refer to its application in interior design, specifically when referring to the 85 interior archetypes.

55.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Image.



white. **3** a colouring substance, especially paint. **4** the use of all colours, not only black and white, as in photography and television. **5** quality, mood, or variety in music, literature, speech, etc.; distinctive character or timbre.

v. **1** apply colour to, especially by painting or dyeing or with coloured pens or pencils.

Taylor and Preston (2006:8-9) includes colour as a prominent interior design practice while Feijs *et al* (2005:3) considers universally it as an element of the language of design. Caan (2011:139) states that colour was studied as an integral component of design at the Bauhaus.

Colour conveys meaning either through association with its occurrence in nature or as part of the cultural system; i.e. the communication of meaning through the use of colour is culturally determined (Edwards, 2011:152). Leydecker (2013:32) contrast the interior designer's enthusiastic use of colour with the restricted palette used by architects. She advises that colour should be considered as an integral component of the design concept and not as an application late in the process.

#### *Constellation*

n. **1** a group of fixed stars whose outline is traditionally regarded as forming a particular figure. **2** a group of associated persons, ideas, etc.

For the purposed of interior design a constellation is considered as a 'particular, observable arrangement' of objects. The built environment may be considered as a constellation of objects connoting meaning (Tan, 2011:42).

#### *Convention*

n. **1a** a general agreement, especially an arrangement on social behaviour etc. by implicit consent of the majority. **b** a custom of customary practice, especially an artificial or formal one.

Cultural engagement is enacted from positions of conformity or individuality (Taylor & Preston, 2006:11).<sup>56</sup> It is possible to introduce innovation through the use of conventions through gradual change; As example De Wolfe (1920[1913]:17) questions the conventional placement of luminaires in hotel rooms;<sup>57</sup> to indicate convention as a method is inclusive of either conformity or deviance from the convention. Interior design can be a discipline which challenges social convention, rather than merely reinforcing it (Merwood-Salisbury, 2012:119).

When 'convention' is denoted it indicates either conformity of deviation from a recognizable convention.

#### *Craftsmanship*

n. **1** skill, especially in practical arts. **2** a trade or an art. .

Edwards (2011:109-194) includes craft as playing an important role in the creation of decoration and ornament. The recent re-evaluation of decoration and ornament in interior design<sup>58</sup> is reinvigorating craft and its associated skills. The techniques and materiality of craft can imbue the interior with meaning and assists the user to understand and use a space.

Interior design itself can be described as a 'decorative craft' (Taylor & Preston, 2006:9). Interior design evolved from a collection of craft-trades,

56.) See, 2.2 Cultural Production.

57.) At the time of writing *The House in Good Taste* the introduction of electric lighting in the interior was fairly novel; De Wolfe complains bitterly that lighting is placed in such a manner in hotel rooms that the viewer's shadow is interfering with their ability to use mirrors (one hundred years later this problem is still not eliminated!).

58.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Decoration. Also refer to Königk (2010), specifically the section 'In defence of decoration' (Königk, 2010:39-41).



e.g. upholstery, furniture-making, carpentry, millenary, painting, etc. (Caan, 2011:85).

Baudrillard (1997[1968]:9) defines the craft object as one that is informed by the “whims of the individual demand and manufacture”. In the design context it can be stated that “[c]raft involves doing,” (Friedman, 2003:513); it is experimental and intuitive.

When ‘craftsmanship’ is denoted it indicates either traditional craftsmanship (handmade manufacture) or it indicates an industrial process which is based on the adaptation or imitation of a craft technique.

#### *Curation*

*n.* **1** the actions of a curator of (a museum, exhibits, etc.); to look after and preserve; or acting as the keeper or custodian.

Curation is included as the noun derived from the verb ‘to curate’; it includes the actions of selectively finding objects and taking care of them. The inclusion here is informed by my own practice of creating mood boards; in the process I select visual material and curate it to reassemble these units of meaning.<sup>59</sup>

When ‘curation’ is denoted it indicates the careful selection, arrangement and display (i.e. the taking care of) of objects, artefacts or other agents of cultural meaning.

#### *Decoration*

*n.* **1** the process of art of decorating. **2** a thing that decorates or serves as an ornament.

To decorate something is to provide it with adornments or to provide a room with finishes such as paint and wallpaper. Interior decoration plays a small but essential role within the wider interiors practice (Caan, 2011:87). Interior decoration provided the initial professional impetus for the development of the profession (Elsie de Wolfe serves as example). Decoration was the method to introduce interior specificity into bourgeois consumption (Rice, 2004); further decoration is a method to articulate the architectural boundary (Rice, 2004:276).

Decoration can serve as a method to introduce complexity in the built environment; a careful balance between complexity and monotony is required to understand the built environment (Edwards, 2011:183).

#### *Ensemble*

*n.* **1a** a thing viewed as the sum of its parts. **b** the general effect of this. **2** a set of clothes worn together; an outfit. **3** a group of actors, dancers, musicians, etc., performing together, especially subsidiary dancers in a ballet etc.

The ensembles considered to be an arrangement and proximal placement of a number of found objects which are displayed simultaneously. These arrangements of objects can be used to demarcate a private or individualized interior (Rice, 2004:279). Sparke (2009:2) identifies the use of the ‘ensemble’ as a key characteristic of interior design.

#### *Form*

*n.* **1a** a shape; an arrangement of parts. **b** the outward aspect (especially apart from colour) or shape of an object. **2** the mode in which a thing exists or manifests itself. **3** a customary method; what is usually done. **4** arrangement and style in literary or musical composition. **5** the essential nature of a species or a thing.

59.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Synthesis. The term ‘curation’ was not found in the literature, but there are references to ‘curator’ (e.g. Edwards (2011:22) discuss the work of Jacob van Falke: “He considered art and design as object, which he saw through the lens of industrialism, and the ambitions of the middle classes ... In terms of interiors, he believed in an emphasis on colour and form as opposed to slavish style-following.”); the term itself emerged from a memo I have written.

v. **1** make or fashion into a certain shape or form. **2** take a certain shape; be formed. **3** be the material of; make up or constitute. **4** develop or establish as a concept, institution, or practice. **5** embody, organize. **6** bring into a certain arrangement and formation.

This loaded concept is well studied in architectural and design theory.<sup>60</sup>

Edwards (2011:90) states that form identifies the space of what we perceive to be the specific shape of an interior.

#### *Furnishing*

n. **1** the furniture and fitments in a house, room, etc.

I differentiated furnishing from furniture. Furnishings are generally fitted and not movable. Sanders (2006[2002]:303) defined furnishing as the mediating factor between architecture and interior decoration. Rice (2004:277) said that the objects and furnishings in an interior carry psychological connotations.

When 'furnishing' is denoted it indicates functional decorations or built-in furniture.

#### *Furniture*

n. **1** the movable equipment of a house, room, etc., e.g. tables, chairs, and beds.

Apart from its technical functions (e.g. storage) furniture plays a role in cultural production through conspicuous consumption; in this way it functions in a similar way as *haute couture*. The acquisition of furniture is influenced by social class and level of education (Bourdieu, 1984[1979]:78). The use of furniture, as fashion, is a social method to signify social hierarchy (Kingwell, 2006[2002]:175). Caan (2011:48-49) describes furniture as a functional extension of the self. Furniture are those objects with which we make the most physical contact (apart from clothing). Furniture provides stylistic, psychological and physiological connotations.

#### *Iconic Connection*

n. **1** a sign which has a characteristic in common with the thing it signifies.

An iconic connection is a type of sign which carry a physical resemblance between the signifier and the signified, but they are not physically connected. Eco (1979[1976]:193) states that to define an icon as a sign which is similar to the thing denoted satisfies common sense, but not semiotics.

For the purposes of the thesis it is only necessary to understand the 'common sense' definitions of the categories of signs.

#### *Image*

n. **1** a representation of the external form of a person or thing in sculpture, painting, etc. **2** a optical appearance or counterpart produced by light or other radiation from an object reflected in a mirror, refracted through a lens, etc. **3** semblance, likeness. **4** a simile or metaphor.

The image is a theoretical concept that is discussed throughout this thesis, specifically as a form of visual representation.<sup>61</sup> Rice (2004:276) states that the interiors practice is both a spatial practice and an image-based phenomenon.

When 'image' is denoted it indicates a visual representation (such as a graphic, photograph or artwork) which is used in the interior.

60.) See, Chapter 6 Modes of Cultural Production in Interior Design.

61.) See, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure

### *Indexical Connection*

An indexical connection is a type of sign which carries a physical connection between the signifier and the signified. The presence of objects in space acts as indexical indicators of inhabitation (Taylor & Preston, 2006:11).

For the purposes of the thesis it is only necessary to understand the 'common sense' definitions of the categories of signs.

### *Inhabit*

v. **1** dwell in; occupy.

A building reflects the duality between its inhabitants and strangers. All built spaces identify at least one 'inhabitant' (Hillier & Hanson, 1984:146). Interior designers solve problems to enable humans to use and inhabit a space (Perolini, 2011:172).

### *Intertextuality*

n. **1** the relationship between especially literary texts.

Intertextual references relate the current interior artefact to earlier and identifiable objects or texts.<sup>62</sup>

### *Iteration*

n. **1** the actions to repeat; state repeatedly.

Contemporary interior design has a historical base which is identifiable in current design practice. It is possible to trace these iterations through time (Jennings, 2007:51). Design iterations evoke the 'archetypal symbols' which informs their origins (Tan, 2011:44). An artefact which does not reference earlier artefacts is unthinkable (Baudrillard, 2009:53).

### *Light*

n. **1** the natural agent that stimulates sight and makes things visible. **2** the medium or condition of space in which this is present. **3a** a source of light, e.g. the sun, a lamp, fire, etc. **b** illuminations. **4a** the amount or quality of illumination in a place. **b** one's fair share of this. **5a** the bright part of a thing; a highlight. **b** the bright parts of a picture etc. especially suggesting illumination. **6a** a window or opening in a wall to let light in. **b** the perpendicular division of a mullioned window. **c** a pane of glass especially in the side or roof of a greenhouse.

v. **1** set burning or begin to burn; ignite. **2** provide with light or lighting; illuminate. **3** show the way or surroundings with light.

This loaded concept is well studied in architectural and design theory.

In the interior light can be used as a method to mark a unit of space from an infinite quantity (Kreiser, 2006[1990]:180),<sup>63</sup> Jennings (2007) and Tan (2011) identify light is a prominent component of interior design, specifically in the communication of meaning. Ippolito (2013:216-240) considers light as an essential 'building material' which incorporates technical and emotive functions. Light serves a cultural function and communicates meaning through messages and metaphors (Ippolito, 2013:234).

### *Material*

n. **1** the matter from which a thing is made. **2** cloth, fabric. **3** things needed for an activity. **4** information etc. to be used in writing a book etc. **5** the elements or constituent parts of a substance.

Adj. **1** not spiritual. **2** concerned with the matter, not the form, of reasoning.

62.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Iteration

63.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Boundary

This loaded concept is well studied in architectural and design theory.

Taylor and Preston (2006:8-9) includes the use of material as a prominent interior design practice. Edwards (2011:207) considers the selection of material an important and rewarding aspect of the work of an interior designer. This is supported by Leydecker (2013:32) who describes the use of material as an essential and enjoyable component of interior design.

The experience of objects includes the psychological and sociological reality of objects, which is informed by, but moves beyond an object's perceptible materiality (Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:7-8).

#### *Micro-ecology*

When it is considered that the interior is defined by the boundary which disconnects it from the global system (Hillier & Hanson, 1984:144) it is possible to consider the interior as a 'small world' (after Eco, 1990:81-82).<sup>64</sup> In this arena divisions and hierarchy of social structure are depicted through small scale metaphors or 'micro-ecologically' (Ardener, 1981:2).

When 'micro-ecology' is denoted it indicates contained or identifiable units in the interior which assists in the establishment or retention of social structure.

#### *Narrative*

*n.* **1** a spoken or written account of connected events in order of happening. **2** the practice or art of narration.

In interior design I consider the use of narrative as either a method to control the sequence of perception (i.e. to determine the order of events) or a reference to an external story.

Narrative methods encodes subjective meanings and processes in interior design artefacts (Tan, 2011:47)

#### *Object*

*n.* **1** a material thing that can be seen or touched. **2** a thing external to the thinking mind or subject.

The object is considered as a material artefact.<sup>65</sup> Object and artefacts form part of the larger cultural system (Baudrillard, 1996[1968]). In the interior they connote meaning (Rice, 2004:277).

#### *Performance*

*n.* **1a** the act or process of performing or carrying out. **b** the execution or fulfilment of a duty or function. **2** a staging or production. **3** a fuss; a scene; a public exhibition.

Interior design (like fashion and theatre) fashions identity through artifice as such it participates in the staging of individual identity (Sanders, 2006[2002]:304-5). The interior is a site of events and affects (Mostafavi, 2008:1). Goffman made a connection between theatrical performance and the performance of everyday life (Edwards, 2011:127).

When 'performance' is denoted it indicates the process of carrying out (or staging) identity and has theatrical connotations. It does not indicate technical execution.

#### *Signage*

*n.* **1** signs collectively, especially commercial or public display signs. **2** a publicly displayed board etc. giving information; a signboard or signpost.

64.) See, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism, and, see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Boundary.

65.) See, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies.

The term signage is used as a form of differentiation from the 'sign'. All memetic devices are sign carriers. In the study's context, 'signage' refers to deliberate efforts to communicate specific meaning through the use of signage and other graphic devices that support branding, environmental communication, and way-finding.

#### *Style*

*n.* **1** a kind or sort, especially in regard to appearance and form. **2** a manner of writing or speaking or performing. **3** the distinctive manner of a person or school or period, especially in relation to painting, architecture, furniture, dress, etc. **4** the correct way of designating a person or thing. **5** a superior quality or manner. **6** a particular make, shape, or pattern.

This loaded concept is well studied in architectural and design theory.

Styling is considered as the use of aesthetic judgements and feelings (Sunley, 2008:683). Fisher (1992:27-29) defines 'style' as a specific and characteristic manner of doing something which is paradigmatically peculiar. Styling is categorized as:

- Isochrestic Styling (consistent ways of doing in a community.)
- Skeuomorphic Styling (manufacturing techniques carried between prototypes and later artefacts).<sup>66</sup> Skeuomorphic styling further refers to non-functional, ornamental elements resembling older technemes that remain on artefacts.
- Iconic Styling (conscious and deliberate styling of the artefact.)

When 'style' is denoted the most appropriate category is used as the description.

#### *Symbolic Connection*

*n.* **1** a mark or character taken as the conventional sign of some object, idea, function, or process, e.g. the letters standing for the chemical elements or the characters in musical notation.

A symbolic connection is a type of sign which does not carry a physical resemblance between the signifier and the signified, neither are they physically connected. When compared to indexical and iconic connections they are considered to be semantics of a higher order (Haverkamp, 2013[2012]:248).

For the purposes of the thesis it is only necessary to understand the 'common sense' definitions of the categories of signs.

#### *Symbolic Motif*

A symbolic motif is a "prominently recurring theme of symbolic meaning" attached to the use of artefacts in the built environment (Tan, 2011:42).

Tan (2011:47) identified five symbolic motifs in the interior:

- Den (a place of refuge)
- Edge (a boundary between two adjacent places)
- Mystery (a place of unknown)
- Journey (transition from one place to another)
- Threshold (a defined transition point)

When 'symbolic motif' is denoted the most appropriate motif is used as the description.

#### *Synthesis*

*n.* **1** the process or the result of building up separate elements, especially ideas into a connected whole, especially into a theory or system. **2** a combination or

66.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Iteration.

composition. **3** the artificial production of compounds from their constituents as distinct from extraction from plants etc.

For interior design synthesis is considered as those forms of production which are distinct from 'raw' production; these include collecting, cutting, pasting, resizing, colouring and arranging pastiches (Leander & Frank, 2006:187).

#### *Taste Good*

Taste goods are artefacts that are used as signs of social status with an alliance to consumption and acquisition (Taylor & Preston, 2006:12). For the purposes of the study taste goods are considered as artefacts that specifically impacts on taste as a discourse.<sup>67</sup>

Taste goods (as material objects) provide evidence of cultural values. Taste goods are objects which transmit the values, virtues and competences which form the basis of legitimate membership to social groups (Bourdieu, 1984[1979]:76-77).

#### *Techneme*

Technemes are the smallest carrier of technical information; they are the simplest technical elements (Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:7). They function as sign-vehicles indicating function (Gottdiener, 1985:986).<sup>68</sup>

A list of technemes in the built-environment may include: steps; staircases; doors; rooms; walls; windows; curtains; corridors; etc.

#### *Temporality*

*n.* **1** temporariness. **2** of or relating to time.

Temporality incorporates the emergent need of interiors to undergo a succession of rapid transformations and it reflects the relative short life-span of the interior artefact. In buildings where this must happen the temporal conditions of the interior cannot be rigidly fixed and the architecture merely acts as organizing structure and envelope (Mostafavi, 2008:30).

#### *Tradition*

*n.* **1a** a custom, opinion, or belief handed down to posterity especially orally or by practice. **b** this process of handing down. **2** an established practice or custom. **3** artistic, literary, etc., principles based on experience and practice; any one of these.

The use of tradition in interior design indicates the physical manifestation of cultural practices handed down from the past.<sup>69</sup> Design has a craft tradition<sup>70</sup> which makes it reliant on the transfer of tacit knowledge of making (Friedman, 2003:520).

#### *Typology*

*n.* **1** the study and interpretation of types.

Interior design typology concerns aspects of production that can be grouped due to similarity (Jennings, 2007:48). Leydecker (2013:52-61) discusses the use of typology in interior design as a method to group interiors by project type; these types are functionally determined.<sup>71</sup> In the

67.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Object, and, see, Chapter 6 Modes of Cultural Production for Interior Design.

68.) See, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies.

69.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Convention.

70.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Craftsmanship.

71.) She includes: 'healthcare'; 'trade fair stands'; 'restaurants'; 'hotels'; 'shop design'; 'reception area'; and 'lounges'. When I recorded the typology of an interior artefact in the meta-data I required greater differentiation; e.g. retail typologies are

interior differentiation is made between morphology (form)<sup>72</sup> and use<sup>73</sup> typologies (Jennings, 2007).

The thesis does not aim to classify projects according to their type; when 'typology' is denoted the category 'morphology' or 'use' will be indicated in the description.

#### *Use*

*n.* **1** the act of using or the state of being used; application to a purpose. **2a** the ability to be used. **b** the purpose for which a thing can be used.

*v.* **1** cause to act or serve for a purpose; bring into your service; avail oneself of. **2** treat in a specified manner. **3** exploit for one's own ends.

For the purposes of the analysis 'use' will indicate an objects technical (actual) function but also consider other 'non-functional' aspects. This is to allow for those objects that fall outside the technical system and answer to other semiotic demands (such as witness, memory, nostalgia, etc.) (Baudrillard, 2009:41). The practice of interior design involves more than mere functional requirements to include the mind and senses and to uplift the human spirit (Caan, 2011:112).

#### *Wit*

*n.* **1** intelligence; quick understanding. **2a** the unexpected, quick, and humorous combining of contrasting ideas or expressions. **b** the power of giving intellectual pleasure by this.

Wit is the use of humour in the interior realm. Baldwin (2006[1972]:28) describes this as the use of items that are unexpected, entertaining or eccentric.

The *in vivo* codes for methods are summarized in the table below (see Table 3.4.1). This table must be used for convenience and reference only; the full *in vivo* codes described above must be used for clarity.

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indicated as 'Retail – Fashion (informal wear; gender not determined)', 'Retail – Goods (furniture)', 'Retail – Books', 'Retail – Fashion (informal wear; female)', amongst others.

72.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Form.

73.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Use.

**Table 3.4.1: *In vivo* codes for methods**

|       |                      |   |
|-------|----------------------|---|
| Ana   | Analogy              | The transfer of ideas from other spheres                                      |
| Arc   | Archetype            | An ideal example from which other models are iterated                         |
| Boun  | Boundary             | The distinction between the interior and the world                            |
| BObj  | Boundary Object      | Objects at the intersection of several social worlds                          |
| Col   | Colour               | An element of the language of design  |
| Cstel | Constellation        | Any particular, observable arrangement of artefacts                           |
| Conv  | Convention           | Cultural engagement enacted from positions of conformity                      |
| Craft | Craftsmanship        | Manufacturing subject to individual demand                                    |
| Cur   | Curation             | The recognition, selection and synthesis of cultural identity                 |
| Dec   | Decoration           | To supply with adornment  |
| Ens   | Ensemble             | A number of found objects which are displayed simultaneously                  |
| Form  | Form                 | Concerning outward appearance   |
| Fur   | Furnishing           | A differentiating factor between architecture and interior decoration         |
| Furni | Furniture            | Large use objects, movable equipment  |
| Icon  | Iconic Connection    | A resemblance between the signifier and the signified, no physic connection   |
| Image | Image                | A visual representation used in the interior                                  |
| Index | Indexical Connection | A physical connection between the signifier and the signified                 |
| Inhab | Inhabit              | All built spaces identify at least one 'inhabitant'; evidence thereof         |
| Inter | Intertextuality      | Relates the current artefact to earlier artefacts                             |
| Iter  | Iteration            | The sequence of design iterations can be traced through time                  |
| Light | Light                | A method to mark of a unit of space from the infinite quantity                |
| Mat   | Material             | A prominent interior design practice  |
| MEco  | Micro-ecology        | Hierarchy and social structure are depicted through small scale metaphors     |
| Nar   | Narrative            | Controlling the sequence of perception or a reference to an external story    |
| Obj   | Object               | A material artefact   |
| Perf  | Performance          | The performing of identity through artifice and theatricality                 |
| Sign  | Signage              | Graphic devices supporting branding, communication, and way-finding           |
| Style | Style                | The use of aesthetic judgements and feelings                                  |
| Symb  | Symbolic Connection  | No resemblance or physical connection between the signifier and the signified |
| SMot  | Symbolic Motif       | A prominently recurring theme of symbolic meaning                             |
| Synth | Synthesis            | Collecting, cutting, pasting, resizing, colouring and arranging pastiches     |
| TGood | Taste Good           | Objects that are used as symbols of social status                             |
| Techn | Techneme             | The smallest carrier of technical information                                 |
| Temp  | Temporality          | Concerning temporariness or timeliness; worldliness                           |
| Trad  | Tradition            | The physical manifestation of cultural practices handed down from the past    |
| Type  | Typology             | Aspects of production that can be grouped due to similarity                   |
| Use   | Use                  | The technical function and other 'non-functional' aspects                     |
| Wit   | Wit                  | Item that is unexpected, entertaining or eccentric                            |



### 3.4.3 Analytic Integration

This phase represents the theoretical integration which aims at assembling the codes into a working theory (Charmaz, 2006:45). Whereas the content analysis of the artefacts (specifically through *in vivo* coding) served the thesis in the identification, isolation and description of interior design methods to construct meaning the analytic phase is aimed at the interpretation of the methods; further, this phase will also aid in the use of description to generate theory. This stage aims to exploit grounded theory's analytic power to reach a greater level of theoretical abstraction and generalization.

From a grounded theory perspective this phase aims to abstract the codes and to search for theoretical meaning and to present this in categories with 'explanatory power'.<sup>74</sup> Grounded theory follows a hierarchical process of working with codes; concepts; categories; and theory. The use of codes is to identify anchors in the data that allows the data to be gathered. Codes of similar content allow them to be grouped in collections known as 'concepts'. Categories are broad groups of similar concepts which are used to generate a theory (which is a collection of explanations).<sup>75</sup>

The overlapping methods between CGT and phenomenography is apparent when it is considered that in the latter extracts from the data are grouped and borderline cases examined to determine attribute criteria for the groups. In this way the groups can be re-arranged and narrowed into categories which define the core meaning. Finally the categories can be described using the extracts from the data.<sup>76</sup>

In his discussion of phenomenography Richardson (1999:70) states that "categories should emerge from the comparisons conducted within the data, whereas in traditional content analysis they would be defined in advance and imposed on the data". It may be argued that the determination of the *in vivo* codes was such an application of categories imposed in advance; it is therefore particularly important to allow the concepts and categories to emerge from the analysis of the data; the emergence of the concepts and categories is discussed below.

The analytic integration is aimed at assimilating and synthesizing the content analysis of individual artefacts into an over-arching theory with applicability beyond the artefacts in the corpus.<sup>77</sup> This phase is accomplished in three actions. Sorting is the process to re-arrange the units of data to arrive at concepts and categories; focused coding aims to integrate the data, its interpretations and findings; and during the construction of theory the categories will be synthesized into a theory which describes and explains interior design's methods to construct meaning.

#### 3.4.3.1 Sorting

Sorting offers the researcher the opportunity to ensure that constant comparison is a feature of the research process. During sorting emergent themes are organized based on their similarities and differences (Goulding, 1999:18).

74.) See, 3.3.1 Constructivist Grounded Theory.

75.) The conventional hierarchy of grounded theory is code; concept; category; theory. Charmaz (2006) deviates from this and treats concept as a higher order than category (i.e. code, category, concept, theory). For methodological convenience I used the conventional hierarchy.

76.) See, 3.3.2 Phenomenography. It seems that phenomenography is an incomplete process when compared with grounded theory; the former aims at description while the latter is extended to the search for theoretical depth.

77.) See, Chapter 4 Data.

*Grounded theory sorting gives you a logic for organizing your analysis and a way of creating and refining theoretical links that prompts you to make comparisons between categories* (Charmaz, 2006:115).

The sorting of the data is dependent on a process of constant comparison; this is the comparison of coding with coding, coding with data, and data with data.

In grounded theory memos are used to compare data, to explore the codes and to direct further data gathering (Charmaz, 2006:10). For this purpose the memos of semiosis serve as a further source of data, created by the researcher.<sup>78</sup> These memos are considered as the most significant component of the content analysis and are used as a means to sift through large amounts of visual data (after Charmaz, 2006:57). The memos were used as a powerful analytic tool to specify the relationships between codes, concepts and categories; they also determined the naming of concepts and categories.<sup>79</sup>

The sorting of the data involved arranging the artefacts into groups; indicating a hierarchy in the complexity of use; sorting the *in vivo* codes into concepts; and finally, sorting the concepts into categories.

#### *Artefacts*

The sorting of the artefacts was undertaken to group artefacts that share coding similarities<sup>80</sup> and then to temporarily remove the memos of semiosis from the artefacts. In this way the memos could be considered and compared to reach inferences about the concepts and categories and to reach a sharper analytic understanding of the methods isolated in the artefacts.

The artefacts were initially sorted into groups; the groups are based on a coding comparison performed by CAQDAS.<sup>81</sup> This allows the researcher to compare artefacts based on the methods isolated within them and not on traditional grounds such as typology, designer, or geographic location. The artefacts were arranged in twelve groups, ranging in size from containing one artefact to containing thirteen.

To aid abstraction and generalization the semiosis memos were extracted and organized in identical groups. They were then studied in isolation (i.e. removed from the artefact) to determine the sorting of codes and categories.

#### *Hierarchy*

The memos of semiosis indicated the existence of a hierarchy of complexity in the use of the methods described by the *in vivo* codes.<sup>82</sup> This implied that some codes could nest within others and subsequently that some methods are simple in their application and others are complex.<sup>83</sup>

78.) See, 3.4.1.7 Memo of semiosis.

79.) For example, the concept 'Decorative' was named after the code 'decoration'; and the category 'Synthesis' share a name with the code 'synthesis'; in other cases names of concepts and categories are derived through inflection or through the use of synonyms (e.g. temporality (code); Temporal (concept); and Timeliness (category)).

80.) *Id est* they share similarity in the application of the *in vivo* codes in their content analysis; in other words, similar methods to construct meaning were identified and isolated in artefacts that share similarity.

81.) For a discussion of the method used to compare the coding of artefacts refer to the discussion of cluster analysis below, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Categories (and its footnote).

82.) E.g. the statement "...further consider low-order methods (e.g. furniture) and high-order methods (e.g. ensemble) nesting in another method (e.g. constellation)".

83.) E.g. compare the codes 'furniture' and 'constellation'.

The hierarchy indicated the complexity of a code's application and execution in the interior artefact.

The hierarchical sorting divided the *in vivo* codes into the following four groups:

- lesser Low-order codes [13]
- greater Low-order codes [15]
- lesser High-order codes [5]
- greater High-order codes [5]

The hierarchical sorting of codes is illustrated in the table below (see Table 3.4.2).

| Low-order codes |                 | High-order codes |                |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| lesser          | greater         | lesser           | greater        |
| colour          | boundary        | analogy          | archetype      |
| craftsmanship   | boundary obj.   | constellation    | convention     |
| decoration      | ensemble        | curation         | micro-ecology  |
| form            | iconic conn.    | narrative        | style          |
| furnishing      | indexical conn. | typology         | symbolic motif |
| image           | inhabitation    |                  |                |
| intertextuality | iteration       |                  |                |
| light           | performance     |                  |                |
| material        | symbolic conn.  |                  |                |
| object          | synthesis       |                  |                |
| signage         | taste good      |                  |                |
| techneme        | temporality     |                  |                |
|                 | tradition       |                  |                |
|                 | use             |                  |                |
|                 | wit             |                  |                |

### Concepts

In grounded theory a concept is a group which encompasses a number of concrete instances found in the data (Spiggle in Goulding, 1999:9). They are useful to explain some aspects but not the whole: “[t]hey unite certain influences under an explanatory conceptual heading,” (Goulding, 1999:12). Concepts have analytic use so far as they function to group some codes together in terms of their similarity or associations and to separate some codes in terms of their differences. The grouping of codes into concepts is dependent on a process of constant comparison.<sup>84</sup>

The allocation of an ‘explanatory conceptual heading’ (name) was determined in two ways: if a code emerged as more prominent an inflection of that code provides the concept;<sup>85</sup> if the name was recorded in an artefact’s memo of semiosis.<sup>86</sup>

The grouping of codes was dependent on two factors: Firstly, if the constant comparison revealed conceptual overlaps between *in vivo* codes this lead to them being grouped together in a single concept.<sup>87</sup> Secondly,

84.) The grouping of artefacts and the temporary extraction of memos of semiosis assisted me in this, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Artefacts.

85.) E.g. the code ‘decoration’ inflects the concept ‘decorative’.

86.) E.g. the statement “function is indicated conventionally and technically” generates the concept ‘Technical’.

87.) E.g. the conceptual overlaps between the codes ‘colour’; ‘decoration’; and ‘furnishing’ placed them together in the concept ‘Decorative’.

codes were grouped in concepts if they are allocated such a position in the memos of semiosis.<sup>88</sup>

I also accepted that the codes cannot be clearly categorized without loss of significance and without leading to a taxonomic style. Since the *in vivo* codes can contain conceptual characteristics that allow their categorization in a number of concepts codes are allowed to exist in more than one concept.<sup>89</sup> This conceptual grouping leads to the emergence of a network of connections in which concepts become similar or dissimilar based on their constituent codes.

After the first sorting allowing a code to exist in more than one category and simply accepting the statements from the memos of semiosis led to the overpopulation of some concepts and a loss of meaning for those concepts.<sup>90</sup>

Through constant comparative analysis the *in-vivo* codes were sorted during several iterations over a period of approximately three weeks. Three subsequent sortings<sup>91</sup> were completed which refined the grouping, spread the codes, and depopulated some concepts.<sup>92</sup>

Ten concepts were identified and initially defined:

- Associative [11] – involving connections in the mind between different components.
- Decorative [9] – serving to provide with adornment.
- Formal [4] – concerning outward form and appearance.
- Iterative [7] – through repetition.
- Proximal [3] – through relative position in space (e.g. nearness or farness).
- Semiotic [8] – through inferring meaning.
- Synthetic [12] – through the combination of various components.
- Technical [8] – through the mechanical arts and applied sciences.
- Temporal [4] – relating to worldliness and timeliness.
- Traditive [11] – through custom handed down from earlier generations.

The sorting of codes into concepts are illustrated in the table below (see Table 3.4.3).

88.) E.g. the statement “Function is indicated by form and material; thus form and material are associative methods” leads to the concepts ‘form’ and ‘material’ to be grouped in the concept ‘Associative’.

89.) E.g. the code ‘colour’ is both ‘Decorative’ and ‘Synthetic’; and the code ‘constellation’ is ‘Synthetic’ and ‘Proximal’.

90.) E.g. the concept ‘Associative’ contained 26 codes; and the only interpretation that could be made is that ‘nearly all interior design gestures contain associative meaning’ which is so obvious and general that it has little analytic use. The use of the codes was then compared and the most appropriate conceptual grouping accepted.

91.) The fourth, and final, sorting was completed when the categories were defined (this final sorting of codes resulted in a second sorting of concepts), see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Categories.

92.) E.g. the concept ‘Associative’ contained eleven codes in the final grouping.

Table 3.4.3: The sorting of codes into concepts.

| Associative     | Decorative | Formal    | Iterative     | Proximal       | Semiotic        | Synthetic      | Technical     | Temporal     | Traditve      |
|-----------------|------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| analogy         | colour     | archetype | archetype     | constellation  | analogy         | colour         | archetype     | inhabitation | archetype     |
| boundary obj.   | decoration | boundary  | convention    | ensemble       | iconic conn.    | constellation  | craftsmanship | performance  | convention    |
| form            | furnishing | form      | craftsmanship | symbolic motif | indexical conn. | curation       | form          | temporality  | craftsmanship |
| image           | furniture  | typology  | iteration     |                | intertextuality | ensemble       | light         | tradition    | iteration     |
| intertextuality | light      |           | style         |                | narrative       | light          | material      |              | micro-ecology |
| iteration       | material   |           | tradition     |                | signage         | material       | techneme      |              | object        |
| material        | object     |           | typology      |                | symbolic conn.  | object         | typology      |              | performance   |
| narrative       | style      |           |               |                | symbolic motif  | style          | use           |              | signage       |
| performance     | taste good |           |               |                |                 | symbolic motif |               |              | style         |
| tradition       |            |           |               |                |                 | synthesis      |               |              | taste good    |
| wit             |            |           |               |                |                 | taste good     |               |              | tradition     |
|                 |            |           |               |                |                 | techneme       |               |              |               |

### Categories

In grounded theory a category pulls together all the conceptual strands to offer an explanation (Goulding, 1999:9); it summarizes a number of identified concepts which have a relationship to each other (Goulding, 1999:13). To qualify as a category the grouping must meet the following criteria: it must be a central account for large proportion of the data; it must be based on recurring themes drawn from the data; it must relate meaningfully to other categories; and it must be modifiable (Glaser in Goulding, 1999:13).

The grouping of concepts into categories was accomplished with the use of NVivo 10. The ten concepts were incorporated into CAQDAS and their constituent codes used as nodes to conduct a second cluster analysis. The cluster analysis function of NVivo is a visual technique to identify patterns in the data. Patterns are created by grouping concepts which share similar codes. Concepts that are closer together are more similar than those that are far removed. The software uses similarity metrics to calculate the statistical correlation between items.<sup>93</sup> Clusters are formed using the complete linkage (farthest neighbour) hierarchical clustering algorithm and displayed as a hierarchical clustering dendrogram (QSR International, 2013).

While a code was allowed to be categorized into more than one concept,<sup>94</sup> a concept can only exist in one category. This analysis grouped the ten concepts into (unnamed) categories based on the similarity of their constituent codes.

Two sortings were executed approximately two weeks apart. To offer a visual representation<sup>95</sup> diagrams were creating indicating the linkages and categorization of codes, concepts and categories.

The first sorting produced four categories. The grouping of concepts was uncomfortable and I was unable to produce elegant category names to account for the constituent concepts. This indicated that there was 'something wrong' in the initial sorting of codes into concepts. The codes were re-sorted and compared and I added the codes 'form' and 'material' to the concept 'Associative'.

- 93.) I used the cluster analysis function in NVivo 10 to compare the concepts for coding similarity. The programme offered three similarity metrics. I utilised all three to triangulate the results. Jaccard's coefficient and Sørensen's coefficient delivered identical results; the Pearson correlation coefficient delivered differing results. I returned to grounded theory principles and compared the sorting of concepts and categories and accepted that the results from the Jaccard and Sørensen coefficients had greater fit with the data; I had to rely on my interpretation. I support this argument by quoting from Geertz (2000[1973]): "Nothing will discredit a semiotic approach to culture more quickly than allowing it to drift into a combination of intuitionism and alchemy, no matter how elegantly the intuitions are expressed or how modern the alchemy is made to look." This decision is not based on intuitive alchemy but on interpretation. This interpretive approach is supported by Goulding (1999:13) who declares that an over-reliance on computer-aided analysis minimises the personal experiences of the researcher. The researcher's situational factors and experiences and the research process itself adds depth to the emerging theory.
- 94.) The decision to not strictly categorise the *in vivo* codes allows me to use the methods represented by them more naturally. I felt that if I forced the codes to fit into categories it might force the data into categories with explanatory value but result in presenting design as a categorised process (this view is shared by Charmaz (2006:181) in her discussion of a grounded theory ethnography that presents the lived experience as categorised). For example, if the use of 'objects' and 'colour' in the interior is considered it is possible to use these for their Decorative, Associative or Synthetic functions. At the level of sorting concepts into categories these multivalent uses are not at stake and strict categorisation becomes feasible since the concepts could be collapsed in overarching categories fairly easily.
- 95.) Or 'concrete image' (Charmaz, 2006:117).

The sorting process was repeated and it produced five categories. In the second iteration the categories and their constituent concepts 'made sense'. Prominent codes and concepts emerged which led to the naming of the five categories:

- Associations [2]
- Proximity [1]
- Synthesis [2]
- Technification [2]
- Timeliness [3]

The categories form the basis of the grounded theory which can be summarized in this hypothesis: "Interior design produces culture through synthesis, proximity, associations, timeliness, and technification".<sup>96</sup> The sorting of concepts into categories are illustrated in the table below (see Table 3.4.4).

| Associations                                   | Proximity                      | Synthesis   | Technification                                     | Timeliness                                   |
|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Resulting from causing connections in the mind | Relating to placement in space | Relating to selection and bringing together in a cohesive whole | Concerned with the physical expression of meaning. | Relating to worldliness and change over time |
| Associative<br>Semiotic                        | Proximal                       | Decorative<br>Synthetic   | Formal<br>Technical                                | Iterative<br>Temporal<br>Traditive           |

#### 3.4.3.2 Focused coding

Focused coding offers the researcher the opportunity to return to the data. This stage specifically targets the two memos that were created for each interior artefact: the memo at capture<sup>97</sup> and the memo of semiosis.<sup>98</sup> In a variation of 'line-by-line coding'<sup>99</sup> the memos are considered incident by incident (or complete statement by complete statement)<sup>100</sup> and coded.

While the initial use of *in vivo* codes in the content analysis of the photographs served to separate the data into categories this stage of focused coding is a reflective stage of the analytic process. It allows the researcher to be critical about the initial interpretations and aims to identify actions and significant processes (Charmaz, 2006:51).

This coding action aids the researcher to specify relationships between categories and concepts (Glaser in Charmaz, 2006:63). To facilitate the coding process a strategic decision was taken to use the concepts as a set of predetermined codes. Like the use of *in vivo* codes for the denotation of the photograph the codes are applied to ensure consistency of meaning and to connect concepts and keywords.<sup>101</sup> The concepts all take the grammatical form of the adjective and are therefore applicable as a 'description' of the statement or incident. It is allowed to apply more than one descriptive code to each statement or incident. The overlapping codes will indicate 'borderline incidents' which is instrumental in the determination of concept criteria.

96.) The development of this theory is demonstrated in Chapter 5 A Theory of Interior Design Methods to Construct Meaning.

97.) See, 3.4.1.2 Memo at capture.

98.) See, 3.4.1.7 Memo of semiosis.

99.) Refer to Charmaz (2006:50-51).

100.) E.g. the statements "The intervention comprises a number of objects, partial demolitions, materials, with the impression that nothing is chosen 'to fit'," from a memo at capture, or "Objects, material and a constellation is used in combination to indicate a function," from a memo of semiosis, are considered as complete statements or incidents.

101.) See, 3.4.1.4 Denotation.

The concepts (which serve as codes in this stage) can then be brought together to allow for comparison between incidents; this will facilitate deeper analysis and conceptual complexity (not merely thicker descriptions). This stage integrates the data, its interpretations, and the findings with each other and the emerging theory.

#### 3.4.3.3 Construction of theory

The construction of a theory to explain and describe interior design's methods of constructing meaning (and by extension its methods of cultural production) represents the final stage of the research process.

The sorting of the codes and concepts into five categories which provides modifiable central accounts for large proportions of the data and which are recurring themes with meaningful reciprocal relationships represents a grounded basis for the construction of theory.

The foundations of this theory are strengthened with a credible amount of data and analysis which addresses the research topic (after Charmaz, 2006:50). During the construction of the theory the categories are formally described. This is informed through reference to their constituent concepts and illustrated with quotes and examples from the data set. Finally, this emergent theory is enriched with references to existing literature. This offers the researcher the opportunity to critically reflect on the emergent theory and to ensure compliance with the grounded theory criteria of "fit, work, relevance and modifiability" (Glaser in Charmaz, 2006:182).

I wish to conclude with a quotation from Goulding (1999:13):

*In summary, therefore, it is possible to think of the coding process as a form of hierarchy at the bottom of which is open coding. Through systematic analysis and constant comparison of data the next stage is to reduce the number of codes and to group them together in a way that indicates a relationship between them. This stage relates to axial coding and the formation of concepts. At the pinnacle of the hierarchy are categories which unite the concepts and reveal a gestaltian theoretical explanation of the phenomenon under study.*



### 3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I strive towards standards of excellence and morality in my research activities. I endeavour to maintain the University's research values of social responsibility, justice, benevolence, respect for the individual, and professionalism.

Since the collected photographs are reproduced for scholarly enquiry and critical commentary they are not subject to copyright controls. Copyright is not infringed by any fair dealing of an artistic work for the purposes of research, criticism or review (*Copyright Act, Act 98 of 1978* and its amendments, South Africa, Section 15(4) and Section 12(1)).<sup>102</sup> Since the works referred are published and freely available it is not foreseen that their inclusion in this thesis will adversely affect their marketability or value.

The following actions are taken to protect the moral rights of authorship: photographers of the primary photos are credited if their identities are revealed in the publications referred; URL links for all referred photographs are provided; copy control is installed in the digital publication of this thesis; and a copyright notice which restricts the use of referred works is included in the publication.

Literary works (articles, books, textbooks, websites, etc.) are treated for academic purposes under the fair dealing principle.

There are no human participants in the research and the study does not involve any questionnaires, surveys or other form of direct involvement with members of society.

No direct financial benefit or conflict of interest for the researcher which could damage the name of the University is foreseen.

The study does not have a potentially detrimental environmental impact.

The study complies with the *Code of Ethics for Research* (University of Pretoria) and does not require approval by the faculty Ethical Committee.

I feel that reasonable attempts are made to counteract any ethical questions and to give due credit for the creative work of others.

102.) This principle is applicable in many Commonwealth nations (in the United States it is known as 'fair use').

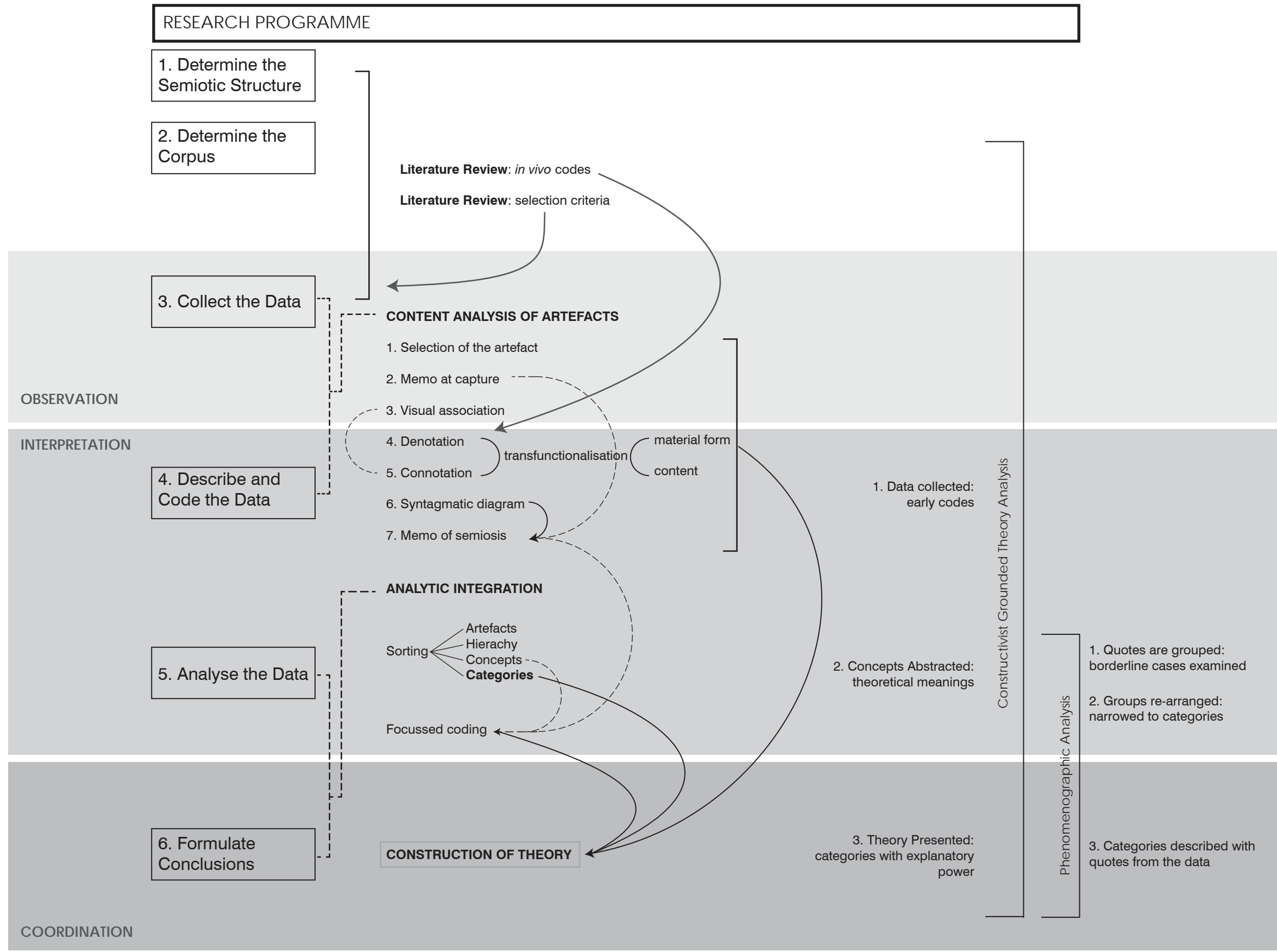
### 3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the research approach and the appropriate research methods. Following this, and integrating elements from the theoretical background, the analytic instrument was discussed in detail. Finally the ethical issues that pertain to this thesis were discussed.

The data, how it was obtained and analyzed, and its content will be discussed in the following chapter. The findings of the analytic integration will be presented in Chapter 5 A Theory of Interior Design's to Construct Meaning.<sup>103</sup>

**Figure 3.6.1** (overleaf): The research programme.

103.) Portions of this chapter were incorporated in a paper titled: "An interpretive method for the analysis of designed artefacts". Delivered at the Cumulus Johannesburg Conference, *Design with the Other 90%: Changing the World by Design*, 22-24 September 2014.



PANOFSKY: Cultural Cosmos

1. Observation of Phenomena

2. Interpretation

3. System of Theory

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA

#### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

A 'corpus' is considered as a collection of artefacts (texts, writings, material artefacts, objects etc.) assembled for the purpose of analytic interpretation, this is differentiated from a 'text corpus' which is a large structured collection of texts used in linguistic analysis where the method is largely statistical (e.g. the *International Corpus of English*<sup>1</sup> or the *Corpus of Contemporary American English*<sup>2</sup>). A 'body' simply refers to a collection, without any specific analytic purpose. The 'canon' is a cumulative cultural repository (Attiwill, 2007:59). Journals, exhibitions and teaching disseminate the canon and the canon is formed through selection, recognition and publication (Attiwill, 2007:59). In my interpretation the canon is the largest collection of artefacts considered as valuable, a body is merely a collection while a corpus is a collection with analytic purpose.

This chapter will discuss the empirical data with focus on three core aspects: in the first the establishment of selection criteria that is instrumental in compiling of the corpus for investigation is considered; in the second, I consider the data itself, how it was collected and the description of the data; finally, I offer a reflection on the corpus as it is situated within the theoretical field.

In the investigation of built artefacts research focus is on the precedent study while representative samples are unusual (Bechtel, 1980:218). If a representative sample is considered the problem is to determine selection criteria for such a collection. This chapter considers how such a representative corpus of interior design artefacts was compiled to be used as a data set for content analysis through interpretation. When design corpora are compiled the selection is dependent on the taste of the collector,<sup>3</sup> this subjectivity should be augmented with the use of selection criteria which are aligned with and compiled through the research.

Once the selection criteria are determined the interior artefacts that will comprise the corpus must be sourced, selected and documented. This chapter will report on this process. The chapter will further deliver a descriptive review of the collection. The reflection on the corpus within the theoretical field should be considered as an analytic device aimed at reviewing the assembled corpus in a conceptual and abstract manner. This allows the researcher to move the generation of theory further than mere description.

Once this is complete I am enabled to assess the data assembled to determine if it is sufficient to create a reasonable expectation that grounded theory saturation will be reached.

Finally, an assessment of the data is completed in this context and limitations are placed on the application of this thesis.

- 1.) <http://ice-corpora.net>
- 2.) <http://www.americancorpus.org>
- 3.) See, 2.2.4 Domain Gatekeepers.

## 4.2 SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria are compiled from two perspectives: In the first consideration is made for the research objectives of the thesis. In the second, a further literature review is conducted to inform the criteria. The selection criteria should augment my role as domain gatekeeper. Their compilation is also an indication of my close engagement with the data, which is a grounded theory requirement.

### 4.2.1 The Selection of the Literature

The selected corpus has influence on the ontological question; it must therefore be assembled with rigour. Literature was identified to assist the compilation of selection criteria with this aim.

Although the sources had different application there is a large overlap with those used in Chapter 3. As with the literature used to derive the *in vivo* codes, this component of the literature review should introduce more discipline specific sources, but some general sources are still included.

Notable sources referred to include the following:

Attwill, 2007, 'What's in a Canon?'

Barthes, 1983[1967], *The Fashion System*

Rice, 2004, 'Rethinking Histories of the Interior'

Eco, 1979[1976], *A Theory of Semiotics*

Eco, 1990, *The Limits of Interpretation*

Hay, 2007, 'Interior Architecture'

Jennings, 2007, 'A Case for a Typology of Design: The Interiors Archetype Project'

Massey, 2001, *Interior Design of the 20th Century*

Rattenbury, 2002, 'Iconic Pictures'

Sparke, 2012, 'Taste and the Interior Designer'

Sunley, Pinch, Reimer & MacMillen, 2008, 'Innovation in a Creative Production System: the Case of Design'

Taylor & Preston (eds.), 2006, *Intimus. Interior Design Theory Reader*

#### 4.2.2 Criteria

The criteria are checked and indicated on the analytic form (see Figure 4.2.1).

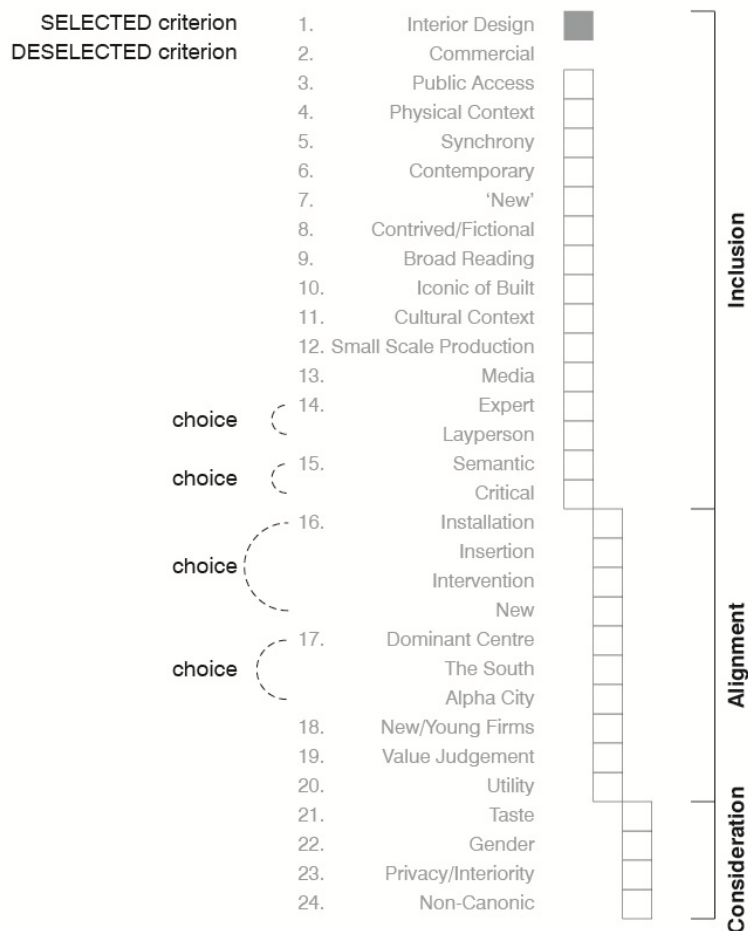


Figure 4.2.1: Selection criteria on the analytic form.

##### 4.2.2.1 Inclusion criteria

Artefacts must comply with all inclusion criteria to be included in the corpus.

###### 1. Interior Design

In contributing to answering the ontological question<sup>4</sup> (Attiwill, 2007); the artefacts selected must be identifiable as interior design. Since it is the artefact that is studied and not the designer<sup>5</sup> it is not required that the designer self-identify as an interior designer.<sup>6</sup> The researcher must be able to identify the object as an interior artefact.

###### 4.) 'What is interior design?'

This criterion has pedagogic application specifically in my own teaching practice. The ontological question is specifically addressed in the study of interior artefacts by third year interior design students in the Environmental Studies (OML 320) course: collectively the group of students prepares an exhibition of posters of current interiors. This annual exhibition is used by the Department to illustrate the nature of interior design during promotional events (e.g. UP Open Day) and during the selection of aspirant students. Interior artefacts contained in the corpus assembled for the purposes of this thesis will be included in future exhibitions.

###### 5.) See, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism footnote.

6.) It also falls outside the scope of the thesis to determine the education and profession of the designers; neither does the study wish to offer opinions on interior design as a profession or to contribute to the development of its professional definition. This thesis focuses on interior design as a practice and is promiscuous in its inclusion of artefacts.

The 'core' of interior design is considered broadly (Königk, 2010) and includes everything from 'selection of cushions' and 'coordination of adjacent rooms (Taylor & Preston, 2006:12) to projects created *ex novo* (Sparke, 2012:24).

It is not desirable to create distinction between various interior design practices (Attiwill, 2007:62); as this may influence disciplinary allegiances to the detriment of the discipline. In this instance it is not specifically detrimental to distinguish between the contentions sub-disciplines: 'interior decoration'; 'interior design'; and 'interior architecture'.<sup>7</sup>

### 2. Commercial

The selected corpus will have a commercial focus; these interiors are constructed for, and to facilitate, commercial consumption. The modern conception of 'interior' connotes the private domestic realm<sup>8</sup> which is separated from the public realm of display or performance (Vidler, 2012:71-72).<sup>9</sup> The thesis aims to investigate public or performative interiors.

The commercial realm is considered to be in constant flux while the domestic interior is more stable (Riggins in Mitchell, 2011:35) it is therefore assumed that the commercial realm is more productive in the generation and interpretation of meaning. The commercial is defined broadly to include the realm of production and consumption<sup>10</sup> and is not typologically limited to retail and office interiors.<sup>11</sup>

This criterion specifically excludes artefacts aimed at national, religious or pedagogic identity: as examples, monuments, museums and religious interiors. Installations and exhibits are included since they are created for consumption.<sup>12</sup>

### 3. Public Access

Since the public realm is important in defining the self (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1989[1981]:17), the chosen interiors must be accessible by the public and specifically excludes access controlled areas,<sup>13</sup> but

- 7.) See, 1.5 Delimitations, and for the definition of 'interior design', see, 1.6.3 Interior Design.
- 8.) The home interior serves as a site of self-expression (Millard, 2001:246). It is accepted that the home or domestic interior provides a natural setting for cultural production but it is specifically excluded from the corpus since it does not address the commercial application of interior design as a professional practice. It is assumed that commercial interiors are contrived through a directed design process and executed based on construction documentation and instructions from the designer while the home interior is the result of an organic process executed by the laity (although this may be in response to a designed framework). The domestic practice of interior design is adequately studied and reported in the literature (e.g. Baudrillard (1996[1968]:13-29), Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton (1989[1981]); Douglas & Isherwood (1996[1979]), Douglas (1996) (specifically 'Bad Taste in Furnishing', pp. 50-76; and 'On Not Being Seen Dead: Shopping as Protest', pp. 77-105), Rice (2004), Sanches-Robles (1980), Tang (1998), Tan (2011:42,46), etc.).
- 9.) This specifically has reference to the popular conception of interior design as a domestic practice. This conception is understood adequately by the interior design profession and needs no further discussion here. From a theoretical perspective, the connotation between interior design and the domestic realm is evident in Baudrillard's (1996[1986]:15-29) discussion of the structures of interior design; he depicts interior design as a domestic practice. I will return to Baudrillard's analysis later in the thesis, see, Chapter 6 Modes of Cultural Production in Interior Design.
- 10.) See, Chapter 2 Theoretical Background, I specifically refer the reader to the synthesis between the realms of capital and meaning (after Baudrillard).
- 11.) Further, since this study is the inaugural doctoral thesis in the Programme for Interior Architecture at the University of Pretoria, I felt the need to reflect the programme's commercial design focus and to contribute to the programme's knowledge and expertise in this area.
- 12.) For examples I refer to the following interior artefacts included in the corpus: 004 Eternal Archetype; 007 Blockbuster; 029 Nike Pop-Up; and 058 Lyhty.
- 13.) E.g. hotel bedrooms; private areas of corporate head offices.



includes tacitly controlled public spaces<sup>14</sup> and spaces designed for display.<sup>15</sup>

#### 4. *Physical Context*

The interiors should be physically enclosed with a strong boundary condition. This boundary must be discernible in the photographs or the researcher must be able to infer that such a boundary is present.

#### 5. *Synchrony*

It was established earlier in the thesis that it has methodological advantage to limit the corpus synchronically.<sup>16</sup> The synchrony is limited to artefacts that were published after the signing of the *Interiors Declaration*. Artefacts that fall outside the synchrony may be included in the corpus if they serve particular utility for the thesis.<sup>17</sup>

#### 6. *Contemporary*

Interior design is considered as a young profession (Massey, 2001; König, 2010) with a need for research focus on contemporary design. This is appropriate since the study of historical interiors fails to prepare practitioners for current interior design typologies (Jennings, 2007:52).<sup>18</sup>

An interior artefact is indicated as 'contemporary' if the researcher finds it paradigmatically appropriate; this excludes pastiches of historical interiors.

#### 7. *'New'*

An artefact is considered as 'new' if it exhibits evidence of the extension or transformation of cultural information or variations in cultural output that occur when tension between innovation and tradition is present. This is supported by Eco (1990:91) which describes 'well done' works as those that creates a dialectic condition between order and novelty. This condition must be perceived by the researcher.<sup>19</sup>

#### 8. *Contrived or Fictional*

The interior must be designed specifically and not the result of the vernacular or through organic production.<sup>20</sup>

The artefact must contain a 'fictionalised account of the world' (Eco, 1990:45).<sup>21</sup> In the poststructuralist tradition all artefacts can be considered as constructed texts. In the Saussurian tradition a 'sign' is an "intentional, artificial" device (Eco, 1979[1976]:15) which is differentiated from unintentional manifestations.<sup>22</sup> The interior artefact must be identifiable as such a contrived or fictional text.

To comply with this criterion the researcher must be able to identify an author, either in the name of a natural person or practice.

- 14.) E.g. clubs; the artefact 018 Tendinha serves as example.
- 15.) E.g. film sets and installations; the artefacts 030 Interior Leather Bar and 058 Lyhty serve as examples.
- 16.) After Barthes (1983[1967]), see, 3.2.3 Research programme.
- 17.) See, 4.2.2.2 Alignment criteria, 20. Utility.
- 18.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.
- 19.) In the selection of some artefacts this dialectic or discomfort is blatantly obvious, e.g. 004 Eternal Archetype and 069 Spiegel Kantine; others are more traditive with small innovations, e.g. 046 Aesop Chez Merci and 063 MenScience. The mere presence of this innovative discomfort is required.
- 20.) See, 4.2.2.1 Inclusion criteria, 2. Commercial.
- 21.) *Id est* a determined narrative, meaning, identity etc.
- 22.) This is an apparent contradiction to the radical poststructural position which states that the interpretation of a text can be considered independently from the author's intentions.

### 9. Broad Reading

Although the analysis is purposefully superficial and broad<sup>23</sup> a broad reading of the interior artefact must be possible in which various 'icon-analogies' are present (Broadbent, 1980:347).

The researcher must emphatically be able to accept the coexistence of multiple tastes (after Sparke, 2012:27).

In grounded theory's constructivist and anti-positivist nature this criterion enables the researcher to study the system and methods employed in the artefacts and not the particulars of connoted meaning.

### 10. Iconic of Built

This criterion implies that the artefact is analyzed through reference to its iconic representation.<sup>24</sup> The researcher selects an iconic representation of a built artefact (i.e. a photograph of a completed interior).<sup>25</sup>

The iconic structure forms part of the architectural canon, and is available to study built artefacts in the absence of the technological structure (Rattenbury, 2002; Rice, 2004; Attiwill, 2007). Images convey the canon since the image has a greater audience than the built artefact. This creates two parallel canons: the canon of built works and the canon of images (Downton in Attiwill, 2007:59). The intention is to study works contained in the canon of images.

### 11. Cultural Context

In limiting the cultural context I consider globalization (after Isar & Anheier, 2010) and regard artefacts that are produced in the cultural context which can be described as neo-liberal and post-industrial as relevant for the study.<sup>26</sup> It is assumed that the consumption and production processes of a western cultural milieu are in place (Cook, 2005; and Baudrillard, 1998[1970]).

The post-industrial milieu reflects a plurality of cultural perspectives (Myerson, 2004:191).<sup>27</sup>

### 12. Small Scale Production

The interior artefacts included in the corpus are considered as mediators of large scale production, but the artefacts themselves are the result small scale production; their properties are that they have high levels of symbolic capital and require relatively low levels of economic capital for their execution (Hesmondhalgh, 2006:215).<sup>28</sup>

At best, interior artefacts mediate between small scale and large scale production.<sup>29</sup>

23.) See, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism; see, 2.3 Semiotic Interpretation; and, see, 3.4 Analytic Instrument.

24.) See, 1.3 The Material and its Interpretation; and, see, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure.

25.) This specifically excludes drawings and artist's impressions of future or un-built work. Since the contributions of interior design to cultural production is considered, it is assumed that the completed artefact will have a larger lay audience, whereas the image communicating the intention (e.g. conceptual drawings) will have a limited, expert audience.

26.) This also reflects my own political and economic position which considers the responsibilities and freedoms of the individual as mediated by the collective: individual rights and the free market are mediated by the interventions of a strong, national State. It is preferable (but not necessary) that this State is elected democratically. The State should act in a benign manner for the goodwill of society and promote a differentiated, national identity. Interior artefacts that are produced in a liberal, democratic milieu (e.g. 045 Truth Coffee) and those from authoritarian states (e.g. 056 WUHAO) are included. I realise that my ideological position influences this study, although the study can only be assessed based on its intellectual rigour.

27.) The dangers of this and the subsequent relevance of the study are discussed in Chapter 1, see, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

28.) The interior artefacts included in the corpus can be compared to the products of large scale production (with low levels of symbolic capital and high levels of economic capital), e.g. toothbrushes, cups, sparkplugs, and other consumer items produced en masse.

29.) For a deeper discussion on this topic I refer the reader to the background to cultural production, see, 2.2.1 Background.

### 13. Media

Barthes (1983[1967]:10) identified fashion magazines as a suitable, convenient and economic corpus to study the fashion system; in a similar vein this study identified digital publishing as a suitable medium from which to select a corpus of interior design artefacts.<sup>30</sup>

Although interior design magazines may be included the focus is on electronic publication due to its convenience, availability and speed of dissemination.

### 14. Audience: Expert or Layperson

In the application of this criterion the researcher must indicate a choice. It is foreseen that artefacts that are produced for both categories will be included in the corpus.

The iconic representation of built artefacts will be aimed at either laypersons or experts and the photographs for these audiences will have different conventions (Serraino, 2002:127-128).

Photographs aimed at experts are highly connoted while laypersons will evaluate them in the larger context of their own needs (Serraino, 2002:135).<sup>31</sup>

The researcher must assess the photograph selected and indicate either of these options.<sup>32</sup>

### 15. Reader: Semantic or Critical

In the application of this criterion the researcher must indicate a choice. It is foreseen that artefacts that are produced for both categories will be included in the corpus.

The artefact selected must lend itself to both semantic and critical evaluation (Eco, 1990:77). It is accepted that most artefacts are aimed at a 'model reader' willing to suspend disbelief and follow the narrative on its own terms (Jabobs, 2005:85); but at least some artefacts must be included which were specifically created with a critical reader in mind. The model reader will interpret the intended semantic narrative, while the critical reader will interpret meaning carrying gestures critically.<sup>33</sup>

'Semantic' is reserved for the level of the content of an artefact (Greimas in Barthes (1983[1967]:192) and 'critical' for the level of critical analysis.

The researcher must assess the photograph selected and indicate either of these options.<sup>34</sup>

#### 4.2.2.2 Alignment criteria

Alignment criteria are included to align the corpus with the researcher's subjective interests. The purpose of these criteria is to allow for the researcher's emphatic response. Unlike the inclusion criteria they are not exclusionary or controlling. They also allow the researcher to act as domain gatekeeper and not simply reliant on a set of controlling criteria.

30.) See, 1.3 The Material and its Interpretation. This chapter itself discusses the material and the selection of the data from the blogosphere, see, 4.3 Data.

31.) For further differentiation of photographs aimed at experts or the laity refer to, 2.4.2.1 The photograph as evidence.

32.) An example of a photograph aimed at an expert is 044 Freipost; and one aimed at a layperson is 014 The Mall.

33.) For further discussion on the levels of interpretation I refer to my discussion of Eco's 'model reader', see, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

34.) An example of an artefact aimed at a semantic reader is 067 Xing; and one aimed at a critical reader is 030 Interior Leather Bar.

*16. Mode of Production: Installation; Insertion; Intervention; or New*

In the application of this criterion the researcher must indicate a choice. It is foreseen that artefacts that are produced by all four categories will be included in the corpus; but a bias towards the insertion with its characteristic strong boundary is expected.

The three modes of production of interior design (identified by Hay, 2007) are included:

- The 'installation' is the response to an existing architectural envelope where a new interior is introduced. This interior is characterized by a loose-fit and when it is removed the architectural envelope reverts to its original condition. The installation itself can be placed in another envelope fairly easily and the boundary between the installation and envelope is fairly weak.
- The 'insertion' is the response to an existing architectural envelope where a new interior is introduced. This interior is characterized by its close-fit to the envelope; when it is removed the architectural envelope reverts to its original condition. The insertion itself cannot be placed in another envelope and the boundary between the insertion and envelope is fairly strong.
- The 'intervention' is the response to an existing architectural envelope where a major alteration is introduced. The intervention is characterized by being totally intertwined with the envelope and it is not possible to return the envelope to its original condition and the boundary between the intervention and the envelope is altered.

Since it is possible to construct an entirely new building with a focus on the interior the following production method is included:

- The 'new'<sup>35</sup> is not a response to an existing architectural envelope but indicates the construction of a new building with a strong focus on the interior.

The researcher must assess the photograph selected and indicate the most appropriate of these options.<sup>36</sup>

*17. Geography: Dominant Centre; Alpha City; or The South*

In the application of this criterion the researcher must indicate a choice. It is foreseen that artefacts that situated in all three geographic locations will be included in the corpus.

In an attempt to broaden the interior design canon I wanted to include an alignment towards The South, Asia and other Postcolonial contexts. It was decided that this may exclude other prominent design centres or centres of cultural production. The geographic areas were therefore expanded to include the following:

- 'The South' indicates the Global South which encompasses Asia and other Postcolonial contexts; geographically the area is contained in Central and South-America, Africa, Australasia, and South-east Asia.<sup>37</sup>

35.) When applying the selection criteria care must be taken not to confuse new construction with the 'new', see, 4.2.2.1 Inclusion criteria, 7. 'New'.

36.) An example of an installation is 007 Blockbuster; an insertion is 051 Bao Bao; an intervention is 055 Camper Soho; and a new building is 005 Timber Gym.

37.) The North-South divide is a controversial matter to determine; since this is not an Economics study I chose the convenient option which describes the North as those countries belonging to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); i.e. the traditional First and Second World. Japan is included as part of the North since it is a G8 member.

- ‘Dominant design centres’ are identified as: London; Milan; Catalonia; Helsinki; Rhone-Alps; Detroit; Los Angeles; New York; Montreal; and Palo Alto (Sunley, Pinch, Reimer & MacMillen, 2008:676).
- ‘Alpha cities’ are those included in the Globalization and World Cities Research Network’s assessment of globally integrated cities (GaWC, 2010). ‘Alpha++’ and ‘Alpha+’ cities are indicated: London; New York; Hong Kong; Paris; Singapore; Tokyo; Shanghai; Chicago; Dubai; and Sydney.

If either the project or the design firm is located in one of the geographic locations the relevant category is indicated. If overlaps occur they are marked in the following order of preference: the South; Dominant Design Centre; Alpha City.<sup>38</sup>

#### 18. *New Young Firms*

In an attempt to ‘shift’ the canon I include an alignment towards the ‘new young firms – the ones who do not get written about’ (Rattenbury, 2002:206). To identify seminal designers would undermine the purposes of the study, which is to investigate the methods of practice not to identify gestural specifics.<sup>39</sup>

This criterion is selected (and the design firm indicated as new or young) if the principals are younger than 40 or the design practice newer than 10 years.

#### 19. *Value Judgement*

This criterion allows the researcher the opportunity to exercise their cultural position as domain gatekeeper.<sup>40</sup> By selecting this criterion the researcher indicates that the interior artefact is considered as ‘valuable, interesting, essential’ (Rattenbury, 2002:58).

As expert in the discipline the researcher acts as arbiter, cultural intermediary and holder of cultural capital (after Bourdieu 1984[1979] and Isar & Anheier, 2010).

#### 20. *Utility*

This criterion allows the researcher to include interior artefacts which do not comply with the other criteria but are deemed useful to the study.<sup>41</sup>

Since all the artefacts included in the corpus are deemed useful<sup>42</sup> this criterion will only be utilized to include artefacts that meet few other criteria; do not meet the inclusion criteria; or are excluded by the study’s delimitations.<sup>43</sup> The reason for including an artefact under this criterion is noted in the memo written at the time of selection.

38.) E.g. the cities of London and New York are both dominant design centres and alpha cities, projects located here were indicated as originating from a dominant design centre; and the cities of Sydney and Hong Kong (China) are indicated as part of the Global South although they are alpha cities, projects located here were indicated as originating in the South.

39.) See, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism *footnote*.

40.) See, 2.2.4 Domain Gatekeepers.

41.) For example artefacts that falls outside the delimited synchrony (e.g. 054 Camper Paris).

42.) See, 4.2.2.2 Alignment criteria, 19. Value Judgement.

43.) See, 1.5 Delimitations.

#### 4.2.2.3 Consideration criteria

These criteria consider the interior artefact and its contribution to cultural production. The criteria are marked when these 'considerations' are evident in the artefact.<sup>44</sup>

##### *21. Taste*

The artefact must include taste, furnishing, decoration and the surface to encompass 'interior design' and thus avoid "[retreating] into 'interior architecture'" (Kleinman, 2012:29). Taste is a relevant method of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1984[1979]; and Douglas, 1996).

##### *22. Gender*

The disciplinary origins of interior design leads to the assumption that all interior design production contains gendered connotations (Taylor & Preston, 2006; Havenhand, 2005; Massey, 2001; Königk, 2010; etc.). This criterion identifies artefacts that overtly comments on sexual identity, gender, marginalization, etc.<sup>45</sup>

##### *23. Privacy or Interiority*

This criterion identifies artefacts that overtly comments on matters of identity as it is revealed in the privacy : publicity dialectic as this involves issues of interiority and inhabitation (Sparke, 2009:3).<sup>46</sup>

##### *24. Non-Canonical*

This criterion identifies artefacts which contribute to a new and fragmented canon (Jacobs & Hanrahan, 2005:8); these artefacts question the boundary of the discipline and indicate the non-recognition of 'seminal' works or 'masterpieces'.<sup>47</sup>

It is not required that the artefacts selected for the corpus receive any peer recognition or critical acclaim, the only requirement is that they are published. The corpus will be promiscuous and allow artefacts of various typologies to be studied. The purpose is not to propose any 'fundamental canon' (Taylor & Preston, 2006:12-13) and is compliant with the notion that all visual forms are admissible into the educational canon (Julier, 2006:64).

This criterion indicates any artefact included which is not seminal, not a masterpiece, part of the everyday, attainable practice of interior design or those artefacts which questions the boundaries of the discipline.<sup>48</sup>

#### 4.2.2.4 Other criteria

These criteria cannot be determined at the point of selection or are exclusionary. They are instrumental in compiling the corpus but they are not indicated on the analytic form.

##### *25. Saturation*

The assembled corpus will be large and broad but is not based on statistical analysis. The size of the sample is determined in two (non-statistical) ways: The first is through the use of a rapid evidence assessment (REA) in which the size of the sample is limited to what can be

44.) In that case, these criteria can also be considered as a form of initial analysis since they direct the researcher's attention to the future analytic used of the interior artefact under consideration.

45.) An example of such an artefact is 030 Interior Leather Bar.

46.) Also refer to McCarthy (2005) and Vidler (2012).

47.) Carlo Scarpa's *Olivetti Showroom* in Venice (1957-1958) may serve as an example of such a seminal, canonic artefact.

48.) An example of an everyday, non-canonic interior is 061 Haberdash; 058 Lyhty is a non-canonic artefact which challenges the boundaries of the discipline; in contrast 055 Camper Soho is considered as canonic due to the fame of its designer (Shigeru Ban).

collected during a specific period of time.<sup>49</sup> The second is through what constructivist grounded theory (CGT) calls 'saturation'. This is aimed more at the analysis than the collection itself. Saturation is the point where further analysis does not provide new insights. The sample must be large enough to allow the researcher to reach a point of saturation. Saturation is reached when no new insights or themes emerge from the initial coding of the photographs.<sup>50</sup> Further the research design specifically avoids the generation of quantitative data and it would be counter-intuitive to determine the sample size in a statistical manner.

#### *26. Avoid the Historical Method*

Since thematic structures may be limiting (Taylor & Preston, 2006:8) the historical method is not applicable here. This allows the researcher to collect material that is broad in type. In addition the material is interpreted without cross-reference to a large data sample which includes other types (e.g. written documents, interviews, etc.). Interior design does not possess a strong canon of referred theories (Taylor & Preston, 2006), its theoretical base can be described as 'promiscuous'. It is apt that the collected corpus will be promiscuous too.<sup>51</sup>

49.) I collected representations of 72 artefacts between 2 and 18 April 2013.

50.) Further evidence for saturation is provided later in this chapter, see, 4.3.3.2 Sufficiency

51.) It is accepted that the artefact is situated in its paradigm (see, Chapter 2 Theoretical Background) and that the precedent study involves the in-depth paradigmatic study of the artefact with consideration of a number of sources. The aim would be to understand the generation of, and influences on, a select number or designed artefacts. The investigation would be narrow and deep, with limited potential for generalisation. The thesis takes another position, the analysis would be broad and superficial but with subsequent greater potential for generalisation.

### 4.3 DATA

This section is considered as a deliberation of the data collection process and of the data itself. As such it is a record of how and where the data was obtained, and it will offer initial insights which emerge from reflecting on the data.

#### 4.3.1 Collection Process

The procedure to collect the artefacts itself was discussed in Chapter 3.<sup>52</sup> Here I will briefly discuss the collection process as it occurred during the rapid evidence assessment.

The collection process was initially limited to a period of two weeks to one month. The purpose was to rapidly assemble a corpus of interior artefacts which allow the researcher to claim representivity and generality (although it is a non-probability, judgmental sample<sup>53</sup>).<sup>54</sup>

It must be remembered that as researcher I acted as a domain gatekeeper and as a grounded theorist. The exercise of my value judgement and the simultaneous involvement in data collection and analysis were characteristic of this process (after Charmaz, 2006:5). Throughout the collection process the corpus was constantly assessed and adjusted. This was based in part on the selection criteria which implied that the corpus must be critically reviewed during (and after) its assembly. The corpus represents shifts during the collection process to assess and adjust over- or under-representivity of certain objects or types;<sup>55</sup> this approach to the collection of data is appropriate in grounded theory. Charmaz (2006:15) states it thus: “[w]ith grounded theory methods, you shape and reshape your data collection, and therefore, refine your collected data”.

When I collected the data I further adopted an attitude which is akin to an interior designer collecting visual material to synthesise a mood board.<sup>56</sup> In this way it represents my own tastes and preferences; it can also be seen as a visual synthesis of my normative position to the ontological question.<sup>57</sup>

The use of selection criteria, and my continuous reflection and adjustment of the corpus during its assembly may be interpreted as constituting ‘forcing’ in grounded theory. This is the practice of pushing data to fit a preconceived framework (Charmaz, 2006:18); tools such as ‘interview guidelines, units for data collection, samples, received codes, following diagrams, rules for proper memoing and so forth’ (Glaser in Charmaz, 2006:18) are examples of forcing the data. I feel that my assembly of the corpus was attempted with care and not with the objective of proving or defending a preconceived position. The corpus emerged from the collection process in the same way that my insights emerged from the analysis. As such it is merely a refined representation of a substantive area within the interior design canon.<sup>58</sup>

The actual process of collecting artefacts followed this procedure:

- 52.) See, 3.2.3 Research programme, and, see, 3.4.1 Analytic protocol for the content analysis of artefacts.
- 53.) See, 4.2 Selection Criteria.
- 54.) See, 4.4 Limiting the Application of the Study.
- 55.) E.g. to achieve a balanced between fashion retailers that cater for women, men, or those which are not gender specific; or to ensure a global corpus with emphasis on the geographic focus areas.
- 56.) See, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure, and, see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Curation.
- 57.) Also refer to my initial assessment of the corpus, see, 4.3.3 A Reflection on the Corpus.
- 58.) Barthes (1983[1967]:51) said that a magazine is a machine for making fashion; in this case ‘fashion’ as system is differentiated from garments and clothing. If a magazine is a machine for making fashion, is interior design also constructed through its representations?



I identified an interior artefact which complies with the selection criteria. The interior artefacts were primarily identified from design blogs.<sup>59</sup> The majority of the artefacts were selected as they were encountered on the internet through browsing; other artefacts were specifically included since they were relevant to another artefact already included in the corpus;<sup>60</sup> some artefacts are included since I encountered them elsewhere in the media and thought they were appropriate or interesting;<sup>61</sup> some artefacts were suggested to me by colleagues or family;<sup>62</sup> or I encountered the physical artefact and included it later.<sup>63</sup> I did not exercise explicit value judgements on the blogs or internet sources themselves but preferred popular or influential sites which are prominent and receives wider recognition.<sup>64</sup> The internet sources are merely considered as a source of data and taken at face value and assumed to be reliable;<sup>65</sup> critical assessment is reserved for the interior artefacts themselves.

Once an interior artefact was identified and selected I sourced the photographs for analysis. If the quality was sufficient on the original blog they were collected directly; otherwise photographs were sourced elsewhere.<sup>66</sup>

All internet sources were documented and all websites captured.<sup>67</sup>

The collection of the data was completed between 2 April and 18 April 2013. Depending on the time spent to identify an artefact, the length of the assessment of selection criteria, the availability and ease of collecting the meta-data, the availability of high-resolution photographs and the preparation of the memo at capture, the collection time for an interior artefact was upwards of an hour. I attempted to spend as much time as necessary to accurately capture the data and minimise mistakes. On the most productive day I could capture ten artefacts, on the least productive day only one.<sup>68</sup>

The total corpus is comprised of 72 artefacts. The corpus is summarised in the table below (see Table 4.3.1, at the end of the chapter).

- 59.) The focus areas of the blogs themselves are broad, ranging from an architectural, interior design, or product design focus to those that are focussed on design in general with a multi-disciplinary application, see, 4.3.2.1 General origins of the artefacts.
- 60.) E.g. 054 Camper Paris was included since it has relevance for 053 Camper Granada; similarly three artefacts were selected which represents the Aesop chain of cosmetic retailers (046 Aesop Newbury; 047 Aesop Islington; and 048 Aesop Chez Merci).
- 61.) E.g. 030 Interior Leather Bar.
- 62.) E.g. my partner suggested 018 Tendinha.
- 63.) E.g. 023 Freedom Cafe.
- 64.) E.g. Dezeen and Arch Daily; for further discussion on the origins of the data see, 4.3.2. Origins.
- 65.) The data was corroborated by including more than one source for some artefacts; specifically to confirm or expand the meta-data.
- 66.) E.g. from the designers websites themselves or from photographic repositories such as Flickr ([www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)).
- 67.) The websites were captured with QSR's web browser extension, NCapture; this utility allows internet content to be captured for analysis in CAQDAS. Further, it provides evidence of the data source as it existed at the time of collecting the interior artefact.
- 68.) This level of detail may be superfluous; it is included here, however, since the thesis has a pedagogic knowledge interest. It is foreseen that this thesis forms the basis of an ongoing research project in which the content of artefacts will be analysed; for pragmatic reasons I feel it is necessary to document this process.

### 4.3.2 Origins

#### 4.3.2.1 General origins of the artefacts

The following points summarize the scale and compilation of the corpus:

- The 72 interior artefacts that are included in the corpus were identified from twelve design blogs;<sup>69</sup> five of the artefacts were sourced from other sources.<sup>70</sup>
- The 72 primary photographs used in the content analysis were sourced from 41 websites.
- A total of 215 photographs were collected for inclusion in the content analysis; this includes the secondary photographs and visual connotations.<sup>71</sup>
- A total of 111 individual website impressions were captured by NCapture for inclusion in NVivo.

#### *Design blogs*

The twelve blogs and the number of artefacts selected from them are listed in the table below (see Table 4.3.2).

| Blog                       | URL                                |    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Afflante</b>            | http://afflante.com                | 2  |
| <b>Arch Daily</b>          | Arch Daily                         | 7  |
|                            | Arch Daily Brasil                  | 2  |
|                            | Plataforma Arquitectura            | 7  |
| <b>Contemporist</b>        | http://www.contemporist.com        | 1  |
| <b>The Cool Hunter</b>     | http://www.thecoolhunter.com       | 4  |
| <b>Designboom Magazine</b> | http://www.designboom.com          | 6  |
| <b>Detail Daily</b>        | http://www.detail-online.com/daily | 1  |
| <b>Dezeen</b>              | http://www.dezeen.com              | 25 |
| <b>Frame</b>               | http://www.frameweb.com            | 1  |
| <b>Inhabitat</b>           | http://inhabitat.com               | 1  |
| <b>Karmatrendz</b>         | http://karmatrendz.wordpress.com   | 1  |
| <b>Retail Design Blog</b>  | http://retaildesignblog.net        | 2  |
| <b>Trend Hunter</b>        | http://www.trendhunter.com         | 4  |
| <b>Other sources</b>       | N/A                                | 5  |

Five blogs were more prominent and delivered approximately 75 per cent of the interior artefacts. These are (in order of importance): Dezeen; Arch Daily (and its derivatives); Designboom Magazine; The Cool Hunter; and Trend Hunter. All these blogs offered search functions and organized their content by discipline or type which facilitated the search process. The blogs are updated regularly. Dezeen, Arch Daily, and Designboom Magazine (contributing 65 per cent of the artefacts) are regularly cited in academic articles.

It is valuable at this point to consider the blogs themselves as the containers of editorial content. As such it must be assumed that the

69.) Eighteen blogs in total were consulted. In some instances an interior artefact was published on more than one. I also do not consider the Arch Daily derivative blogs (Arch Daily Brasil and Plataforma Arquitectura) as independent blogs.

70.) For example from the designer's websites themselves after I selected the artefact in other ways, see, 4.3.1 Collection process

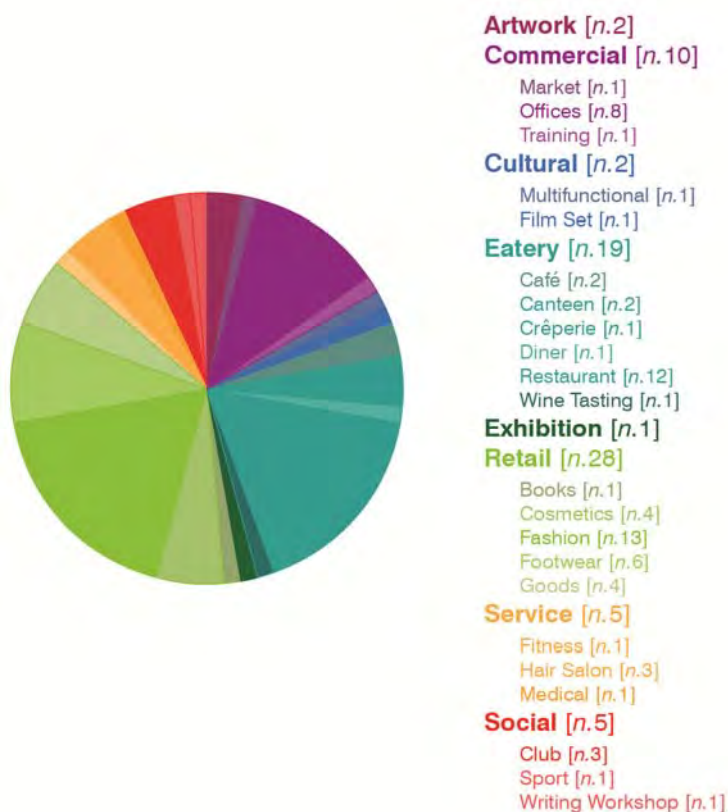
71.) The secondary photographs were captured with the artefact and their internet sources are thus captured. Since the visual connotation serves the purpose to stimulate the researcher's emphatic response it is not considered to form part of the data (it should be considered as an analytic gesture); subsequently, their internet sources are not captured, only their URL's are indicated.

artefacts included for publication already underwent a process of selection and validation. I did not investigate the blogs' editors, or their editorial policy; at this juncture I merely make the observation that the artefacts included in this corpus was subject to a second selection process where I (as researcher) acted as the second domain gatekeeper. My selection of an artefact does not merely indicate that it is acceptable to the interior design canon,<sup>72</sup> but also that it is worthy of scholarly enquiry.

#### Interior types

No predetermined typologies were used to classify the interior artefacts. During collection and analysis the interior types were indicated as the artefacts were selected. The types were gradually categorized and refined as the corpus was compiled. Eight major types were identified: Artwork; Commercial; Cultural; Eatery; Exhibition; Retail; Service; and Social.

The interior types, their sub-types, and the number of interior artefacts selected for these are listed in the diagram below (see Figure 4.3.1):



**Figure 4.3.1:** Interior types in the corpus.

Interior artefacts are functional objects and as such they are automatically transformed into signs of their functions (after Eco).<sup>73</sup> Their first communicative act is to communicate that function and all other messages or meanings contained in the artefacts are informed and mediated by their functions. In terms of the interior types selected it is clear that the corpus is in fact 'promiscuous' and comprises a large range of functional expressions. When use or function is considered the substantive area covered by the corpus is large.

The large range of functional types allows me to compare transfunctionalisation of meaning across types between artefacts. Since the number of interior artefacts included per type is limited<sup>74</sup> it is not

72.) This is attested to by their publication in the first instance.

73.) I refer to the background to semiotic interpretation, see, 2.3.1 Background.

74.) E.g. only one artefacts represents the functional category Retail – Books (013 Van Alen).

possible to generalize meaning construction in specific typologies. This thesis is considered as an initial study in this realm and it is therefore appropriate; future research should be conducted to investigate the creation of meaning in specific functional interior types to greater depth. The selection criteria limited the inclusion of functional types. Further research must be conducted for the excluded types (e.g. medical or national interiors). This thesis, and its analysis, would also allow a new critical investigation of the understanding of the cultural role of the domestic interior.<sup>75</sup>

#### 4.3.2.2 Focused origins of the artefacts

It now becomes necessary to consider the effect of the two inclusion criteria which offers options, the alignment criteria, and the consideration criteria on the corpus. I will briefly reflect on the inclusion criteria and each alignment criterion and its influence on the corpus; following this the consideration criteria are discussed collectively.

*Audience: Expert or Layperson*

51 of the photographs (70 per cent) were aimed at experts and only 21 at the laity. This indicates that in the production of publications there is an expectation of an informed audience. The blogs serve as a means to spread memes amongst peers.<sup>76</sup>

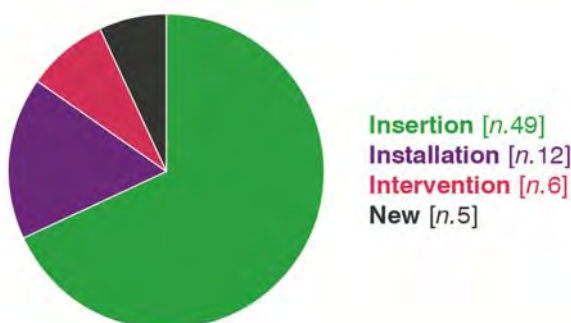
*Reader: Semantic or Critical*

62 artefacts (86 per cent) were aimed at semantic readers and 10 at critical interpreters. This criterion is aimed at indicating whether the interior artefact was specifically generated with a critical audience in mind (and not whether the artefact allows for critical interpretation)<sup>77</sup> and was intended to include at least some interior artefacts that are aimed at a critical audience. It is unsurprising that the majority is only aimed at semantic interpretation; the majority of artefacts were merely generated to be understood by the laity in a rapid fashion.

*Mode of production: Installation; Insertion; Intervention; or New*

It was decided to include a bias for the insertion in the compilation of the corpus. The insertion is characterized by a strong boundary and that it causes little permanent change to the host building during its construction. As such it allows the designer considerable freedom in the establishment of meaning or identity for such an interior. 49 interior artefacts (68 per cent) were classified as insertions; twelve as installations; six as interventions; and only five are considered as entirely new buildings.

The modes of production that produced the artefacts included in the corpus are quantified in the diagram below (see Figure 4.3.2).



**Figure 4.3.2:** Modes of production in the corpus.

75.) See, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

76.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field, for a deeper discussion on this.

77.) The possibility for critical interpretation is indicated through the use of criterion 9. Broad Reading.

*Geography: Dominant Centre; Alpha City; or The South*

The selection criteria implied tilting the corpus with a focus on the Global South, dominant design centres and Alpha cities. 22 of the artefacts originated in the South, fourteen from dominant design centres, and eleven from Alpha cities; in total the geographic alignment accounts for 47 artefacts (65 per cent of the corpus).

The geographic origins of the artefacts are diverse, with all inhabited continents represented and a total number of 24 countries included. The generalization of inferences from the corpus to the general interior design canon must be limited since the corpus cannot be considered as a truly representative sample. Analysis of the geographic origins presents a number of interesting observations that are present in the substantive area however.<sup>78</sup>

56 per cent of the artefacts were sourced from Dezeen and Arch Daily (and its derivatives) which are English, Spanish and Portuguese blogs. Although this delivered a range of geographic locations the cultural influence of colonialism is visible with the majority of artefacts also originating in the Anglosphere, Hispanosphere and Lusosphere.<sup>79</sup> It is notable that the blogs located in South America<sup>80</sup> delivered artefacts in Spain and Portugal and only a few Latin American examples. Dezeen (English) has a more global focus and a large proportion of works originating in Asia was sourced from Dezeen.<sup>81</sup>

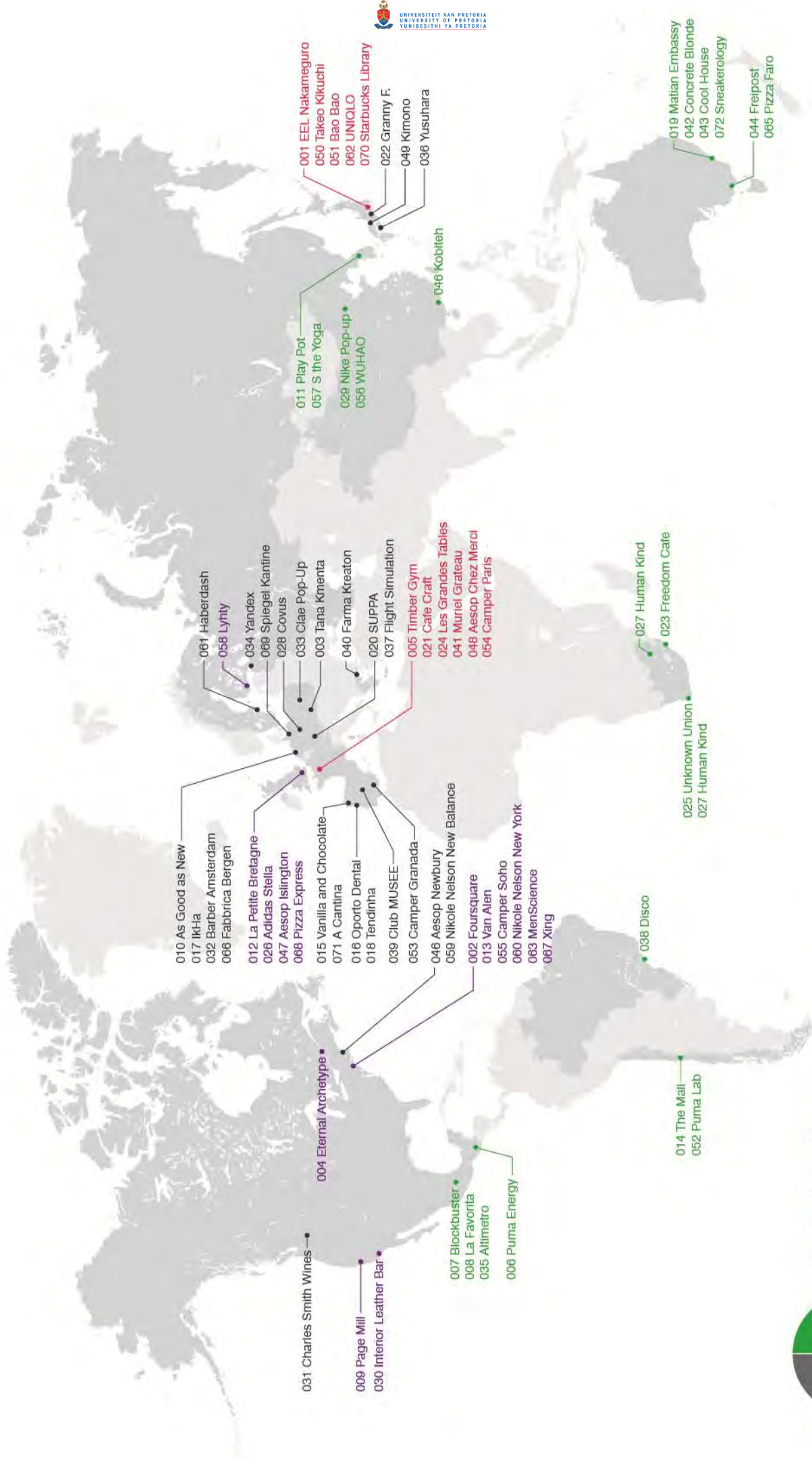
A concentration of artefacts around the North Atlantic (*n*.39) and Pacific Rim (*n*.28) is observable. These two areas account for a total of ninety three percent of the interior artefacts included in the corpus.<sup>82</sup> This may reflect the global cultural dominance of the West<sup>83</sup> and the economic importance of Asia. This phenomenon may also reflect the relevant professional maturity of interior design in these locations.<sup>84</sup>

The geographic origins of the artefacts included in the corpus are indicated in the map below (see Figure 4.3.3).

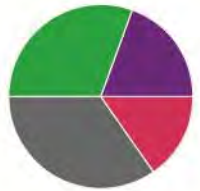
**Figure 4.3.3** (overleaf): The geographic origins of the corpus.

- 78.) I also consider the availability of artefacts in these publications to be somewhat indicative of the state of interior design (at least in the blogosphere).
- 79.) With the colonial focus on the United Kingdom, Portugal and Spain.
- 80.) Arch Daily Brasil and Plataforma Arquitectura (Chile).
- 81.) Of the fourteen Asian interior archetypes included in the corpus seven were sourced from Dezeen.
- 82.) Only three interior artefacts are located adjacent to the South Atlantic and two adjacent to the Indian Ocean.
- 83.) It also stems from the cultural context of the investigation of the thesis (a post-industrial context where the consumption and production processes of a western cultural milieu are in place), see, 4.2.2.1 Inclusion criteria.
- 84.) Another example may be the dominance of South Africa in Africa; South Africa delivered all the African interior artefacts. Coincidentally South Africa is the only African member of the International Federation for Interior Architects/Designers (IFI).





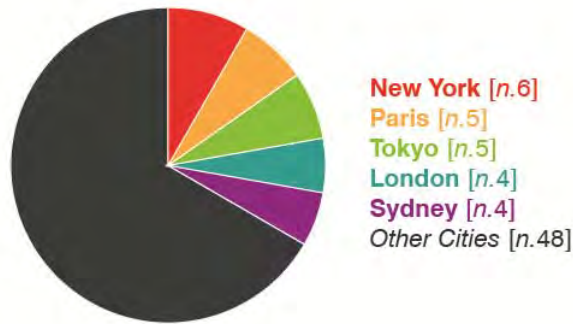
**The South [n.22]**  
**Dominant design centres [n.14]**  
**Alpha cities [n.11]**  
**Other locations [n.25]**



Australia [n.6]; Brazil [n.1]; Canada [n.2]; Chile [n.2]; China [n.3]; The Czech Republic [n.1]; Finland [n.1]; France [n.6]; Germany [n.4]; Greece [n.1]; Guatemala [n.1]; Japan [n.8]; Korea [n.2]; Mexico [n.3]; The Netherlands [n.4]; Poland [n.1]; Portugal [n.2]; Russia [n.1]; South Africa [n.4]; Spain [n.4]; Sweden [n.1]; Switzerland [n.1]; The United Kingdom [n.4]; The United States of America [n.11]

The most dominant cities from which the interior artefacts originated are (in order of importance): New York, Paris, Tokyo, London, and Sydney. All these cities are located within the geographic alignment area; while the cities of New York and London are both dominant design centres and Alpha cities. Collectively these five cities contributed 24 of the artefacts (33 percent of the corpus).

The cities that made the dominant contribution to the corpus are quantified in the diagram below (see Figure 4.3.4).



**Figure 4.3.4:** Cities with the dominant contribution to the corpus.

Although the substantive area covered by the corpus is not of such a nature that accurate general conceptions regarding the interior design canon can be reached, I feel that the geographic focus of my compilation and the canon of published works (represented by the blogs consulted) illustrate possible research focus areas for interior design. Since this thesis is concerned with interior design's methods of cultural production artefacts were sourced from the most productive and accessible areas. Further research could focus on under-represented areas, or offer a more balanced global perspective.<sup>85</sup>

85.) See, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

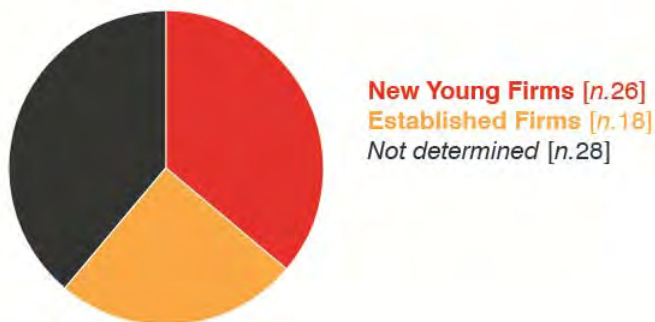
### *New young firms*

The selection of the corpus was initially based on an assumption that the works produced by young, unpublished<sup>86</sup> design firms may be more innovative or productive in a cultural sense (after Rattenbury).

Research was not directed at firms or principles and the demographics of design practices could only be determined if they were published either in the blogs or on the designer's own websites. Subsequently I was not able to fully determine the compliance with this alignment criterion. In 44 cases I was able to determine the age of the firm or its principles (in 28 cases this could not be established).

A total of 26 interior artefacts (36 per cent of the corpus) were produced by confirmed 'new young firms'; 18 interior artefacts were produced by established firms; and in 28 cases compliance could not be determined.

The compliance of the corpus with this criterion is quantified in the diagram below (see Figure 4.3.5).



**Figure 4.3.5:** The contribution of new or established firms to the corpus.

Since it is not possible to determine if this criterion altered the corpus in a significant way, and since it is not possible to test Rattenbury's (2002:206) alignment towards a new canon, it is proposed that this phenomenon be investigated in future research.<sup>87</sup>

### *Value judgement*

As domain gatekeeper I asserted my subjective influence on the compilation of the corpus by only allowing those interior artefacts which I consider to be valuable, useful, interesting, and worthy of study and emulation to be included. This criterion was selected for all 72 artefacts included in the corpus.

### *Utility*

Although the inclusion criteria were strictly applied the utility criterion (which allows an artefact which is useful to the study to be included) was utilized to allow 11 ineligible artefacts to be included in the corpus; this comprises 15 per cent of the corpus.<sup>88</sup>

86.) *Id est*, 'those not written about'.

87.) See, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

88.) Two of the artefacts were included for multiple reasons; this explains the discrepancy between the total and the sum of the artefacts listed.



The reasons to include artefacts for their utility are varied:

- Four interior artefacts were included of which the date of publication falls outside the synchrony or could not be determined accurately.<sup>89</sup>
- Five artefacts were considered as 'boundary objects'<sup>90</sup> of which the disciplinary origins are uncertain although they expressed strong interior design characteristics.<sup>91</sup>
- One artefact was created in an organic fashion by the laity.<sup>92</sup>
- One artefact was considered as a useful and insightful example (i.e. complied with the value judgement criterion), but I personally disliked the artefact.<sup>93</sup>
- Two artefacts did not meet all the inclusion criteria.<sup>94</sup>

#### *Consideration criteria*

The four consideration criteria are reflected collectively:

- 'Taste' was considered in 70 of the artefacts,
- 'Gender' was indicated in 26 of the artefacts,
- 'Privacy/Interiority' was a consideration in 65 of the artefacts, and
- 70 of the artefacts were selected since they are considered to be 'non-canonic'.<sup>95</sup>

The inclusion of consideration criteria did not radically alter the corpus. These criteria were used to ensure that the artefacts selected are of such a nature that they clearly consider the contribution of the interior artefacts to cultural production and discourse.

There are no artefacts included in the corpus which do not meet at least one of the consideration criteria.

#### **4.3.3 A Reflection on the Corpus**

This subsection aims to provide initial conceptual meaning to the interior artefacts assembled in the corpus. It will review the corpus within the theoretical field and will avoid merely describing the corpus. The purpose is to depict it in a conceptual and abstract manner. The corpus itself is considered to reflect the methods employed by interior design in the production (and commodification) of meaning, and by extension, culture in the broadest sense. Secondly, the corpus will be critically assessed to determine if it is large enough to fulfil a reasonable expectation to reach grounded theory saturation.

89.) The artefacts are: 024 Les Grandes Tables; 048 Aesop Chez Merci; 054 Camper Paris; and 068 Pizza Express.

90.) The boundary object is considered as an artefact which represents the intersection of several social worlds and is the reaction between several different actors, see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods.

91.) The artefacts are: 004 Eternal Archetype; 030 Interior Leather Bar; 048 Aesop Chez Merci (object in installation); 058 Lyhty; and 060 Nikole Nelson New York (object in installation).

92.) The artefact is 065 Pizza Faro which was created in-house by the patron; 041 Muriel Gâteau was also created by the patron, but she is a product designer and is considered as a design professional.

93.) The artefact is 037 Flight Simulation; I dislike this artefact since it is such a blatant pastiche of superficial iconic connections and represents the type of interior project which I hope the results of this thesis help to avoid.

94.) The artefacts are 004 Eternal Archetype; and 014 The Mall. Both artefacts are considered as non-commercial artefacts.

95.) The two artefacts which are the exception and serves as canonic examples are 054 Camper Paris (which is considered as canonic due to the fame and iconic status of its designers; this artefact was also included in the corpus by utilizing the utility criterion) and 055 Camper Soho (which is considered as iconic due the prominence of the architect who designed it).

#### 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field

The substantive area can initially be described as the everyday commercial practice of interior design;<sup>96</sup> in this vein the corpus is broad but specific, and it includes artefacts which represent counter movements, boundary conditions and emergent practices.<sup>97</sup>

The corpus represents a global collection of artefacts.<sup>98</sup> The opportunities for cultural exchange which globalization offers are clearly visible in the corpus and with this the possible loss of diversity which may be the result. The corpus itself is diverse with a wide range of functional types and expressions present, but I perceive a universality of place expression between the artefacts. Few artefacts manifest a national expression or other indication of their local setting<sup>99</sup> and as such the corpus could be considered as internationalist; some artefacts tacitly claim place specificity but express internationalism.<sup>100</sup> This issue raises Isar and Anheier's (2010:7) concern that globalization may lead to the possibility of a one-way decoding which generates a global *lingua franca* of easily swappable pockets of meaning.<sup>101</sup>

The universality in place expression might be the result of other factors. I will briefly reflect on these:

In the first instance, since I assumed the role of domain gatekeeper the selected artefacts would represent the influence of my own taste and value judgements. This may be considered as a possible shortcoming of the thesis; although my subjective liberty is defended.<sup>102</sup>

In the second instance the selection criteria placed emphasis on the insertion with a strong boundary condition.<sup>103</sup> This mode of production allows the interior designer considerable freedom from interference in the creation of meaning.<sup>104</sup> The boundary condition further allows the interior to be sheltered from its context. If the insertion is considered as a collection of meaningful elements ('signs') it is sheltered in denial of the real (after Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:34).<sup>105</sup> This indicates an artificial tranquillity sanctified by a distance to the world with an allusion to the real. In this case many of the artefacts assembled in the corpus represent fictionalized 'small worlds' which are highly discrete. This differentiated interior is still reliant on the outside world; knowledge of the outside world allows the inserted interior's differentness to be experienced more deeply. It is assumed that the artefacts collected which display this characteristic was designed deliberately so.<sup>106</sup>

Thirdly, the artefacts are designed to reflect the identity of the client. In the majority of cases these reflect a corporate identity that is not place

96.) For a formal definition of the substantive area, see, 4.4.1.1 Limitations in terms of the scope of the study.

97.) These 'marginal artefacts' enrich the corpus without radically altering it.

98.) See, 4.3.2.2 Focused origins of the artefacts.

99.) Examples of place specific artefacts are 023 Freedom Cafe; 028 Covus; and 056 WUHAO.

100.) E.g. 043 Cool House.

101.) Refer to the introduction to the problem and its setting, see, 1.1 Introduction.

102.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study; and, see, 2.2 Cultural Production.

103.) See, 4.2.2.2 Alignment criteria, 16 Mode of Production: Installation; Insertion; Intervention; or New.

104.) I refer to Wilwerding (2013:82) who listed the difficulties which interior designers face when constructing meaning. See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

105.) Also refer to this quotation: "the generalized consumption of images, of facts, of information aims to *conjure away the real with the signs of the real*, to conjure away history with the signs of change, etc." (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:33).

106.) There is such large number of artefacts like this in the corpus that I will only highlight a few; these include: 008 La Favorita; 013 Van Alen; 016 Oporto Dental; 029 Nike Pop-up; 051 Bao Bao; etc.

specific;<sup>107</sup> other artefacts are conceptually informed by the theme they address;<sup>108</sup> or are specifically constructed to create fantastical spaces that are removed from their surroundings.<sup>109</sup> In all these instances the design brief and concept contributes to the appearance of a global *lingua franca*.

In the fourth instance, these interior artefacts are technical objects; as such the first communicative function they must perform is to indicate their use.<sup>110</sup> Their meaningful contribution is dependent on transfunctionalisation<sup>111</sup> and may initially be considered to be of secondary importance.

Despite these possible contributing factors the cultural exchange of memes must be approached with care. In some of the artefacts locational and temporal memes are exchanged which produces artefacts that are out-of-place<sup>112</sup> or out-of-time.<sup>113</sup> My value judgement in these cases is reserved. I do not necessarily chastise this practice but consider it only valid if it is approached deliberately and with care, intellect, and wit.<sup>114</sup> The thesis aims to contribute such a rigorous interior design strategy. The corpus is considered as valuable and contributing to this endeavour.

The discussion now takes a Marxist turn, in *The Consumer Society. Myths and Structures* Baudrillard (1998[1970]:27) offers a description of the 'drugstore' which may be interpreted as a generic description of the corpus:

*The drugstore (or the new shopping centre) achieves a synthesis of consumer activities, not the least of which are shopping, flirting with objects, playful wandering and all the permutational possibilities of these ... [the drugstore] does not juxtapose categories of merchandise, but lumps signs together indiscriminately, lumps together all categories of commodities, which are regarded as partial fields of a sign-consuming totality. In the drugstore the cultural centre becomes part of the shopping centre. It would be simplistic to say that culture is 'prostituted' there. It is **culturalized**. Simultaneously, commodities (clothing, groceries, catering etc.) are also culturalized in their turn, since they are transformed into the substance of play and distinction, into luxury accessories, into one element among others in the general **package** of consumables.*

I do not share Baudrillard's belief that signs are lumped together indiscriminately; in contrast I feel that the signs collected in the interior artefacts are selected or generated and applied with care.<sup>115</sup> I value his

107.) E.g. 006 Puma Energy and 052 Puma Lab are located in Guatemala City and Santiago de Chile respectively; they reflect the global brand (Puma) not their specific locations. Similar examples are the artefacts created for Aesop and Camper; although both these brands promote diversity in their interior offering.

108.) E.g. 007 Blockbuster which reflects film-making.

109.) E.g. 018 Tendinha; 019 Martian Embassy; and 034 Yandex.

110.) I refer to the discussion of interior types above, see, 4.3.2.1 General origins of the artefacts.

111.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions.

112.) E.g. 012 La Petite Bretagne which in name and appearance is French but situated in London; and 064 Kobiteh which is Malaysian but located in Hong Kong.

113.) E.g. 040 Farma Kreaton which is nostalgic although it projects a contemporary feeling.

114.) I feel that all the artefacts included in the corpus created meaning in a critical fashion, none of them are pure pastiches that evoke another place or time in a naive fashion and only one uses pastiches in a superficial manner (037 Flight Simulation).

115.) The corpus, in its entirety, lumps together 'all categories of commodities' in a promiscuous fashion.

description of the commercial interior as a nexus of cultural production and specifically enjoy his notion that culture is culturalized in the commercial interior and that this facilitates the culturalization of consumer commodities. As the mediator between small scale and mass production (after Bourdieu)<sup>116</sup> the commercial interior provides the social space of consumption and facilitates mass produced culture. This is an example of the interior artefact serving as the tangible vehicle for the expression of intangible aspects of culture. The corpus then fulfils the analytic purpose for which it was assembled, as a collection of cultural goods to be interpreted. These artefacts obtain meaning in their facilitation of choice in consumption.<sup>117</sup>

As spaces of consumption several of the interior artefacts display commodities in profusion.<sup>118</sup> Baudrillard (1998[1970]:26) asserts that the display of vast quantities of goods and the offering of a wide selection is an indication of the contemporary hope that “there should not be enough, but too much – and too much for everyone”. Objects are presented in a super-abundant manner; they are arranged for the consumer to choose commodities from a selection of complementary objects. In many cases the selection of one object implies that others will be acquired and consumed too. In some of the interior artefacts this presentation of complementary objects are inherent in the product offering;<sup>119</sup> in other cases the product offering is deliberately altered as part of the interior intervention.<sup>120</sup> For Baudrillard this implies that few consumer objects are offered alone, they are part of an inventory which comprises a total category. This has particular interior design specificity where:

*The shop-window, the advertisement, the manufacturer and the **brand name**, which here plays a crucial role, impose a coherent, collective vision, as though they were an almost indissociable totality, a series. This is, then, no longer, a sequence of mere objects, but a chain of **signifiers**, in so far as all of these signify one another reciprocally as part of a more complex super-object, drawing the consumer into a series of more complex motivations (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:27).*

(His description here is in stark contrast to the indiscriminately lumping together of signs in the drugstore.)

I deliberately selected a contemporary corpus and limited the synchrony from February 2011 to the date of selection; despite this the corpus is dating already and I feel the urge to include newer artefacts.<sup>121</sup> This reflects an attitude in which culture is diminished in the service of mass consumption recycling (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:100-102). For Baudrillard cultural recycling is the new cultural product and it is used to reflect the cultural consumer’s ability to be ‘in the know’, to ‘know what’s going on’. In this case culture is perceived as a cyclical fashionable commodity that needs to be updated continuously. This is in exact

116.) I refer to the background to cultural production, see, 2.2.1 Background.

117.) Specifically if the meaning of an artefact is applied in the Peircian sense as the actions and uses which it produces.

118.) E.g. 011 Play Pot which connotes abundance and generosity through the display of stacks of crockery on the serving counter.

119.) E.g. 047 Aesop Islington and 063 MenScience; the presentation of cosmetic ranges serves as ideal example of this phenomenon.

120.) E.g. 010 As Good as New where a selection of second hand furniture is painted in the same gray colour to impart uniformity to the temporary shop.

121.) E.g. the new Camper store opened in Shanghai designed by the Chinese architects Neri&Hu.

opposition to the traditional definition of culture which is conceived as an inherited legacy of works, thoughts and tradition and the continuous dimension of critical and theoretical reflection (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:101).

This new cultural capital is obtained by showing that you are informed and up to date; that you know what is new. This is not the 'new' which contributes to cultural variety<sup>122</sup> or innovative in Eco's sense in which the artefact has the potential to determine social organisation.<sup>123</sup> Cultural recycling is bound in the 'cycle' of fashion in which individuals are expected to 'recycle' themselves on a seasonal basis (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:100). Barthes (1983[1967]:10) identified the 'fashion of one year' as the time span of one cycle in the fashion system.<sup>124</sup> The fashion system is a system of mass production and it could exercise its hegemony to create automatic redundancy in the system. Interior design is contrasted as a system of small scale production and it creates individual artefacts that are not mass produced; are expensive, difficult and time-consuming to execute; and are expected to have a reasonable life-span.<sup>125</sup> A clearly defined cycle is not present in the interior design system but it does portray some characteristics of cultural recycling. The most notable is the rapid publication of work in both the printed and electronic media. The assembled corpus reflects this.

An object intended for cultural recycling is not made to last (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:101) and obsolescence is designed into the object.<sup>126</sup> Although these objects still try to claim universality and to assert themselves as ideal reference they are losing semantic substance. Just as the interior artefacts included in the corpus are not an indiscriminate lumping together of signs they also do not show a lack of semantic substance; the corpus allows for deep and critical semantic reflection.

Since elements of cultural recycling is clearly visible in the production of interior design Baudrillard's criticism of cultural recycling must be taken seriously. He states that cultural recycling is "arbitrary, transient, cyclical, and adds nothing to the intrinsic qualities of the individual" (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:100). This is the attainment and application of cultural capital in the most banal and superficial ways. Although some of the assembled artefacts display this;<sup>127</sup> others alter or inform the intrinsic qualities of the individual or their cultural milieu in a traditive, innovative, iterative and ongoing fashion. They truly display the qualities of culture as a system of inherited legacy of works, thoughts and tradition and the continuous dimension of critical and theoretical reflection (after Baudrillard).<sup>128</sup>

I will spend some time to consider the origins of the corpus from digital publication as this has relevance in understanding cultural recycling as it is evident in interior design production. In the introduction to the thesis I

122.) See, 2.2.4 Domain Gatekeepers, and, see, 4.2.2.1 Inclusion criteria.

123.) I refer to the background to cultural production, see, 2.2.1. Background.

124.) In a footnote he states that the year is comprised by different fashion seasons but that these seasons does not constitute a diachronic series; the synchronic unit of the fashion system is the 'line' which is annually renewed.

125.) The expected lifespan of the interior artefact introduced the topic of temporality; I will return to this later in this section. For the time being it is convenient to note that some artefacts included in the corpus are expected to have a relatively long life span (e.g. 005 Timber Gym and 036 Yusuhara) while others were constructed for short-term use only (e.g. 017 IkHa).

126.) Specifically in fashion design and ITC technologies. The electronic gadget must be the ultimate contemporary example of cultural recycling and it did not exist in Baudrillard's time. (It is the superficial forces of cultural recycling which leads to consumers sleeping in line in-waiting for the latest iPhone.)

127.) Particularly 037 Flight Simulation with its superficial pastiches; and 034 Yandex with its stale humour.

128.) 004 Eternal Archetype; 008 La Favorita; 014 The Mall; 024 Les Grandes Tables; 031 Charles Smith Wines; and 049 Kimono serve as examples, amongst others.

quoted Leach's (2002:232-234) criticism of the digital era as an age in which the built environment becomes oriented towards the fictive and imaginal.<sup>129</sup> Leach's criticism here is aimed at the perceived inferiority of the image which degrades the practice of architecture (with its formal considerations and bias).<sup>130</sup> Interior design in contrast is specifically oriented towards the fictive and imaginal (at least as far as the approach of this thesis is concerned). The interior artefacts assembled in this corpus were specifically selected since they give insights into the production methods of these imaginal and meaningful practices.

The corpus was not only selected digitally, but it is highly visual. Our fantasies of reality are signified in the image and consumed through it (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:33). For Leach (2002:232) this represents a "dream-world that has evolved under the conditions of extreme opulence offered by advanced capitalism". In this digital paradigm digital devices allow their users to isolate themselves in an immaterial interior world which is divorced from their immediate surroundings (Leach, 2002:233). When the corpus is considered, the insertion with its strong boundary serves as a physical manifestation of such isolated interior worlds (which can be discrete from their surroundings). This physical isolation allows the interior to be constructed as a fictive and imaginary world. It is even arguable that the creation of a strong boundary is of primary importance in the establishment of a 'small world'.<sup>131</sup> The creation of the imaginal interior allows for an aesthetic critique which facilitates upscale consumption (after Zukin, 2002[1991]:201-202). The imaginal interior can then be considered as not only a message in itself, but a medium for another message. The interior, within its eco-system, becomes a 'set of objects in total signification' (after Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:27).<sup>132</sup>

Baudrillard (1998[1970]:102) declares:

*[C]ulture ... can be produced (and virtually is produced) **out of the medium itself, out of the code of reference.***

This is one of the most assertive declarations on the role of the artefact (as 'text', medium, or 'code of reference') in the construction of meaning (and culture itself) that I have encountered in the literature.

Through the constant consumption and alteration of images in the system of cultural recycling the meaning of artefacts themselves become cyclical. This transience of meaning is reflected in the poststructural view of interpretation and the role of the reader but in this case the temporal influence is taken further, the encoded meaning itself is constructed to be destroyed and recycled. In other words, meaning is made to become meaningless.

This is a clear reflection on the consumption of interiors through their pictorial representations. The consumption of the iconic representation stands for the canon of images that is accessed without any physical interaction with the technical object ('actual artefact'). It becomes necessary to differentiate the consumption of the image (and its characteristics) from the consumption of the interior. The existence of two

129.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

130.) I discussed the effect of the image on interior design's ontology and the specific 'degradation' this implies for architectural criticism in my dissertation (König, 2010:17-18).

131.) In this instance the creation of a strong boundary can be isolated as an interior design method of initial importance.

132.) The interior artefact is a 'complex super-object' (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:27), above.



parallel canons becomes pertinently clear: 1.) the canon of objects; and 2.) the canon of images.<sup>133</sup>

Although the consumption of images of the interior (and my use of them in the analysis employed for this thesis) display clear characteristics of cultural recycling it would be unfair (at this stage) to project that onto the physical interior itself.<sup>134</sup> Since the interior artefact is temporally extended it does not fully conform to cultural recycling and imaginal consumption; it forms part of a larger physical (built) eco-system which is assembled and altered over time.<sup>135</sup>

It must be remembered that some artefacts were deliberately made to be destroyed.<sup>136</sup> If it is considered that these artefacts were pre-designed to become redundant rapidly; it must be asked if this is a wasteful practice or strategically innovative?<sup>137</sup>

Lane (2009[2000]:63-64) discusses the 'new temporality' that emerged in which people live their lives as the successive consumption of objects; this is contrasted to the previous era where objects were timeless and made to outlive their users.<sup>138</sup> Although the interior artefacts contained in this corpus can be placed on a continuum of temporality, from those that are clearly made to be destroyed to those with a longer (but still limited) life-span, none of them are made to outlast their creators. It is a general observation that interior artefacts have a short life cycle (Königk, 2010:19); this aspect is a pertinent component of interior design's ontology and at this stage I merely take note of it in the context of consumption and will reserve judgement.<sup>139</sup>

In the introduction to the thesis I cited Tang (1998:542) who stated that interior design interiorises the 'political economy of the sign'.<sup>140</sup> In Chapter 2 I returned to Tang who used this concept as an illustration of interior design's semiotic devices as cultural production methods; interior design is a practice which spatially expresses the sign.<sup>141</sup> Since the thesis is

133.) Here I consider Downton's categorisation (in Attiwill, 2007:59); refer to the background to the iconic semiotic structure, see, 2.4.1 Background.

134.) I physically experienced only two artefacts contained in the corpus: 023 Freedom Café; and 025 Unknown Union. 052 Puma Lab was experienced by proxy, since I visited its manifestation in Johannesburg; similarly I experienced 054 Camper Paris through its iteration in Rome. In these two case I could experience and interact with the interior, and they were true to their representations; this was only in the imaginal sense, since the architecture (the form, space and planning) of the localities were different; but in their use-objects, materials, lighting, etc. they were what was represented in photographs of 'other' localities (places). I felt that this is one of the roles of the imaginal aspects of interior design: to transplant place.

135.) In 'Medium is Message' Baudrillard (1998[1970]:122-124) discusses the consumption of the message; in this case cultural recycling is taken to the extreme where the actual message becomes 'the message-consumption message': "a message of segmentation and spectacularisation, of misrecognition of the world and foregrounding of information as commodity, of glorification of content as sign". Baudrillard states that in this situation we move from the primacy of the signified to the primacy of the signifier. Looking back it feels as if Baudrillard predicted our current era where life events only become 'real' when they are documented and transmitted on social media. The electronically published interior is such an event.

136.) E.g. 017 IkHa; 029 Nike Pop-Up; 030 Interior Leather Bar; 033 Clae Pop-Up; and 043 Cool House, amongst others. These interior artefacts were made for a short life-span and currently only exist through their representations.

137.) The reader can also consider the 'Camper Walk in Progress' concept by Martí Guixé; this is a temporary installation, using minimal material resources (e.g. shoe boxes and red markers) which is used by the brand to establish its presence while the 'permanent' outlet is constructed. The 'Walk in Progress' concept is notable since it became so iconic that some 'temporary' artefacts were never destroyed and continued as permanent retail outlets, e.g. Camper Walk in Progress, Neue Schönhauserstrasse, Berlin (the temporary store in the Piazza de Spagna, Rome was replaced by a permanent manifestation designed by the Bouroullec brothers, refer to 054 Camper Paris).

138.) E.g. ceremonial chalices, cathedrals and monuments.

139.) I do not necessarily believe that an object that lasts for a long time is more valuable than one which is consumed quickly. (Some useless objects, like the Chernobyl and Fukushima reactors, are merely impossible to destroy.)

140.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

141.) See, 2.3 Semiotic Interpretation.

presented as part of the theoretical approach aimed at the synthesis between capital and meaning I will spend some time on this concept.

The political economy of the sign is a synthetic structure which results from the convergence of the bourgeois vulgate<sup>142</sup> (and its emphasis on 'culture') and the Marxist vulgate (which is ideologically aligned to economics); these vulgates are dependent on the transcription of content into either of these forms (i.e. meaning or capital) (after Baudrillard, 1976:112). The political economy of the sign (like this thesis) therefore represents the attempts of 20<sup>th</sup> Century theory to reach synthesis between these facets. In his criticism of *The Consumer Society*, Lane (2009[2000]38-39) states that Western culture is dependent on its objects to construct its identity; but it can be taken so far that these objects must be destroyed (particularly through in-built obsolescence). The consumer society represents the synthesis between capital and meaning through its driven need to generate meaning and to indicate expenditure.

In 'Towards a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign' Baudrillard (1976:113) asserts that the commodity value of an object is a sign of that object. If it is considered that the first sign-value of a technical object is to communicate its function (after Eco) it can then be asked, *is this communication of commodity value a second order function which is dependent on the process of transfunctionalisation?*

Baudrillard (1976:113) disagrees, in fact he does not even consider transfunctionalisation by stating that the commodity value is not 'added on' as a message but is itself set up as total medium of communication which governs all social exchange. The primary function of the imaginal object is then to contain a message which can be consumed; its technical use in this case can then be relegated to being a mere container. It is that the technical use (or typology) of the artefact serves such a secondary function in the generation of cultural meaning which makes it acceptable to assemble a 'promiscuous' corpus such as this.<sup>143</sup>

Baudrillard (1976:113) asserts that whether the 'material contents of production' or the 'immaterial contents of signification' are considered matters little. The object exists as a sign-form in which the code of the political economy reduces symbolic ambivalence. The tangible and intangible aspects are synthesized into a single construct. When the interior artefacts are considered as such conflated objects in which their material contents and immaterial signification can no longer be differentiated, their value as meme-carrying objects destined for interpretation is elevated; the medium is the message.<sup>144</sup>

To take this argument to the extreme: interior design is created for its own sake. The system through which it is documented, disseminated and consumed as images is a self-perpetuating system. The canon of images exists with the sole purpose to generate more images. It is the canon of objects which is the source of the canon of images; and the canon of images informs the creation of technical, physical objects.

Just as the material contents cannot be separated from immaterial signification, the canon of images can no longer be separated from the canon of objects. I therefore contradict my earlier assumption; to criticize the image of the interior is to criticize the interior artefact; to consume the image is to consume the interior. If the imaginal representation of the interior is subject to cultural recycling so is the material and physical artefact.

142.) I use the term 'vulgate' since it was used by Baudrillard; it is understood to mean the traditionally accepted collection of texts. I therefore interpret it as a canonic collection; which has relevance here.

143.) I refer to my description of typologies above, see, 4.3.2.1 General origins of the artefacts.

144.) *Id est*, the interior artefact is a complex super-object.



Interior design is thus subject to Baudrillard's (1998[1970]:101) criticism:

*[T]he work ... is condemned to be merely an ephemeral sign because it is produced, deliberately or otherwise, in what is today the universal dimension of production: the dimension of cycling and recycling. Culture is no longer made to last.*

Culture is subject to the same expectations to be 'up to the minute' as material goods (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:101-102); it is therefore inevitable that the 'acculturated' signify their cultural capital by being in the know. This is a characteristic of culture in a post-global world and the dangers of living in a period of rapid cultural change must be accepted. Interior design (as a manifestation of this paradigm) is subject to the same pressures. Interior designers (and researchers) express their 'up-to-the-minuteness' as a method to display innovation by proxy. In the same vein that the media indicates happiness by showing people who are happier because of their possessions (Lane, 2009[2000]:69) the publication of 'good' interior design artefacts indicates design fulfilment. When interior designers consume novel interior design through its publication it enables them to imbue their own work with an artificial sense of innovation and relevance.<sup>145</sup> I hope that the critical reflection contained in my thesis overcomes this obvious shortcoming.

The 72 works selected for the corpus displays my value judgement. I consider these works to be good and valuable. In my self-identification as interior designer I am proud to be associated with these works. It is with discomfort that I ask: *do we create meaningless ephemeral objects?*

Consumption is the intersection between culture and commodification; it represents the synthesis between capital and meaning. Commodity is produced as sign, sign value; and the signs as commodities (Baudrillard, 1976:114).<sup>146</sup> The interior artefacts included in the corpus embody such a synergy between physical form (material object) and meaning (immaterial signification) which is produced for consumption.

The interior artefacts collected here are objects of consumption in themselves and they facilitate further objects of consumption. Objects of consumption have social meaning such as status, prestige, fashion etc. Like the Saussurian sign they function differentially and arbitrarily through their relations with other objects (Lane, 2009[2000]:72). They exist firstly, as object of mass production; and secondly, as mediators between small scale and mass production (after Bourdieu). Culture is the produced context in which human behaviour takes place – this is physically true for the constructed interior. All the artefacts included represent physical contexts that allow human behaviour to take place within them, or they comment on, or alter human behaviour. These interior artefacts provide the physical location for the daily life of consumption to take place; as I indicated above, whether this consumption takes material or intangible form matters little.

By investigating these hegemonic artefacts and determining their methods of production, would it become possible to not only ask, how is it done, but also, *how should it be done?*

Should interior design strike a new course?

145.) This point towards an assumption held by many (including myself) which can be summarised in the aphorism "the more you know, the more you have to design with".

146.) This is, again, a description of the complex super-object.

#### 4.3.3.2 Sufficiency<sup>147</sup>

To facilitate a process of emergence I made the strategic decision to collect all the artefacts in a predetermined time period. The aim was to collect a substantial amount of data which will allow the conceptual themes to emerge from the data, and not to select interior artefacts which support a preconceived argument.<sup>148</sup>

The size of the sample is determined in two (non-statistical) ways: The first is through the use of a rapid evidence assessment (REA) in which the size of the sample is limited to what can be collected during a specific period of time.<sup>149</sup> The second is through what constructivist grounded theory (CGT) calls 'saturation'. This is aimed more at the analysis than the collection itself. Saturation is the point where further analysis does not provide new insights. Saturation does not occur during the collection of the data, but through the theoretical treatment of the codes, categories, and concepts (Charmaz, 2006:113).<sup>150</sup> It is only through the expectation that saturation is possible that the corpus can be closed.

The corpus has no statistical relevance and the outcomes of the thesis cannot necessarily be generalized to a specific larger population. Since grounded theory is a process analysis and not a unit analysis it does not require generalisability (although it is a possible outcome); grounded theory is not a verificational method and does not require generalization to the general population that is reflected (Glaser, 1999:117). Despite this, I feel that I have taken all reasonable steps necessary to create a holistic corpus and to assemble it with academic rigour and care. This is facilitated by using similar methods to assemble the data than that which will be used to analyze it; it is generational and general.<sup>151</sup> The research design is further explicitly aimed at the avoidance of quantitative information.<sup>152</sup> The corpus allows me the opportunity of constant comparison; this is the comparison of coding with coding; coding with data; and data with data (after Charmaz, 2006). The analysis allowed me to identify connections between coding and artefacts and to establish connections between artefacts.<sup>153</sup>

Reflecting on the scale and origins of the corpus (and the conceptual density its analysis allows) I feel confident that this corpus affords the opportunity to interpret the artefacts and formulate new theory through creative abstraction. This theory creation is especially made possible through application of the second creative act in the generation of meaning: the act of interpretation. In the grounded theory tradition the research is aimed to create modifiable statements of probability (Glaser, 1992:29). The corpus was thus selected with the same purpose; it was compiled for the purpose of analytic interpretation which will be used to generate theory. The grounded theory cannot be tested.

In Chapter 2 I echoed calls for interior design to shift its research focus towards its theoretical underpinnings.<sup>154</sup> I highlighted the possibility that

147.) The term is taken from Dey (in Charmaz, 2006:114).

148.) This does not exclude a rigorous, but somewhat organic and flexible collection method, see, 4.3.1 Collection process, and, see, 4.3.2 Origins.

149.) I collected 72 artefacts between 2 and 18 April 2013.

150.) See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting

151.) See, 3.4 Analytic Instrument.

152.) Although I can quantify a number of CGT factors, e.g. coding references; and I use some statistical analysis in coding comparisons and used quantitative methods in the description of the corpus, see, 4.3.2 Origins.

153.) See, 3.4.3 Analytic integration.

154.) See, 2.2 Cultural Production

interior design's hegemonic agency may be identified and uncovered; and that this can subsequently utilized in a way that is not merely aimed at the commercial exploitation of the discipline's artefactual residue. I am confident that the corpus is of sufficient size and complexity to make a significant contribution in this endeavour.

I feel that the corpus is large enough in scale (and contains enough data) to represent a substantive area within the discipline's field of production. Further, by considering the collected interior artefacts within the larger theoretical field the corpus is sufficiently large to allow me to reach conceptual density. I have a reasonable expectation to reach analytic saturation.

Since the corpus is *sufficient* to support the research aims I will consider the corpus as closed and will not expand it.

#### 4.4 LIMITING THE APPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The study's limitations emerge throughout the research and theoretical construction processes. Those stated here have bearing on the data.<sup>155</sup>

This section will offer a brief assessment of the scope and reliability of the data (and its contribution to theory construction) in a grounded theory context. I initiate this discussion by quoting from Goulding (1999:16):

*Finally, the researcher needs to be clear about claims of generalisation. While some grounded theorists take the research into a variety of settings, this is most common in longitudinal and large scale projects. It is not necessarily a condition for all grounded theory research, the aim of which is parsimony and fidelity to the data.*

This study is small and limited; and at its most ambitious it may lead to further longitudinal or large scale studies;<sup>156</sup> the study is therefore limited and does not make claims for generalization. As such this study adopts the modest ambition to create a substantive theory. This is defined by Charmaz (2006:189) as the "theoretical interpretation or explanation of a delimited problem in a particular area". The thesis was delimited in a number of areas.<sup>157</sup>

It was determined as part of the research that it would be sufficient to study a limited corpus (after Barthes).<sup>158</sup> The selected corpus was assembled from artefacts published during a limited synchrony (11 February 2011 to date). The synchrony is relatively compact and represents a short period of time in the discipline's development (although it includes a significant theoretical event). The study is therefore not able to comment on the historical development of meaning production in the discipline.<sup>159</sup>

The selection criteria delivered a corpus that covers a broad scope of interior artefacts created for the commercial sector in the realm of production and consumption. These interior artefacts were contrived by designers and do not include works generated in an organic fashion or by the laity (with one exception).<sup>160</sup> The works assembled here is therefore a reflection of the work of interior design (as a professional discipline) in the commercial realm and not the interior artefact (as a product of humanity) in general.

The corpus was further limited by my own judgement;<sup>161</sup> the study is therefore greatly influenced by my personal limitations. This is exacerbated by the grounded theory research process which may be greatly influenced by the abilities and insight of the researcher; the 'skill and thoroughness' in discerning and recording useful data has further impact (Charmaz, 2006:16).<sup>162</sup>

155.) It is noted that since data collection and analysis are so closely related in grounded theory it is impossible to eliminate a methodological discussion entirely.

156.) See, 7.4 Recommendations.

157.) See, 1.5 Delimitations.

158.) See, 3.2.3 Research programme; specifically, 2. Determine the corpus.

159.) To access a study of this nature I refer the reader to the 'Intypes (Interior Archetypes) Research and Teaching Project' which is conducted by Cornell University; this is a longitudinal and large scale research project.

160.) In general, organic interior artefacts created by the laity are best represented by the domestic interior; however a great proportion of commercial interiors are also created in this fashion.

161.) See, 2.2.4 Domain Gatekeepers.

162.) These are serious qualitative shortcomings and throughout this report on the research I therefore attempt to be as transparent as possible; I do not wish to claim subjectivity in a naive fashion and certainly do not believe that 'beauty lies in the eye of the

In summary the substantive area can then be considered as cultural production as it is reflected in a collection of contrived, commercial interior artefacts; published after February 2011; and assembled subjectively. The theoretical investigation reflects a search for meaning and understanding; it is aimed at innovative theory and not the determination of universal laws (after Goulding, 1999:17). At best the results are suggestive and not definitive.

The study is conducted as the content analysis<sup>163</sup> of pictorial representations<sup>164</sup> of interior artefacts.<sup>165</sup> The absence of the actual object (or technical artefact)<sup>166</sup> has clear limitations; these limitations lead to a general belief that there exist two canons of built artefacts; i.e. the canon of images and the canon of objects (after Downton in Attiwill, 2007; but also refer to Caan, 2011). Despite my efforts to defend the photograph as evidence and my synthesis of the two canons into a single canon,<sup>167</sup> I accept this limitation. It is also ascertained that the majority of the photographs are aimed at expert peers and edited to conform to professional conventions.<sup>168</sup> However, since these photographs are intended for consumption within the interior system they are extremely relevant and powerful as meaningful artefacts in this context.

I was not able to test the alignment criterion aimed at including more works from new and young firms.<sup>169</sup> The study can therefore not make any probability statements regarding cultural innovation in young firms. This is expanded to include the effect of any demographic attribute of the author of an artefact on the meaning contained in the artefact.

Before restating the limitations synoptically and succinctly I wish to spend a little more thought on the generality of the theory. In contrast to the definition of substantive theory (above) Charmaz (2006:187) offers this definition for formal theory. Formal theory is the “theoretical rendering of a generic issue or process that cuts across several substantive areas of study. The concepts in a formal theory are abstract and general and the theory specifies the links between these concepts”. Although substantive theory is only the result of explanations of a particular area it may become possible to make contributions to a formal theory which is more abstract. It must be noted that generality can only emerge from the analytic process and cannot be the result of a prescribed goal for it. Limiting the study narrowly and situating it in a defined substantive area is a method to safeguard the data from forcing by the researcher (Charmaz, 2006:180).<sup>170</sup> Cultural production represents a generic issue or process; at the completion of the thesis I will reflect whether the substantive theory

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beholder’. Early in the research process my study leader (who is an accomplished qualitative researcher) was concerned that I may deliver a subjective, ‘black box’ reflection on a contentious topic in lieu of a research report which complies with the academic conventions of a doctoral study. Such are the long shadows and residuals of positivist dominance (after Charmaz, 2006:73). My thesis is the inaugural doctoral study in the Programme for Interior Architecture at the University of Pretoria, and as such it reflects my normative stance and I probably include more activism than is necessary (despite the humorous asides).

163.) See, 3.2.1 Content analysis through interpretation, and, see, 3.4 Analytic Instrument.

164.) See, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure.

165.) See, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies.

166.) See, 2.3.2 Semiotic devices.

167.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

168.) See, 4.3.2.2 Focussed origins of the artefacts; particularly Audience: Expert or Layperson; 70 per cent of the photographs are aimed at an expert audience.

169.) See, 4.2.2.1 Alignment criteria, and, see, 4.3.2.2 Focused origins of the artefacts.

170.) One example of strategically avoiding forcing is my decision not to strictly categorise the *in vivo* codes into concepts (see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting); this was to prevent the phenomena to be presented as employed more categorically than they actually are (after Charmaz, 2006:181).

generated here makes a contribution to this formal area; however, this aim is explicitly excluded from the thesis.<sup>171</sup>

#### **4.4.1 Limitations**

In summary, the application of the study is limited in the following ways:

##### 4.4.1.1 Limitations in terms of the scope of the study

- The study aims to create a substantive theory for the substantive area which is described as ‘cultural production as it is reflected in a collection of contrived, commercial interior artefacts; published after February 2011; and assembled subjectively’.
- The study does not consider actual, physical artefacts and analyses interior artefacts through their pictorial representations only.
- This work does not consider the effect of the demographic attributes of the authors of artefacts.
- The thesis does not aim to contribute to the formal theory of cultural production.
- The study will not make it possible to generalize meaning construction in specific typologies.
- The study will not report on the content of the associated meanings themselves.

##### 4.4.1.2 Limitations in terms of the reliability of the study

- The study will not produce universal laws of a predictive nature and aims to make probability statements only.
- This work does not comment on the historical development of meaning production in the discipline of interior design.
- This thesis does not consider the role of the interior artefact as a product of humanity in general and is only concerned with the work of interior design as a commercial practice.
- The study is limited by my personal limitations and subjectivity.
- The results of this thesis are suggestive and not definitive.
- This study will draw no statistical inferences from the data.
- The study takes note of the possible loss of meaning which the editorial photograph may produce; in addition it is accepted that, as a conventional artefact, the photograph produces meaning which is not present in the artefact it represents.

171.) See, 6.2.3 The theoretical contributions to interior design’s ontology.

#### 4.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I reviewed the data by reporting on the compilation of selection criteria; by describing the collection process and the data sample itself; and by critically reviewing the data sample within the theoretical field.

The chapter specifically reported on the compilation of a 'corpus' which is a collection of artefacts with analytic purpose. Since corpora are intentional, their compilation can be augmented with the use of selection criteria determined during the research process itself. Since the taste of domain gatekeepers have bearing on their mediation of valuable cultural capital, their taste will also have bearing on the selection of artefacts to be included in corpora. Corpora must be compiled on the basis of selection criteria that are aligned with the eventual analysis; this gives expression to the analytic purpose of corpora.

For the selection of the corpus (which forms the basis of this thesis) I proposed 'inclusion'; 'alignment'; and 'consideration' criteria. These categories of criteria have differential application in the selection of artefacts.

This chapter did not review the collection procedure, which was considered as a methodological matter; it looks back on the collection process as it occurred during the rapid evidence assessment. A non-probability, judgmental sample was compiled which covers the substantive area with a degree of representivity and generality. Photographic documentation and meta-data was collected for 72 interior artefacts between 1 April and 18 April 2013. The chapter provided a quantitative overview of the data as an indication of the scope of the sample. It further reflected on the documentary origins of the published works, and the physical origins of the interior artefacts depicted. To articulate the corpus as a source of empirical data the chapter included a descriptive review of the origins and the content of the corpus.

This chapter provided initial conceptual meaning to the corpus; this was aimed at reviewing the corpus within the theoretical field and mere description was surpassed. This section contributed conceptual depth and takes a critical and analytic position within the theoretical field.

It is noted that the corpus has a global character and manifests an internationalist stance; this gives support for concerns raised earlier that interior design may contribute to cultural exchange with a subsequent loss of cultural diversity; possible reasons for this were considered.

The interior artefact was considered as a component of a 'complex super-object' which is active in the realm of consumption. Within the consumer society cultural recycling is considered as an arbitrary cyclical practice which adds nothing to the intrinsic qualities of the individual and stands in strong contrast to the traditional definition of culture as an iterative process (after Baudrillard).

The interior design system, like the fashion system, illustrates characteristics of cultural recycling. Unlike the fashion system however, interior design is a system of small scale production and it cannot exercise hegemonic agency to effectively design redundancy into its production processes.

In this context the consumption of the image of the interior and the consumption of the interior artefact itself is synthesized as a single system. This allows me to collapse the dual canon (the canon of objects and the canon of images). At the conclusion of the theoretical reflection I introduce the Utopian question into the normative stance.

In grounded theory analysis it is expected that the data sample be broad and large enough, and the analysis complete enough, that a point of 'saturation' is reached. Saturation is the point where the inclusion of further data and analysis reveals no further insights. Since it is impossible to determine this position before the research process is complete I merely considered whether I have reached a reasonable expectation for

saturation. It was therefore asked whether the corpus is sufficient. It was determined that the corpus represents a substantive area and that conceptual density is possible; the corpus was therefore closed.

Finally I reviewed the application of the study and placed limitations on the scope and reliability.<sup>172</sup>

172.) Sections of this chapter formed part of two papers titled: 'Determining Selection Criteria for the Compilation of an Interior Design Corpus' (König, 2013a); the paper was delivered at the Design Educators Forum of South Africa (DEFSA) Conference, *Design Cultures: Encultured Design*, Vanderbijlpark, 2-3 September 2013; and 'Interior Design's 100%: Engaging the Cultural Capital of the 'Other''. Delivered at the Cumulus Johannesburg Conference, *Design with the Other 90%: Changing the World by Design*, 22-24 September 2014.

Sections of this chapter was also incorporated in a keynote address titled: 'An Assessment of a Global Interior Design Corpus: 72 Interiors after February 2011' (König, 2013b); the address was delivered at the *Taipei International Design Conference*, 15-16 October 2013.



**Table 4.3.1: The corpus of interior artefacts**

| Case code                     | Interior Artefact                         | Type   | Design Firm  | Suburb   | City           | Country         | Blog                       |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|--|----------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| <b>001 EEL Nakameguro</b>     | EEL Nakameguro                            | Retail - Fashion<br>(informal wear;<br>gender not determined)  | Schemata Architecture Office:<br>Jo Nagasaka.                                      | Higashiyama Meguro                                 | Tokyo          | Japan           | Dezeen                     |
| <b>002 Foursquare</b>         | Foursquare<br>Headquarters                | Commercial - Offices<br>(Headquarters, social<br>network)      | Foursquare: Dennis Crowley<br>and Derek Stewart;<br>Designer fluff: Audra Canfield | SoHo   | New York       | USA             | Dezeen                     |
| <b>003 Tana Kmenta</b>        | Táňa Kmenta Hair Salon                    | Services - Hair Salon  | Studio Muon: Jiří Zhoř   |  | Brno           | Czech Republic  | Dezeen                     |
| <b>004 Eternal Archetype</b>  | Labyrinth of the Eternal<br>Archetype     | Artwork -<br>Installation                                      | Shyra De Souza   |  | Montreal       | Canada          | Designer                   |
| <b>005 Timber Gym</b>         | Regis Racine<br>Gymnasium                 | Social - Sports Facility                                       | Atelier D'Architecture:<br>Alexandre Dreyssé                                       | Drancy   | Paris          | France          | Detail Daily               |
| <b>006 Puma Energy</b>        | Puma Energy Offices                       | Commercial - Offices<br>(Regional;<br>fashion (sports wear))   | Studio Domus   | Pradera  | Guatemala City | Guatemala       | Plataforma<br>Arquitectura |
| <b>007 Blockbuster</b>        | Blockbuster: Itinerant<br>Film Exhibition | Exhibition   | Work!: Samuel Barrios  | University Museum of<br>Contemporary Art<br>(MUAC) | Mexico City    | Mexico          | Plataforma<br>Arquitectura |
| <b>008 La Favorita</b>        | La Favorita de<br>Insurgentes             | Eatery – Diner   | ARCO Arquitectura<br>Contemporánea   |  | Mexico City    | Mexico          | Plataforma<br>Arquitectura |
| <b>009 Page Mill</b>          | 395 Page Mill First Floor                 | Commercial - Offices<br>(Headquarters<br>services (ITC):foyer) | Studio O+A   |  | Palo Alto      | USA             | Dezeen                     |
| <b>010 As Good as New</b>     | As Good As New pop-<br>up shop at SPRMRKT | Retail - Goods<br>(furniture)<br>Pop-up Store                  | i29  |  | Amsterdam      | The Netherlands | Dezeen                     |
| <b>011 Play Pot</b>           | Play Pot Restaurant                       | Eatery - Restaurant  | Lim Tae Hee Design Studio  |  | Seoul          | Korea           | Dezeen                     |
| <b>012 La Petite Bretagne</b> | La Petite Bretagne<br>Crêperie            | Eatery - Crêperie  | Paul Crofts Studio   |  | London         | UK              | Dezeen                     |

**Table 4.3.1: The corpus of interior artefacts**

| Case code                        | Interior Artefact                      | Type  | Design Firm   | Suburb            | City              | Country         | Blog                    |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| <b>013 Van Alen</b>              | Van Alen Books                         | Retail – Books  | LOT-EK  | Flatiron District | New York          | USA             | Plataforma Architectura |
| <b>014 The Mall</b>              | Espacio Cultural The Clinic: The Mall  | Cultural - Multifunctional (cafe, library, music room, boutique hotel, theatre, restaurant) | Cristián Contreras  |                   | Santiago de Chile | Chile           | Plataforma Architectura |
| <b>015 Vanilla and Chocolate</b> | Acondicionamiento Vainilly & Chocolate | Retail - Fashion (informal wear; female)  | Salgade E Liñares Arquitectos   |                   | La Coruña         | Spain           | Plataforma Architectura |
| <b>016 Oporto Dental</b>         | Clínica Dental, Oporto                 | Services - Medical (dental)   | Paulo Merlini   |                   | Oporto            | Portugal        | Plataforma Architectura |
| <b>017 IkHa</b>                  | ikHA Pop-up Restaurant                 | Eatery - Restaurant (temporary)   | Oatmeal Studio: Rosa Dalle Vedove, Annika Syrjämäki                             |                   | Den Haag          | The Netherlands | Dezeen                  |
| <b>018 Tendinha</b>              | Tendinha dos Clérigos                  | Social - Club (dance, restaurant, bar)  | Atelier Veloso Arquitectos  |                   | Oporto            | Portugal        | Frame                   |
| <b>019 Martian Embassy</b>       | The Martian Embassy                    | Social - Writing Workshop   | LAVA, Laboratory for Visionary Architecture, Will O'Rourke and The Glue Society |                   | Sydney            | Australia       | Karmatrendz             |
| <b>020 SUPPA</b>                 | SUPPA Sneaker Boutique                 | Retail - Footwear (sneakers)  | DLF Product Design: Daniele Luciano Ferrazzano                                  |                   | Stuttgart         | Germany         | Dezeen                  |
| <b>021 Cafe Craft</b>            | Cafe Craft                             | Eatery - Restaurant   | POOL  |                   | Paris             | France          | Dezeen                  |
| <b>022 Granny.F</b>              | Granny.F Salon                         | Services - Hair Salon   | Hiroyuki Miyake   |                   | Toyokawa          | Japan           | Dezeen                  |
| <b>023 Freedom Cafe</b>          | Freedom Cafe                           | Eatery - Restaurant   | Egg Designs   |                   | Durban            | South Africa    | Designer                |
| <b>024 Les Grandes Tables</b>    | Les Grandes Table du 104               | Eatery - Restaurant   | Ciguë   |                   | Paris             | France          | Designer                |

**Table 4.3.1: The corpus of interior artefacts**

| Case code                       | Interior Artefact                                      | Type   | Design Firm   | Suburb      | City          | Country         | Blog            |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|-------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>025 Unknown Union</b>        | Unknown Union  | Retail - Fashion (informal wear; male)         | Architecture at Large: Rafael de Cárdenas                         |             | Cape Town     | South Africa    | Dezeen          |
| <b>026 Adidas Stella</b>        | Adidas by Stella McCartney                             | Retail - Fashion (informal wear; female)       | APA London  | Fulham Road | London        | UK              | Dezeen          |
| <b>027 Human Kind</b>           | Human.Kind Advertising                                 | Commercial - Offices (services)                | PPS Architects  |             | Johannesburg  | South Africa    | Arch Daily      |
| <b>028 Covus</b>                | Covus Central GmbH                                     | Commercial - Offices (services; ITC)           | sbp: Seel Bobsin Partner  |             | Berlin        | Germany         | Arch Daily      |
| <b>029 Nike Pop-up</b>          | Nike Pop-Up Showroom                                   | Retail - Fashion (sportswear; unisex)          | Maggie Peng and Albert Tien                                       |             | Beijing       | China           | Arch Daily      |
| <b>030 Interior Leather Bar</b> | Set Design and Decoration for "Interior. Leather Bar." | Cultural – Film Set (documentary)              | Set Design: Liz Phillips; Director of Photography: Keith Williams |             | Los Angeles   | USA             | Designer        |
| <b>031 Charles Smith Wines</b>  | Charles Smith Wines Tasting Room and Headquarters      | Eater - Wine Tasting                           | Olson Kundig Architects   |             | Walla Walla   | USA             | Inhabitat       |
| <b>032 Barber Amsterdam</b>     | Barber Amsterdam                                       | Services - Hair Salon                          | Ard Hoksbergen  |             | Amsterdam     | The Netherlands | Dezeen          |
| <b>033 Clae Pop-Up</b>          | Clae Pop-Up Shop                                       | Retail - Footwear (male)                       | mode:lina architekci  |             | Poznań        | Poland          | Arch Daily      |
| <b>034 Yandex</b>               | Yandex St Petersburg Office                            | Commercial – Offices (Regional; ITC)           | za bor architects   |             | St Petersburg | Russia          | Arch Daily      |
| <b>035 Altimetro</b>            | Altimetro  | Commercial - Offices (Tourism; extreme sports) | Darkitektura  |             | Colonia Roma  | Mexico          | Arch Daily      |
| <b>036 Yusuhara</b>             | Community Market Yusuhara                              | Commercial - Market                            | Kengo Kuma and Associates   |             | Yusuhara      | Japan           | The Cool Hunter |

**Table 4.3.1: The corpus of interior artefacts**

| Case code                    | Interior Artefact                 | Type  | Design Firm                              | Suburb      | City      | Country      | Blog                |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|-------------|-----------|--------------|---------------------|
| <b>037 Flight Simulation</b> | simmiINN Flight Simulation Centre | Commercial - Training (flight simulation)             | Boris Banozic Architecture / Scenography |             | Stuttgart | Germany      | The Cool Hunter     |
| <b>038 Disco</b>             | Clube Disco                       | Social - Club (dance, bar)                            | Estudio Guto Requena; Maurício Arruda    |             | Sao Paulo | Brazil       | Arch Daily Brasil   |
| <b>039 Club MUSEE</b>        | Club MUSÉE                        | Social - Club (dance, bar, art gallery)               | Parolio & Euphoria Lab                   |             | Madrid    | Spain        | The Cool Hunter     |
| <b>040 Farma Kreaton</b>     | Restaurant Farma Kreaton          | Eatery - Restaurant                                   | Minas Kosmidis (Architecture in Concept) |             | Komotini  | Greece       | The Cool Hunter     |
| <b>041 Muriel Grateau</b>    | Muriel Grateau Gallery            | Retail – Goods (tableware) Gallery                    | Muriel Grateau                           |             | Paris     | France       | Retail Design Blog  |
| <b>042 Concrete Blonde</b>   | Concrete Blonde Restaurant        | Eatery - Restaurant                                   | Dreamtime Australia Design               |             | Sydney    | Australia    | The Cool Hunter     |
| <b>043 Cool House</b>        | The Cool House                    | Retail - Goods (home ware)                            | Steve Cordony                            | Bondi Beach | Sydney    | Australia    | The Cool Hunter     |
| <b>044 Freipost</b>          | Freipost Headquarters             | Commercial - Offices (Headquarters; courier services) | ITN Architects                           |             | Richmond  | Australia    | Designboom Magazine |
| <b>045 Truth Coffee</b>      | Truth Coffee                      | Eatery - Cafe and Coffee Roastery                     | Haldane Martin                           |             | Cape Town | South Africa | Dezeen              |
| <b>046 Aesop Newbury</b>     | Aesop Newbury Street              | Retail - Cosmetics                                    | William O'Brien Jr.                      |             | Boston    | USA          | Dezeen              |
| <b>047 Aesop Islington</b>   | Aesop Islington                   | Retail - Cosmetics                                    | Ciguë                                    | Islington   | London    | UK           | Dezeen              |
| <b>048 Aesop Chez Merci</b>  | Aesop Chez 'Merci'                | Retail - Cosmetics                                    | Ciguë                                    |             | Paris     | France       | Designer            |

**Table 4.3.1: The corpus of interior artefacts**

| Case code                            | Interior Artefact                   | Type  | Design Firm                                      | Suburb               | City              | Country | Blog                |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------|-------------------|---------|---------------------|
| <b>049 Kimono</b>                    | Otsuka-Gofukuten Kimono Store       | Retail - Fashion (kimono; gender not indicated)         | Yusuke Seki                                      |                      | Kyoto             | Japan   | Dezeen              |
| <b>050 Takeo Kikuchi</b>             | Takeo Kikuchi                       | Retail - Fashion (male)                                 | Schemata Architecture Office: Jo Nagasaka        |                      | Tokyo             | Japan   | Designboom Magazine |
| <b>051 Bao Bao</b>                   | Bao Bao by Issey Miyake             | Retail - Fashion (accessories; female)                  | Moment   |                      | Tokyo             | Japan   | Designboom Magazine |
| <b>052 Puma Lab</b>                  | Puma Lab                            | Retail - Fashion (informal; sportswear; unisex)         | Plajer & Franz                                   |                      | Santiago de Chile | Chile   | Arch Daily Brasil   |
| <b>053 Camper Granada</b>            | Camper Granada                      | Retail - Footwear (unisex)                              | A-cero   |                      | Granada           | Spain   | Contemporist        |
| <b>054 Camper Paris</b>              | Camper Paris                        | Retail - Footwear (unisex)                              | Studio Bouroullec                                |                      | Paris             | France  | Dezeen              |
| <b>055 Camper Soho</b>               | Camper Soho                         | Retail - Footwear (unisex)                              | Shigeru Ban Architects and Dean Maltz Architects | SoHo                 | New York          | USA     | Dezeen              |
| <b>056 WUHAO</b>                     | WUHAO Curated Shop                  | Retail - Goods (Fashion; Furniture; Objects; Tea; etc.) | Isabelle Pascal (curator)                        |                      | Beijing           | China   | Dezeen              |
| <b>057 S the Yoga</b>                | S. The Yoga Studio                  | Services - Fitness (Yoga Studio)                        | YoonSpace Design & Architecture                  |                      | Gyeonggi          | Korea   | Designboom Magazine |
| <b>058 Lyhty</b>                     | LYHTY - Habitare                    | Artwork - Interior Installation                         | Erkko Aarti Architecture                         | Habitare Design Fair | Helsinki          | Finland | Designboom Magazine |
| <b>059 Nikole Nelson New Balance</b> | New Balance Boston Experience Store | Retail - Fashion (sportswear; unisex)                   | Nikole Nelson                                    |                      | Boston            | USA     | Designer            |
| <b>060 Nikole Nelson New York</b>    | New Balance NYC Experience Store    | Retail - Fashion (sportswear; unisex)                   | Nikole Nelson                                    | Flatiron District    | New York          | USA     | Designboom Magazine |

**Table 4.3.1: The corpus of interior artefacts**

| Case code                    | Interior Artefact                        | Type                                     | Design Firm  | Suburb            | City      | Country         | Blog               |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------------|
| <b>061 Haberdash</b>         | Haberdash                                | Retail - Fashion (informal wear; male)   | Form Us With Love  |                   | Stockholm | Switzerland     | Afflante           |
| <b>062 UNIQLO</b>            | UNIQLO Ginza Flagship Store              | Retail - Fashion (informal wear; Unisex) | Wonderwall Inc: Masamichi Katayama                         | Ginza             | Tokyo     | Japan           | Afflante           |
| <b>063 MenScience</b>        | MenScience Androceuticals Flagship Store | Retail - Cosmetics and Nutrition (male)  | HWKN (Hollwich Kushner): Matthias Hollwich, Marc Kushner   |                   | New York  | USA             | Trend Hunter       |
| <b>064 Kobiteh</b>           | Old Street Kobiteh                       | Eatery - Restaurant                      | NC Design and Architecture: Nelson Chow                    |                   | Hong Kong | China           | Dezeen             |
| <b>065 Pizza Faro</b>        | Pizza Faro                               | Eatery - Restaurant (pizzeria)           | Pizza Faro (in-house): Yvette Romanin                      |                   | Thornbury | Australia       | Trend Hunter       |
| <b>066 Fabbrica Bergen</b>   | Fabbrica Bergen                          | Eatery - Restaurant                      | Tjep: Frank Tjepkema, Leonie Janssen, Jeroen van Laarhoven |                   | Bergen    | The Netherlands | Trend Hunter       |
| <b>067 Xing</b>              | Xing Restaurant                          | Eatery - Restaurant                      | LTL Architects (Lewis, Tsurumaki, Lewis)                   |                   | New York  | USA             | Retail Design Blog |
| <b>068 Pizza Express</b>     | Pizza Express Concept Restaurant         | Eatery - Restaurant (pizzeria)           | Ab Rogers  | Richmond          | London    | UK              | Trend Hunter       |
| <b>069 Spiegel Kantine</b>   | Kantine for Der Spiegel                  | Eatery - Canteen (corporate; journalism) | Ippolito Fleitz Group Identity Architects                  |                   | Hamburg   | Germany         | Dezeen             |
| <b>070 Starbucks Library</b> | Starbucks Espresso Journey               | Eatery - Cafe (take-away)                | Nendo  |                   | Tokyo     | Japan           | Dezeen             |
| <b>071 A Cantina</b>         | A Cantina                                | Eatery - Canteen (museum; shop)          | Estudio Nómada   | Cidade da Cultura | Galicia   | Spain           | Dezeen             |
| <b>072 Sneakerology</b>      | Sneakerology                             | Retail - Footwear (sneakers)             | Facet Studio: Olivia Shih, Yoshihito Kashiwagi             |                   | Sydney    | Australia       | Arch Daily         |

**CHAPTER 5**  
**A THEORY OF INTERIOR DESIGN'S METHODS TO**  
**CONSTRUCT MEANING**

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the result of the grounded theory process<sup>1</sup> and presents the grounded theory hypothesis:

*Interior design produces culture through synthesis, proximity, associations, timeliness, and technification.*

The emergence of this hypothesis, and its theoretical development, is an original and substantial contribution to the interior design body of knowledge and expertise.

This chapter presents the construction of a theory to explain and illustrate the methods employed by interior design to construct meaning (and by extension culture in the broadest sense); this is the final stage of the research process. The purpose of this chapter is to offer a modifiable central account for a large proportion of the data;<sup>2</sup> the theory presented here is merely suggestive and can be considered as neither predictive nor definitive.

The grounded theory presented in this chapter is the result of the synthesis of analytic memos created during the content analysis of the corpus and their subsequent analytic integration.<sup>3</sup> This process involved three steps: sorting; focused coding; and the construction of theory. The theory presented here is organized around the five core grounded theory categories: Synthesis; Proximity; Associations; Timeliness; and Technification. These categories represent interior design's methods to construct meaning within the substantive area. The grounded theory categories form the basis of the theory of interior design's methods of cultural production. The categories represent the methods and are discussed in a cohesive manner to include their constituent concepts.<sup>4</sup> The interior design methods presented here are described by way of example. The methods' properties are determined as the result of the grounded theory processes of memo-writing, constant comparison, and sorting.

Each method (grounded theory category) is discussed in narrative form; the method is described by discussing and illustrating its general properties; the actions the method undertake and the effects these create. In the text I combine analytic statements with supporting descriptions and illustrations (after Charmaz, 2006:152). This description is firstly informed by the data set; as such it is limited and only covers the substantive area. Where applicable additional literature is added to deepen and broaden the discussion in an attempt to augment the grounded findings. In a similar manner the data set is expanded in this chapter by including additional photographs to illustrate the theory that is generated; this is included to augment (but not to replace) the findings which emerged from the initial content analysis of 72 photographs of interior artefacts.<sup>5</sup> The addition of additional data sources is included for theoretical elaboration and refinement (Charmaz, 2006:100) to explicate the grounded theory categories. Grounded theory aims to construct general and abstract theory; this chapter is grounded in the data and will be concrete and

- 1.) See, Chapter 3 Methods.
- 2.) See, Chapter 4 Data; I specifically refer to the limitations placed on the study in term of its scope and reliability, see, 4.4.1 Limitations.
- 3.) See, 3.4.3 Analytic Integration
- 4.) E.g. the category Timeliness is comprised of three constituent concepts: Iterative, Traditive, and Temporal; these constituent concepts are not discussed individually. The integration of codes, concept and categories is discussed in Chapter 3, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting.
- 5.) Refer to the discussion of the data in Chapter 4, see, 4.3 Data.



descriptive in its presentation. In the discussion of each category I will refer to the data set, before summarizing the characteristics and properties; actions; and effects of the category in a general and abstract manner. These characteristics are considered as original research findings of the thesis. This chapter does not only offer descriptions of the methods isolated and their interdependent use; it will also be beneficial to argue against the notion of cultural recycling<sup>6</sup> as the isolated methods indicate a strong iterative character.

This chapter should be considered as the foremost response to the main problem and premise addressed by this thesis.<sup>7</sup> The theory presented here is the result of identifying, isolating, describing and interpreting interior design's methods of cultural production; it further offers the future possibility to synthesise these methods in a rigorous design strategy to construct meaning in the design of new interior artefacts.<sup>8</sup>

- 6.) *See*, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.
- 7.) *See*, 1.2. The Problem Statement and Premise.
- 8.) The third component of the problem and premise is to speculate on the cultural role of the interior artefact, this will be addressed in Chapter 6 Modes of Cultural Production in Interior Design.

## 5.2 SYNTHESIS IN INTERIOR DESIGN

An interior artefact is a complex object that is composed of an assortment of constituent elements and components. Synthesis relates to the selection of these components and bringing them together in a cohesive whole. In this discussion I will illustrate how this process is executed in a physical manner, but I will expand the argument to demonstrate that synthesis informs the selection and use of the other design methods and as such becomes the primary interior design method to construct meaning.

In its most rudimentary understanding synthesis can be described as the process whereby a larger artefact is created by combining simple components and objects. In the *As Good As New Pop-up Shop at SPRMRKT* the installation is comprised of a collection of second hand furniture and household goods (see Figure 5.2.1).



**Figure 5.2.1:** *As Good As New Pop-up Shop at SPRMRKT*, i29, Amsterdam, c.2012  
(Photography: Lisette Ros ©)  
[010 *As Good as New*].

The constituent components are painted gray to achieve uniformity in the synthesis through the use of a single colour.

When synthesis is applied it is a method to combine constituent components and methods to generate meaningful syntagms. In this case the meaning of the interior artefact is considered as the meaning contained in a coherent string of signs. As an example I refer to *Tendinha dos Clérigos* (see Figure 5.2.2).



**Figure 5.2.2:** *Tendinha dos Clérigos*, Atelier Veloso Arquitectos, Oporto, c.2013  
(Photography: José Campos ©)  
[018 *Tendinha*].

In this nightclub a conventional method employed in the interior design of nightclubs, to simply paint the interior a uniform colour (usually black or grey) and focusing capital investment on the sound equipment and lighting is deviated from by cladding the interior in timber and painting it bright pink. As in the case of *As Good As New* uniformity in the synthesis is achieved through the adornment of the interior. However as a 'coherent string of signs' the synthesis is more complex as it involves the use of an interior archetype which is supported formally (with the faceted ceiling) and through adornment (the pink soffit and walls). Synthesis is therefore not only the combination of physical components but the coherent use of different interior design methods.<sup>9</sup>

The cases used above imply that synthesis is a method that is reliant on the use of existing elements and it avoids the creation of entirely new or novel artefacts. Synthesis is a process of selecting, arranging and combining found objects, materials, forms, patterns and uses. The components selected for the synthesis will act as meaning carrying devices which will connote first- and second-order meaning by making associations to internal and external meaning.<sup>10</sup> In the *Puma Energy Offices* a major interior design decision is the selection of appropriate furniture (see Figure 5.2.3).



**Figure 5.2.3:** *Puma Energy Offices*, Studio Domus, Guatemala City, c.2011 (Photography: Alejandro de León ©) [006 Puma Energy].

The use artefacts in this case communicate the use typology (or first-order meaning); the arrangement of Robin Day chairs with tables creates a constellation which indicates that this is a dining area.<sup>11</sup> The use typology is primarily indicated through the additive assembly of found components (furniture, fixtures, fittings, and equipment such as the sink and fridge); while the newly designed elements (e.g. the bulkheads and cabinetry) merely reinforce the primary message.

The combination of elements in meaningful syntagms implies that multiple interior design methods are used to generate the signs that form the syntagm. Synthesis is therefore extended to the selection and combination of differing methods; and applying these in combination. The synthesis of methods will be described by referring to three projects from the corpus:

- 9.) These constituent methods which form part of the synthesis of an interior artefact are discussed below; I refer to Timeliness, Associations, and Technification.
- 10.) See, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.
- 11.) See, 5.3 The Use of Proximal Assemblies in Interior Design.

Firstly, *The Cool House* was included in the corpus as an example of a project which was generated nearly entirely through the acts of styling and decoration (see Figure 5.2.4).



**Figure 5.2.4:** *The Cool House*, Steve Cordony, Sydney, 2012 (Photography: Steve Cordony ©) [043 Cool House].

This project serves as a second example that synthesis is the additive assembly of existing components. This installation is a temporary retail space for the blog *The Coolhunter*; it was conceived by an interior stylist to indicate the use of domestic artefacts which are on sale. In this interior meaning is transferred between the domestic and commercial realms in a commercial space with a residential character.

This project is primarily generated using curation as a method. This implies the careful selection, arrangement and display of objects, artefacts and other agents of cultural meaning.<sup>12</sup> In this project when curation was undertaken it involved the selection and arrangement of objects (e.g. beach umbrellas, carpets and potted plants), colour (which is embedded in the use objects, e.g. yellow upholstery or patterned carpets), and materials. In addition to the tangible elements comprising the synthesis this project utilizes a number of methods; examples are the craftsmanship evident in the wood-turning (coffee tables), the use of images (non-figurative murals), a number of proximal assemblies (e.g. the constellation comprising a sofa and recliners; and the ensembles: side tables with magazines, and recliners with scatter cushions), colour and decoration (in various applied colours, patterns, motifs and other methods to supply the interior with adornment) and furnishing (in this case functional decoration in the form of scatter cushions).

Secondly, in *Fabbrica Bergen* synthesis is achieved by combining various interior design methods (see Figure 5.2.5).

12.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Curation.





**Figure 5.2.5:** *Fabbrica Bergen*, Tjep, Bergen, 2011  
(Photography: Yannic Alidarso ©)  
[066 Fabbrica Bergen].

Synthesis is achieved in the establishment of an interior archetype ('intype'). The isolated dining booth is described as the intype 'incubate'. This is a shared unit of space which is isolated from the larger environment (Intypes, sa); this archetype is established formally (the extruded tube) and through an iconic connection with railway cars. In addition the booth is isolated from the larger environment by adding a threshold (ladder). A constellation (dining table and banquetts) are placed within the dining booth which indicates the first-order meaning (dining). In addition the meaning is strengthened by using objects (e.g. the chandelier) and lighting.

Lastly, in the *Pizza Express Concept Restaurant* an oversized pendant and the light that it casts onto the dining table and banquette is synthesised in the intype 'incubate' (see Figure 5.2.6).



**Figure 5.2.6:** *Pizza Express Concept Restaurant*, Ab Rogers, London, 2010  
(Photography: Dezeen ©)  
[068 Pizza Express].

In addition the place setting (including glasses, cutlery, candles and cruet) is an example of an ensemble; and the combination of furniture is considered as a constellation.<sup>13</sup> These methods are used in a synthetic manner to construct a large and complex artefact, but they are also embedded within each other in a hierarchical fashion. Objects in

13.) See, 5.3 The Use of Proximal Assemblies in Interior Design.

combination form proximal assemblies; these in turn are combined with colour and material to comprise the interior.

To state that synthesis implies the selection and combined use of methods to generate meaning is an important point. During the synthetic assembly of a complex string of meaningful elements both the physical manifestation and the functional characteristics of those elements must be considered (from a semiotic point of view). When I consider the artefacts assembled in this corpus I suspect that there is no concrete design syntax and that design can be made analogous to language at best, but should never be considered as a language with a distinct grammatical structure.<sup>14</sup>

In the *New Balance NYC Experience Store* an interior sculpture is used to introduce meaning in the interior (see Figure 5.2.7).



**Figure 5.2.7:** *New Balance NYC Experience Store*, Nikole Nelson, New York, 2011  
(Photography: Jeff Harris ©)  
[060 Nikole Nelson New York].

In my original analysis of this artefact I concluded that the interior designer composed this object from a number of smaller objects and 'stitched' them together utilising craftsmanship (*papier maché*). The sculpture incorporates artefacts from the shoe manufacturing process, complete shoes, and materials. The sculpture is used to portray events in the development of the sportswear brand. The artefact is compiled through a process of curation; this extends the synthesis beyond merely selecting to include the notion of taking care of. Objects and methods are not merely used; they are used in order to protect them by ensuring their ongoing existence. Interior design in this case is not merely a discipline which engages in cultural recycling, since this curation of methods implies that meaning is constructed in the traditional and iterative sense.

In addition to combining methods, and taking care of interior design methods to ensure their ongoing iterative development, the use of synthesis in interior design functions to strengthen the cultural functions of the other design methods and principles. Although this was already tacitly stated above I will illustrate this property with one further example:

14.) I return to the discussion of design as a linguistic system later in the chapter, see, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.

In the *Granny.F Salon* synthesis is achieved through the combination of a range of methods (see Figure 5.2.8).



**Figure 5.2.8:** *Granny.F Salon*, Hiroyuki Miyake, Toyokawa, c.2012  
(Photography: Dezeen ©)  
[022 *Granny.F*].

In the analysis of this project I identified ten different design methods that are used in combination to portray a range of meanings. In this project a boundary is created between the washing stations and cutting stations. I will consider this boundary briefly, and discuss the constituent methods in a hierarchical fashion stating the Low-order<sup>15</sup> codes (methods) first. Firstly two decorative methods are used in combination: a material (glazed bricks) is used to establish a decoration (pattern); this decorative masonry wall forms the structure of the interior and is used as a punctured boundary between functions. This boundary is emphasized with a light (in an alcove). This boundary is used to separate two technical functions (washing and cutting). These Low-order methods are used to establish three High-order<sup>16</sup> symbolic motifs which communicate the sequential use of the space. In the first the boundary is elevated to form the symbolic motif<sup>17</sup> edge; in this case the boundary forms a clear edge between two adjacent places. This edge is punctured with four thresholds, which serves as defined transition points between adjacent places. Finally a journey is created between functional stops. In this project meaning is created by utilising a range of symbolic motifs which function in conjunction to control technical use and movement in the interiors; this sets up a functional ritual and controls the narrative use of the interior.

The creation of meaning in this interior illustrates that the synthetic use of a range of methods affects the strengthening of the cultural functions of the individual methods.

In the first interiors discussed in this section the synthesis between constituent components and methods are 'complete'. In other words the constituent components combine to form coherent artefacts. The use of synthesis in the interior does not have to be complete and contrast between the constituent components may be introduced. This may be

- 15.) The Low-order codes are sub-divided into lesser Low-order codes (colour; craftsmanship; decoration; form; furnishing; image; intertextuality; light; material; object; signage; and techneme), and greater Low-order codes (boundary; boundary object; ensemble; iconic connection; indexical connection; inhabitation; iteration; performance; symbolic connection; synthesis; taste good; temporality; and tradition). See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Hierarchy.
- 16.) The High-order codes are sub-divided into lesser High-order codes (analogy; constellation; curation; narrative; and typology), and greater High-order codes (archetype; convention; micro-ecology; style; and symbolic motif). See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Hierarchy.
- 17.) For a discussion on the symbolic motifs, see, 5.3 The Use of Proximal Assemblies in Interior Design.



useful to generate eclecticism through contrasting iconic styles; to indicate change of use or function; or to indicate temporality and cultural transfer between successive users.

In *Accondicionamiento Vainilly & Chocolate* two iconic styles are used in contrast to create an incomplete synthesis (see Figure 5.2.9).



**Figure 5.2.9:**  
*Accondicionamiento Vainilly & Chocolate*, Salgade E Liñares, La Coruña, 2012  
(Photography: Héctor Santos-Díez ©)  
[015 Vanilla and Chocolate].

The interior can generally be described as an example of late modernism; but this style is undermined by using a neoclassical chair. The iconic styling (late modernism) is established through the synthetic combination of material (concrete), colour (white), and archetype ('white box'). This generates a meaningful syntagm which is contrasted with a piece of furniture. The upholstered neo-classical chair connotes taste and expense even though it is stylistically out of place in the rest of the interior.

The synthesis of meaning carrying elements plays an important role in the establishment of adornment. I will consider firstly the creation of adornment, and secondly the application of adornment. I use 'adornment' here as a generic term to incorporate decoration and ornament. Decoration is a practice devoted to visual pleasure and ornament is applied decoration, specifically three-dimensional adornment such as can be found in the built environment (Brett, 2005:4).

To illustrate the creation of adornment I identified three synthetic combinations from the corpus: the combination of technemes; the combination of furnishing and colour; and the combination of material and colour.



To illustrate the combination of technemes I refer to the *Freipost Headquarters* (see Figure 5.2.10).



**Figure 5.2.10:** *Freipost Headquarters*, ITN Architects, Richmond, 2012 (Photography: Designboom ©) [044 Freipost].

Technemes are used in close proximity to create a partition (these are: timber studs, timber panels, and steel nuts and bolts). The partition is placed in proximity to a painted steel truss. The synthetic effect is to generate tectonic decoration.

In the *Pizza Express Concept Restaurant* adornment is created through the combination of furnishing and colour (see Figure 5.2.6, above). The vinyl upholstery is used as a convenient method to introduce colour.

In the *Xing Restaurant* material and colour is combined to create adornment (see Figure 5.2.11). Two combinations are evident: in the first timber cladding provides a brown wall cladding; in the second gray tiles are used as a wall cladding.



**Figure 5.2.11:** *Xing Restaurant*, LTL Architects, New York, 2005 (Photography: Michael Moran ©) [067 Xing].

The three examples indicated does not represent an exhaustive list of synthetic combinations to generate adornment; for the purposes of the thesis it is sufficient to note that the generation of adornment is dependent on the synthetic combination of physical components and immaterial design methods.

Decoration and ornament should not only be generated it should be applied in the interior. The examples above indicate that the generation and application of adornment may be considered as simultaneous

processes. In other instances adornment is applied as a secondary process.

In the *Play Pot Restaurant* a decorative material choice informs the selection of technemes to assist in the application of that material (see Figure 5.2.12).



**Figure 5.2.12:** *Play Pot Restaurant*, Lim Tae Hee Design Studio, Seoul, 2012 (Photography: Patric Young Chae ©) [011 Play Pot].

Yellow and white candy stripe canvas (material) is stretched with turnbuckles (techneme). In this case the application of a synthetic method (decoration) is dependent on the simultaneous application of a technical method.

Earlier in the thesis I defined style as a paradigmatically peculiar, specific and characteristic manner of doing something (after Fisher).<sup>18</sup> When compared with adornment style can be contrasted as temporally and culturally significant, while adornment (whilst it contributes to style) may be locally or temporally limited. As synthesis is methodically significant in the generation of adornment it is in the generation of style. This includes all three forms of styling: isochrestic, skeuomorphic, and iconic styling (which are presented hierarchically).

In the first instance technemes are synthesised to generate isochrestic styling (which is based on consistent ways of doing something within a community). I will discuss two examples to indicate the generation of isochrestic styling:

18.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* co-des for methods, Style.

Firstly, in the *Charles Smith Wines Tasting Room and Headquarters* isochrestic styling is dependent on the manufacture of the timber trusses and its constituent technemes (including frames and braces) (see Figure 5.2.13).



**Figure 5.2.13:** *Charles Smith Wines Tasting Room and Headquarters*, Olson Kundig Architects, Walla Walla, 2011 (Photography: Benjamin Benschneider ©) [031 Charles Smith Wines].

In this example isochrestic styling can be considered as a ‘found object’ since it was located in the place prior to the intervention. The extant isochrestic styling informs the materiality of the intervention, specifically the timber frame construction of the tasting rooms (in the back of the space).

This can be compared with the deliberate application of isochrestic styling in the second example, *Camper Paris* (see Figure 5.2.14).



The tectonics of manufacture is evidenced in the steel brackets used in the merchandise display; a relatively crude techneme is reinterpreted<sup>19</sup> in a visually sophisticated manner. The use of styling here represents the tectonic nature of additive assembly. These examples indicate how (isochrestic) style is generated through the synthesis of technemes.

Higher orders of styling are also generated synthetically through the combination of constituent components. As example I refer to *Accondicionamiento Vainilly & Chocolate* (see Figure 5.2.9, above). In this interior the styling (late modernism) is iconic and grounded in a concept of

**Figure 5.2.14:** *Camper Paris*, Studio Bouroullec, Paris, 2009 (Photography: Studio Bouroullec ©) [054 Camper Paris].

19.) Also refer to the discussion of temporal iteration, see, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design; and the discussion of *Camper Paris* (see Figure 5.4.11).



the present directed towards the future (after Brett, 2005:194). In this interior the iconic style is constituted by using minimal decoration and a restricted material and colour palette. The style is generated by combining technemes (HVAC grills) which have a technical use (to control the interior environment), with light (exposed, surface mounted fluorescent lighting), unadorned materials (timber and concrete flooring), and colour. Style is indicated here as a complex method, a true meaningful string of memes.

In *Freedom Café* interiority is maintained through the use of bright colour and a strong boundary; the interior space established within the re-used shipping container is clearly demarcated (see Figure 5.2.15).



**Figure 5.2.15:** *Freedom Café*, Egg Designs, Durban, 2012 (Photography: Taste Freedom ©) [023 Freedom Cafe].

In this example an association between the Decorative<sup>20</sup> methods and the Formal<sup>21</sup> methods are indicated. *Freedom Café* indicates a strong synergy between form and adornment; these methods are supported synthetically.<sup>22</sup>

An archetype is an ideal example of a historical or cultural practice from which newer models are iterated (after Jennings).<sup>23</sup> Jennings (2007:49) defines the archetype as a general cultural practice that is both 'conservative and dynamic'; it is constantly present and subject to change. In this discussion of methods I will return to the archetype as a significant factor in all four categories. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to reveal new insight into the nature of archetypes; it simply acknowledges it as one method to construct meaning (in a group of 32). Archetype is referred to here in order to gain a better understanding of the overarching methodological categories.

20.) Colour, Decoration, Furnishing, Furniture, Light, Material, Object, Style, and Taste Good, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

21.) Archetype, Boundary, Form, and Typology, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

22.) See, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.

23.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Archetype.

Synthesis is employed to generate, combine and support archetypes.  
In the *UNIQLO Ginza Flagship Store* a number of archetypes are utilised (see Figure 5.2.16).



**Figure 5.2.16:** *UNIQLO Ginza Flagship Store*, Wonderwall Inc., Tokyo, 2012  
(Photography: Will Rob ©) [062 UNIQLO].

I will refer to these briefly to indicate the synthetic actions.

The intype 'specimen' is described as a "display strategy where items are arranged in taxonomic array" (Intypes, *sa*). In *UNIQLO* this archetype is present in the display of merchandise on display plinths. The archetype is established synthetically through the combination of colour (specifically in the merchandise which are ordered by type and arranged by colour), objects (plinths arranged in a grid) and the combination of uses (storage and display). This archetype is very effective here to indicate a wide range of objects available for consumption.<sup>24</sup>

The effect of 'specimen' is enhanced with the archetype 'marching order'; this is described as "a sequence of repeating forms organized consecutively, one after another, that establish a measured spatial order" (Intypes, *sa*). In *UNIQLO* merchandise is not only taxonomically displayed on shelves, this system is extended throughout the interior.

Both intypes are synthetically supported by combining it with the intype 'kaleidoscope'. This is defined as "an interior space in which two reflective planar surfaces are placed perpendicularly to each other, such as a mirror wall and a window wall, or a mirror ceiling and a mirror wall. The planes create a kaleidoscope of reflections" (Intypes, *sa*). This creates the effect that the taxonomic array of merchandise is continuously reflected and sends a clear message of over-abundance.<sup>25</sup> In this case archetypes are established synthetically, and then combined to achieve a much stronger and blatantly obvious message of consumption. In addition to the establishment and use of archetypes, this project illustrates that synthesis may be used to indicate an external organization which is reflected spatially. In this case the inventory of merchandise is reflected spatially in the presentation as consumer goods.

24.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field, for a discussion on the commercial interior as an object of consumption which facilitates further objects of consumption.

25.) "[T]here should not be enough, but too much – and too much for everyone," (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:26).

In another taxonomic display of merchandise synthesis is used to support the archetype. In *Sneakerology* merchandise is displayed as a decoration of the walls (see Figure 5.2.17).



**Figure 5.2.17:** *Sneakerology*, Facet Studio, Sydney, 2011 (Photography: ArchDaily ©) [072 Sneakerology].

This project also employs the intype 'specimen'. The taxonomic display of sneakers is supported by using signage (numbers) to suggest that the range of merchandise is dependent on an external organization. As far as the general application in interior design is concerned, this project indicates that the use of archetype is dependent on the synthetic support of other, appropriate methods to generate meaning.

While the use of archetype illustrates the quality of synthesis to re-use societal and cultural conventions<sup>26</sup> synthesis may also be utilised to break a convention for decorative purposes.

In the *Barber Amsterdam* electrical and plumbing services are distributed in surface mounted copper tubing (see Figure 5.2.18).



**Figure 5.2.18:** *Barber Amsterdam*, Ard Hoksbergen, Amsterdam, c.2012 (Photography: Wouter van den Brink ©) [032 Barber Amsterdam].

Since it is technically and conventionally not acceptable to distribute electrical services in copper tubing (in lieu of galvanized mild steel or uPVC) this decorative use of a technical function serves as an example of transfunctionalisation; the decorative meaning is the second-order meaning. The copper tubing is used to create patterns but it is also used to provide secondary use functions (e.g. as towel hooks).<sup>27</sup> In the same

26.) See, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.

27.) The utilisation of social and cultural conventions play a larger role in the case of timeliness, see, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.



project the synthesis of constituent components indicates the function and thus communicates the first-order meaning. A constellation (barber chair in front of a mirror) indicates the use of the place (hair salon); this constellation is supported with objects (semi-recessed laboratory sink and towels) and material (bevelled glazed tiles) which carry meaning.

In *La Favorita de Insurgentes* the morphological typology (diner) is indicated synthetically (see Figure 5.2.19).



**Figure 5.2.19:** *La Favorita de Insurgentes*, ARCO Arquitectura Contemporánea, Mexico City, 2012  
(Photography: Jaime Navarro ©) [008 La Favorita].

The synthesis which delivers the morphological typology is comprised of the following: A convention (diner bar counter) is combined with an ensemble (place setting with plate cutlery and placemat) and a constellation (waiter's station) this indicates a high level of service to the user. The morphological typology is further symbolically indicated through the use of objects (spherical pendants) which have clear associations with other diners (this is an example of an intertextual reference); finally the use of signage above the counter (as menu) completes the morphological typology. The morphological typology is a second-order function, but it indicates the first-order (or use typology). In this example synthesis contributes to the Traditive<sup>28</sup> methods.<sup>29</sup>

The generation of second-order meaning is also synthetic in nature. During synthesis meanings derived from the use of other methods and principles are combined to generate new meaning. In *Café Craft* a range of symbols and materials associated with other typologies are re-used and reinforced with the use of objects (see Figure 5.2.20).

28.) Archetype, Convention, Craftsmanship, Iteration, Micro-ecology, Object, Performance, Signage, Style, Taste Good, and Tradition. *see*, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

29.) *See*, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.

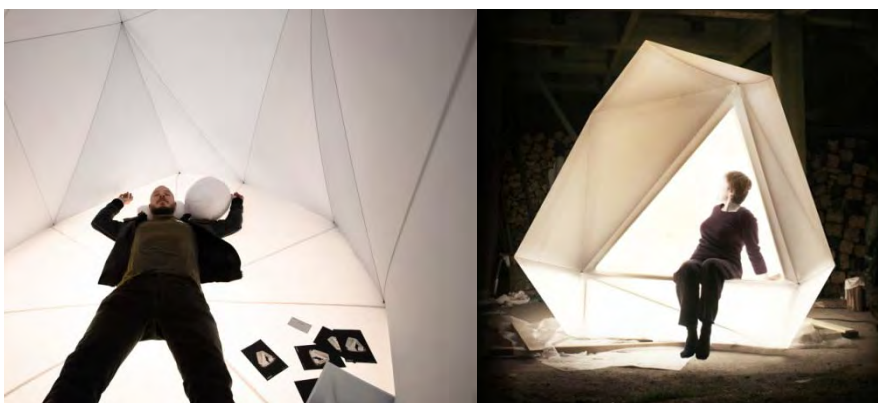


**Figure 5.2.20:** *Café Craft*, POOL, Paris, c.2012  
(Photography: Samuel Kirszenbaum ©)  
[021 Cafe Craft].

In this project ubiquitous domestic associations are synthesised with public cultural meaning to create new associations. Although this café is clearly a public space it utilizes symbolic motifs which carry domestic (the den: living area) and privileged (the den: study area) associations. These two symbolic motifs are separated with a transparent edge which indicates easy movement between fictional public and private spheres. The symbolic motifs further functions as a method to indicate inhabitation.

The creation of a contrived identity in the interior is dependent on the establishment of a 'small world'.<sup>30</sup> This small world is a limited and contained, contrived and fictional space. It is separate from the world at large but dependent on knowledge of that world. To create this space it becomes necessary to isolate the fictional interior; this establishes the creation of a strong boundary as an interior design method of initial importance. This creates physical isolation which allows the interior to be constructed as a fictive and imaginary world.<sup>31</sup>

Synthesis delivers the methods to demarcate an interior and separate it from the rest of the world.<sup>32</sup> In *LYHTY – Habitare* a contained interior is created (see Figure 5.2.21).



**Figure 5.2.21:** *LYHTY – Habitare*, Erkkö Aarti Architecture, Helsinki, 2012  
(Photography: Pyry Kantonen ©)  
[058 Lyhty].

This project is a conceptual work and is intended to connote a shelter and place of warmth during the polar winter. The interior is small and

30.) See, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

31.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

32.) The demarcated interior is also delivered through external connotations (see, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design) and specifically set up formally (see, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design).



contained and established through the synthetic cooperation of colour (white is applied to all the interior surfaces and contrasts the interior with its surroundings), form (an irregular, crystalline polyhedron as an interpretation of a vernacular form), and decoration (the pattern created by the joints between panels).<sup>33</sup>

If the designed interior (specifically the commercial interior) is considered as a component which forms part of a 'complex super-object' in which a chain of signifiers signify each other reciprocally it then becomes important to consider the meaning and generation of the other components. In this environment consumer products and objects of consumption become part of an inventor which comprises a total category.<sup>34</sup> In this context the products of interior design must find consistency with those offered by other disciplines (e.g. product design and graphic design).<sup>35</sup> Synthesis is an effective method to create unity between a visual identity and a spatial expression; further it can be used to distribute and combine the design efforts of other disciplines.

In the *MenScience Androceuticals Flagship Store* the identity created by graphic design (on the product labels) is critically translated to generate the spatial identity (see Figure 5.2.22).



**Figure 5.2.22:** *MenScience Androceuticals Flagship Store*, HWKN (Hollwich Kushner, New York, 2012) (Photography: Michael Moran ©) [063 MenScience].

The correlation between the general use of shape, proportion, and colour on the labels and the merchandise display is evident.

The synthetic assembly of use objects and loose artefacts (e.g. the yellow *Tolix* stool) is an indication of the presence of an inhabitant. The inhabitant is connoted through the implication that she is responsible for the selection and combination of objects.<sup>36</sup>

- 33.) Coincidentally the pattern is the result of the synthetic combination of technemes (folds and joints between panels) which generate decoration, see, *Freipost*, above, and, see, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.
- 34.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.
- 35.) This introduces the concept of design distribution which falls outside the scope of this thesis.
- 36.) Although this has synthetic significance it is of greater importance as a Temporal method; inhabitation will be discussed as such later in the chapter, see, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.

Synthesis can facilitate the interaction between the constituent components to create greater subtlety or a more complex message. In the design of the *Human.Kind Advertising* offices a corporate environment with a sense of fun is synthesised (see Figure 5.2.23).



**Figure 5.2.23:** *Human.Kind Advertising*, PPS Architects, Johannesburg, 2013 (Photography: Lizl Sheridan ©) [027 Human Kind].

In this interior it becomes evident that methods to create meaning exist ecosystemically; meaning is created in their interaction and as a string of meanings (syntagm) existing in a larger context. All interiors are paradigmatically placed. A complex message which conveys the identity of the place is created at an important and meaningful node (the reception counter). This message is dependent on the interaction of a large number of sememes: the constellation (reception counter with a row of pendants) is established formally and its first-order meaning and primary function is clearly communicated. However the message is made deeper, more complex, and more subtle by using a string of meaningful elements:

To include a sense of fun and informality wit is used by placing vinyl figurines (a crocodile and a dinosaur) on the counter; the name of the place is indicated with three-dimensional signage (with connotations of expense in manufacture and craftsmanship); an iconic connection is made (by placing a map of South Africa, with national connotations on the wall behind the counter); the message of the entire installation is accented with the use of light (both as light as a source of illumination, and luminaires as objects); the message is further enhanced with the use of furnishing and images (a cover of *Drum* magazine printed on the scatter cushions); and materials (astro-turf and reclaimed timber).

In this interior the synthesis is complete with a sense that the entire interior was conceived and executed simultaneously. Earlier in this section I discussed partial synthesis as a method to generate eclectic style;<sup>37</sup> avoiding a full synthesis is generated by revealing and emphasizing the constituent components.

37.) See, *Accondicionamiento Vainilly & Chocolate* (Figure 5.2.9), above.

When considering a historic building that underwent a series of alterations the establishment of a partial synthesis becomes evident. *Espacio Cultural The Clinic: The Mall* is created as the latest alteration in a building originally constructed as a residence in 1925 (see Figure 5.2.24).



**Figure 5.2.24:** *Espacio Cultural The Clinic: The Mall*, Cristián Contreras, Santiago de Chile, 2012-2013 (Photography: Rodrigo Rojas ©) [014 The Mall].

During its lifetime the building underwent a series of *ad hoc* alterations. The latest intervention and the retention of original material represent a palimpsest of the building's history. The interior experienced entropic skid (after Scott, 2008) which is celebrated.

In this interior previous occupations and uses are indicated through the unconventional placement of objects (e.g. the basin which is located in a reception area), and the retention of existing materials (e.g. partially demolished walls with exposed masonry). This retains the original fabric unto which new layers are placed; these include the use of applied decoration and images (figurative and iconic murals and portraits), objects (pendants and recliners) and constellations (a dining table with four chairs).

In addition to revealing the constituent components the use of incomplete synthesis creates variation and interest in the interior.<sup>38</sup>

The *Espacio Cultural* (which is synthetically incomplete) indicates that synthesis is further instrumental in setting up and telling narratives.<sup>39</sup> This is a further example of the synthetic characteristic to support other methods.

38.) I will return to this characteristic in the discussion of the Technical and Formal methods, see, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.

39.) Since the narrative implies a series of connected events that takes place in sequence the temporal quality of this property is considered of higher importance. I will discuss it fully in my description of the Temporal methods, see, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.

### 5.2.1 Properties of Synthesis

'Synthesis' is the category or interior design methods that relate to the selection of meaningful components and bringing them together in a cohesive whole.

The category emerged from the combination of two concepts: the Synthetic methods; and the Decorative methods.

The Synthetic concept involves those methods that enact meaning through the combination of various components. This is the dominant concept in this category and denoted the category. The concept comprises twelve codes: colour; constellation; curation; ensemble; light; material; object; style; symbolic motif; synthesis; taste good; and techneme. 'Synthesis' is the prominent code which denoted the concept. For interior design synthesis is considered as those forms of production which are distinct from 'raw' production; these include collecting, cutting, pasting, resizing, colouring and arranging pastiches (Leander & Frank, 2006:187).

The Decorative concept involves those methods that serve to provide adornment. This is an ancillary concept in this category. The concept comprises nine codes: colour; decoration; furnishing; furniture; light; material; object; style; and taste good. 'Decoration' is the prominent code which denoted the concept. In interior design to decorate something is to provide it with adornments or to provide a room with finishes such as paint and wallpaper which serve to articulate the architectural boundary (Rice, 2004:276).

In the semiotic context synthesis can be considered as the result of the richness of possibility. This possibility is expressed and reduced by 'contextual and circumstantial interpretations' (Eco, 1979[1976]:140).<sup>40</sup> Since synthesis is not 'raw' production the richness of possibility implies that synthesis is an iterative process that re-uses existing meanings and codes (and all the richness of their interpretation).<sup>41</sup>

Lotman (in Eco, 1979[1976]:138-139) identified cultures which are governed by systems of rules and those that are governed by a repertoire of texts. The first are defined as grammar-oriented, and the second as text-oriented cultures. Grammar-oriented cultures generate new texts by combining discreet units of meaning in conventional ways that can be judged as correct or incorrect; text-oriented cultures (in opposition) generate texts directly by proposing models to be followed and imitated. This includes the possibility that rules and conventions may be inferred by analyzing these 'macro-units' (Eco, 1979[1976]:138).

This has two implications for this study: firstly, interior design (and its community of practitioners) can be considered as a culture with its own conventions to generate meaning; secondly, the imaginal text can be considered as conventional artefact with its own (non-grammatical) methods to generate meaning.

If interior design is considered as a 'culture' it can then be argued that interior design is a text-oriented culture which generates meaning iteratively by referring to existing texts.<sup>42</sup> If I consider the research methods and data sample employed in this thesis the analysis of existing texts to generate knowledge is pertinent. This can be extended analogously to the production of meaning in interior design.

In its objective to isolate and describe existing, implicit methods within the interior design canon, this thesis represents an attempt to introduce

40.) See, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.

41.) Refer to the discussion of the 'dictionary' and 'encyclopedia' models of interpretation below, see, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.

42.) Refer to my discussion of the 'text' in the background to cultural production, see, 2.2.1. Background.

some grammar-based principles in the interior design production system. However; it does not criticize the text-based production methods. The text-based production methods are considered as the primary production methods for interior design throughout. As far as synthesis in interior design is considered the text-based production methods in which exemplary models can be followed or imitated<sup>43</sup> implies that interior designers are able to identify, source, and interpret existing units of meaning. These units can be combined to generate new messages; these new messages are embodied in texts (interior artefacts)<sup>44</sup> which in turn can be interpreted by the inhabitants and other designers. The existing units of meaning exist as cultural conventions, if these conventions were absent meaningful transactions would not take place.

### Properties

From the content analysis of the corpus it is possible to explicate identifiable characteristics and properties of synthesis:

Synthesis combines simple components and artefacts into larger and more complex artefacts.

Synthesis combines constituent components and methods to create meaningful syntagms (or strings of signs).

Synthesis is the selection, arrangements, and combination of existing objects, patterns, codes, and conventions and is distinct from new production.

Synthesis is dependent on the selection of appropriate methods and principles to construct meaning. It is extended beyond the physical object to include intangible methods. As such, synthesis is the overriding method to generate meaning and it determines the application of the other methods (proximity, timeliness, associations, and technification).

Synthesis not only employs the other methods, it curates them. This implies that in their synthetic application the other methods are used in order to protect them and to ensure their ongoing existence.

Through synthetic application the effects of the other methods to generate meaning are strengthened.

### Actions

In its application synthesis takes the following actions:

Although synthesis implies the creation of a cohesive whole (which can be described as a complete synthesis) it can also be used to create contrast between the constituent components of the complex artefact.

Synthesis generates and applies adornment through the combination of constituent components; these include (but are not limited to): colour, furnishing, materials, and technemes.

Synthesis is reliant on the Technical and Formal methods to apply adornment.

Synthesis combines constituent components to generate the three proximal assemblies (ensemble, constellation, and symbolic motif).

Synthesis combines constituent components to generate style.

Synthesis applies style to achieve consistency of meaning in different places and locations.

Synthesis applies style to connote meaning and to generate second-order functions.

43.) See, 2.2.4 Domain Gatekeepers.

44.) See, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.



Synthesis plays a primary role in generating, supporting and combining archetypes.

Through the use of synthesis conventions can be questioned, iterated or broken.

Synthesis is associated with the Formal methods; this is dependent on the strong synergy between form and adornment.

Synthesis contributes to the Traditive methods.

### Effects

In its application synthesis has the following effects:

Through synthesizing the constituent components the function is indicated; this communicates first-order meaning.

Synthesis combines the messages and meanings derived from other methods and principles to generate new meaning; this communicates second-order meaning.

Synthesis is instrumental in demarcating an interior and separating it from the rest of the world.

Synthesis creates conformity between a visual identity and its spatial expression.

Synthesis combines and distributes the design efforts of different professional disciplines.

Synthesis connotes or implies the presence of an inhabitant; this inhabitant is assumed to be responsible for the selection and combination of constituent components.

Synthesis may facilitate the interaction between constituent components to create a greater level of subtlety.

In revealing the constituent components a full synthesis may be avoided; this will create an 'incomplete synthesis'.

Synthesis can impart variation and interest to an interior.

Synthesis is effective in telling narratives or explicating rituals.

Synthesis can indicate external organization which is reflected spatially.

### 5.3 THE USE OF PROXIMAL ASSEMBLIES IN INTERIOR DESIGN

For the purposes of meaning creation in interior design proximity relates to placing found objects in meaningful arrangements or patterns. Although this implies that proximity is synthetic in nature (and could be considered as a synthetic concept) generating a separate category is warranted. This grouping complies with Glaser's (in Goulding, 1999:13) category criteria: it represents a large proportion of the data; it is based on recurring themes from the data; it relates meaningfully to the other categories; and it is modifiable.<sup>45</sup>

Whereas synthesis can be understood as a process whereby a larger artefact is made by combining simple components and objects, the proximal assemblies are differentiated since the process of proximity does not result in a new, single, and complex artefact. The constituent objects maintain their discretion; the result of proximal assembly is an arrangement or pattern.

In this section I will illuminate how the close placement of objects and components (i.e. the use of proximity) results in three proximal assemblies: ensemble, constellation, and symbolic motif.<sup>46</sup>

My development of the proximal assemblies was introduced by Tan (2011:42) who stated: "in the interior environment we see artifacts [sic], constellations and symbolic motifs".<sup>47</sup> In the determination of the *in vivo* codes the term 'ensemble' was encountered in Rice (2004:279) and Sparke (2009:2). Although there exists some overlap between the characteristics of the ensemble and the constellation; my use in the content analysis created distinctions between these methods and a hierarchy of complexity emerged which is expressed as: object; ensemble; constellation; and symbolic motif.<sup>48</sup>

The term 'ensemble' is referred to often in interior design literature although no clear definition is provided. Sparke (2009:2) merely states that the ensemble is a key characteristic of the interior and is contrasted with the mass produced object. Edwards (2011:53) uses the term to describe the total building, including architecture and decoration. This is in opposition to Milligan *et al* (2007:20) who distinguishes between the building (object) and the ensemble.<sup>49</sup> Although Rice (2004:279) did not use the term his description of choosing and arranging objects to demarcate a private interior gave some initial insight into the nature of assembling found objects. Brett (2005:34) includes the ensemble with decorative schemes and overall style as methods which phenomenologically addresses the self and its fundamental definitions of the world (including the social and private spheres). Although he does not provide a definition he refers to the possibility of inferring the nature of a particular decorative ensemble by knowing something of the furniture, ceramics and glassware that may constitute it (Brett, 2005:122); later he (2005:211) implies that ensembles are a lived arrangement of domestic objects. This provides a vague and ambiguous understanding of what the ensemble may entail. Muthesius (2003:273) defined ensembles as "room settings that combined the fine with the applied arts"; this was used to differentiate the ensemble from conventional museum exhibits as

45.) See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Categories.

46.) These are the three constituent codes of the concept 'Proximal'; which is the sole concept in the category.

47.) This contributed to the establishment of the *in vivo* codes 'Object' (see, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies); 'Constellation'; and 'Symbolic Motif' (see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods).

48.) Since, generally for the purposes of interior design, objects are considered as single elements or components, they are not included as a proximal assembly and are not generated synthetically by interior design, see, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies, and, see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods.

49.) The implication is that the building's content provides the constituent parts of ensembles.



collections of artefacts. The implication here is that there is an underlying connection between the components in an ensemble that surpasses theme or type. My assumption, at this point, is that the underlying connection is the meaningful content of the ensemble.

My interpretation of the use of the term in the interior design literature is that it generally indicates the bringing together and fitting together of all the parts and components that constitutes an interior; i.e. synthesis in its broadest definition. However this is not sufficient to explain some of the contradictions (e.g. excluding the building as object) and characteristics (e.g. demarcating a private sphere in a larger environment) that are implied. In my use in the content analysis I accepted these general characteristic but limited the ensemble in scale. I further differentiated the ensemble from the constellation and placed it hierarchically below the constellation.

Tan's (2011:42) introduction of the term 'constellation' in the interior design vocabulary is a novel application of a term that existed (somewhat obscurely) in the field of environmental psychology. She described the constellation as "any particular, observable arrangement of artifacts [sic]".<sup>50</sup> In Barker's (1968:19) original text the constellation is described as a behaviour setting that exists at a particular time, in a particular place and is comprised of a particular arrangement of particular objects. It exists independently form a standing pattern of behaviour and independently of the perception of its setting. I interpret this to mean that a constellation is an arrangement of artefacts that allows certain social behaviours to manifest (e.g. dining at a dining table, or conversing in a lounge).

In contrast the ensemble is made up of small objects used synthetically and proximally to facilitate inhabitation. Generally it is a small scale assembly, similar in scale to the ensemble in fashion (i.e. an 'outfit') (e.g. place-settings, or decorative arrangements of objects).

In the *IkHa Pop-up Restaurant* the place-setting (comprising cutlery, glasses, table-mat, candleholder and pot-plant) is an example of an ensemble (see Figure 5.3.1).



**Figure 5.3.1:** *IkHa Pop-up Restaurant*, Oatmeal Studio, Den Haag, 2012  
(Photography: Nadine Stijns ©)  
[017 IkHa].

This assembly of objects contributes to the function and inhabitation of the place, although its limited scale excludes the possibility that it may be occupied.

The constellation is larger in scale and not only facilitates inhabitation, but it can be entered and occupied. This implies that constellations are functional arrangements of furniture (e.g. a dining table and chairs).

50.) This definition (and her omission of 'ensemble') introduces the possibility that these terms may be used as synonyms for the same construct.

In *La Favorita de Insurgentes* the arrangement of a dining table with chairs is an example of a constellation (see Figure 5.3.2).



**Figure 5.3.2:** *La Favorita de Insurgentes*, ARCO Arquitectura Contemporánea, Mexico City, 2012  
(Photography: Jaime Navarro ©)  
[008 La Favorita].

The constellation is comprised of furniture in a functional arrangement, and it includes a nested ensemble (the place-setting). This supports the hierarchical treatment of ensembles and constellations. The constellation is large in scale and inhabitation of the constellation is possible. This constellation demarcates a space and separates it from the larger interior.

Tan (2011) developed the definition of symbolic motif to be a “prominently recurring theme of symbolic meaning.” She identified five symbolic motifs that are commonly employed in interior design: den, edge, mystery, journey, and threshold.<sup>51</sup> The five symbolic motifs identified by Tan are large in scale and exist at the building level. Since Tan’s definition and application of symbolic motif was concise and clear I accepted it at face value in the content analysis.

In *A Cantina* two symbolic motifs are present: ‘mystery’ (which is the forested destination in the background), and the ‘threshold’ (which serves as a point of transition between the shop and canteen) (see Figure 5.3.3).



**Figure 5.3.3:** *A Cantina*, ARCO Estudio Nómada, Galicia, 2012  
(Photography: Santos-Diez/BISimages ©)  
[071 A Cantina].

These symbolic motifs are large in scale and are established on the architectural (building envelope and structure) level.

51.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Symbolic Motif.

In summary an ensemble is a small scale, proximal assembly of objects which contributes to inhabitation; a constellation is a large scale proximal assembly of objects which is inhabitable; and a symbolic motif is a proximal assembly which exists at the building scale and is permanently incorporated in the interior. This generates a nested hierarchy: ensemble, constellation, and symbolic motif (the implication is that ensembles can form part of constellations and constellations can be embedded within symbolic motifs). Although the proximal assemblies can be differentiated from each other they act generically in the generation of meaning in the interior environment.

The proximal assemblies are established conventionally; however their conventional use may be criticized to provide commentary on social conventions. In the *IkHa Pop-up Restaurant* social commentary is present in the unconventional use of symbolic motifs (see Figure 5.3.4).



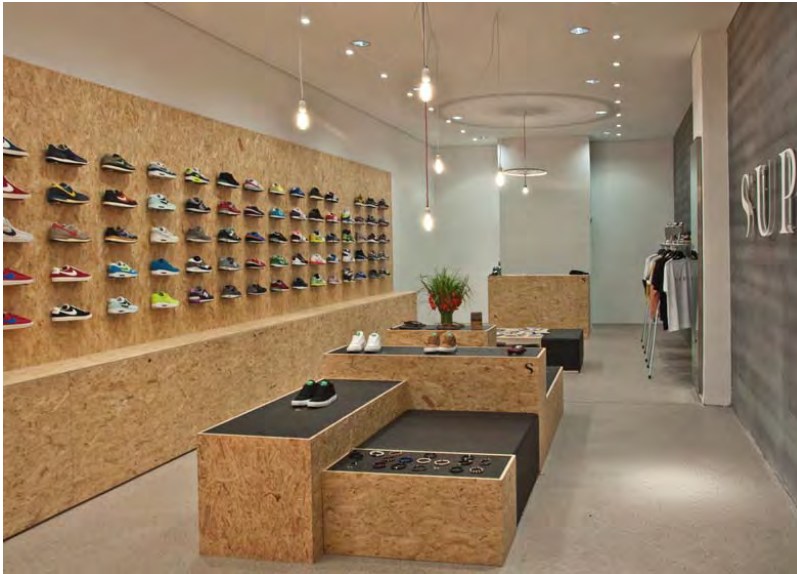
**Figure 5.3.4:** *IkHa Pop-up Restaurant*, Oatmeal Studio, Den Haag, 2012  
(Photography: Nadine Stijns ©)  
[017 IkHa].

The symbolic motif 'edge' which is the separation between two adjacent places is present in the form of a shelving unit which separates the two sides of the table. Movement is controlled in this interior and it is not physically possible to transgress the edge or move from one side of the dining table to the other in a conventional way. The conventional use of an edge is illustrated in *La Cantina* (see Figure 5.3.3). In *La Cantina* the edge is visually impermeable with a clear threshold at the point of transgression. In contrast *IkHa* is visually permeable. This commentary is dependent on the user being aware of the conventional use of these symbolic motifs.

Since the ensemble (place-setting, see Figure 5.3.1) is nesting within this symbolic motif (edge) *IkHa* provides further empirical support for the hierarchical organization of the proximal assemblies.

The proximal assemblies are effective in connoting the primary function of an interior; this communicates first-order meaning. In *SUPPA Sneaker Boutique* the primary function is connoted with constellations (see Figure 5.3.5).





**Figure 5.3.5:** *SUPPA Sneaker Boutique*, DLF Product Design, Stuttgart, 2012  
(Photography: Daniele Luciano Ferazzano ©)  
[020 SUPPA].

Two constellations are present in this interior: sneakers are displayed in a grid in the wall; and there is a central display area in the shop. These constellations, in combination, indicate the speciality nature of this retail outlet. The display area provides additional functional support in the provision of furniture that facilitates the fitting of shoes.

The constellation to display sneakers also establishes the intype 'specimen';<sup>52</sup> in this case two High-order<sup>53</sup> codes support each other.<sup>54</sup>

The proximal assemblies play a role in establishing and maintaining social systems and personal hierarchies. In *Tendinha dos Clérigos* the symbolic motif (den) provides the place where a performance (of identity) can take place (see Figure 5.3.6).



**Figure 5.3.6:** *Tendinha dos Clérigos*, Atelier Veloso Arquitectos, Oporto, c.2013  
(Photography: José Campos ©)  
[018 Tendinha].

The den is established in the alcoves provided against the walls. These alcoves provide spaces of retreat in the club. They also connote the 'wallflowers' (quite literally) and in a nightclub may indicate sexual or social availability.

52.) See, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design

53.) The High-order codes are sub-divided into lesser High-order codes (analogy; constellation; curation; narrative; and typology), and greater High-order codes (archetype; convention; micro-ecology; style; and symbolic motif). See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Hierarchy.

54.) See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Hierarchy.

It was indicated earlier that the proximal assemblies offer effective mechanisms so isolate areas of inhabitation within a larger interior or space.<sup>55</sup> In *Tendinha* the symbolic motif (den for wallflowers) represent such a contained space within a larger interior. In *La Favorita* the constellation (dining table with chairs) allows its occupants the ability to claim a portion of the larger space and indicate inhabitation (although it is only temporary).

In the retail environment the proximal assemblies are used to indicate a choice in range. In *Aesop Newbury Street* an ensemble (arrangement of bottles on shelves) is used to indicate various goods for sale (see Figure 5.3.7).<sup>56</sup>



**Figure 5.3.7:** *Aesop Newbury Street*, William O'Brien Jr., Boston, c.2012  
(Photography: Dezeen ©)  
[046 Aesop Newbury].

The proximal assemblies in general and the symbolic motifs specifically are effective to establish, support, and tell narratives; or to control movement and rituals. Two examples illustrate this:

In *IkHa* the spatial organization is established through extensive use of the symbolic motif (edge) (see Figure 5.3.4). This edge controls movement in the space and it makes intertextual references to the layout of *Ikea* stores, which follows a similar, narrative arrangement (all the components for *IkHa* was sourced from *Ikea*).

In *La Cantina* the symbolic motifs (mystery and threshold) indicates movement between functional areas (retail and canteen) (see Figure 5.3.8).<sup>57</sup>

55.) See, *La Favorita de Insurgentes*, above (see figure 5.3.2).

56.) The brown bottles further establish associations with light sensitive chemicals which are stored in dark glass, see, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.

57.) My discussion of *Granny.F Salon* serves as a further example of the synthetic function of symbolic motifs (edge, journey, and threshold) to establish ritual, see, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design (see Figure 5.2.8).

In the *Kantine for Der Spiegel* proximal assemblies are combined synthetically with other methods as an organizational device (see Figure 5.3.8).



**Figure 5.3.8:** *Kantine for Der Spiegel*, Ippolito Feitz Group Identity Architects, Hamburg, 2011

(Photography:  
Markus Tollhopf ©)  
[069 Spiegel Kantine]

The constellation (dining table with four chairs) is emphasized with a boundary (palisade curtain wall) and yellow bulkhead. This creates variation and interest in an interior which could easily be monotonous. The apparent informality in the furniture placement is also contradicted with the clear predetermined placement of coloured bulkheads.

### 5.3.1 Properties of Proximity

'Proximity' is the category of interior design methods that relate to the placement of objects in space to create meaningful arrangements and patterns. Proximity is differentiated from synthesis since it does not result in a new, complex artefact but maintains the discretion of the constituent components.

The category emerged from one concept: the Proximal methods. The Proximal concept involves those methods that create meaning through the relative placement of objects in space. Since this is the only concept in the category it denoted the category. The concept comprises three codes: ensemble; constellation; and symbolic motif. No prominent code emerged to denote the concept. The concept was named descriptively to connote the three constituent codes. In this category the constituent codes can be arranged hierarchically in scale and complexity:

The 'ensemble' is made up of small objects used synthetically and proximally to facilitate inhabitation.

The 'constellation' is larger in scale and not only facilitates inhabitation, but it can be inhabited. This implies that constellations are functional arrangements of artefacts that allow social behaviours to manifest.

The 'symbolic motif' is a 'prominently recurring theme of symbolic meaning'. Tan (2011) identified five symbolic motifs that are commonly employed in interior design: den, edge, mystery, journey, and threshold.

#### Properties

From the content analysis of the corpus it is possible to explicate identifiable characteristics and properties of proximity:

The proximal assemblies act generically to create meaning in the interior environment.

The proximal assemblies are established conventionally.

Ensembles are the assembly of objects. Ensembles facilitate inhabitation but are of such a scale that they cannot be occupied.

Constellations are the assemblies of objects and ensembles.

Constellations facilitate inhabitation and are of such a scale that they can be occupied.

Symbolic motifs are the assemblies of objects, ensembles, and building elements. They are carriers of recurring symbolic themes and are of such a scale that they can be occupied.

#### Actions

In their application the proximal assemblies take the following actions:

Proximity comments on social conventions; this is through repetition, iteration or innovation of existing conventions.

The proximal assemblies demarcate spaces and separate them from the larger interior. This allows the user to occupy or inhabit these spaces temporarily.



### Effects

In its application proximity has the following effects:

The proximal assemblies are effective in connoting the primary function of an interior; this communicates first-order meaning.

The proximal assemblies establish and maintain social systems, hierarchies, positions, etc.; this indicates second-order meaning.

The inhabitable proximal assemblies (constellation and symbolic motif) are instrumental in demarcating a space and separating it from the rest of the interior.

The proximal assemblies provide spaces for the performance of identity.

In the retail environment the proximal assemblies are used to indicate a choice in range.

The proximal assemblies (in general), and the symbolic motifs (specifically) are effective to establish, support, and tell narratives; or to control movement and rituals.

The proximal assemblies can be combined synthetically with other methods as organizational devices.

#### 5.4 TIMELINESS IN INTERIOR DESIGN

In interior design timeliness refers to those methods that situate the interior artefact paradigmatically. Timeliness relates the interior to ideas of the world and to changes over time. These methods express customs and conventions handed down from earlier generations which are constructed and reconstructed through repetition; in addition they express the current era and the contemporary interpretation of traditions and conventions; finally, they facilitate expectations for the future.

One of the primary assumptions of the *Intypes* project is that the contemporary practice of interior design is built on a historic base which is identifiable in current expressions, and which can be traced through time (Jennings, 2007:51). Although this study does not include a historic comparison I hope to include some empirical evidence for this assumption in this section. When interior artefacts are considered as objects<sup>58</sup> it is beneficial to remember that Baudrillard (2009:53) indicated that it is not possible to imagine a current artefact which does not have references to earlier artefacts. The contemporary interior as a physical manifestation of cultural practices that are handed down from the past is an expression of tradition in the discipline.

When timeliness is considered in the contemporary interior it is also necessary to consider the temporal, or temporary, character of interior design.<sup>59</sup> Temporality relates to the relative short life-span of the interior artefact and the emergent need of interiors to undergo a rapid succession of transformations (or replacements in a cycle of construction and demolition). In buildings that are designed to accommodate this (e.g. shopping centres) the interior cannot be rigidly fixed and the architecture merely acts as an organizing structure and container (Mostafavi, 1008:30).

In its most basic understanding timeliness in interior design reinforces meaning by including references to the past. In *Bao Bao by Issey Miyake* this practice is specifically evident in the use of archetype (see Figure 5.4.1).



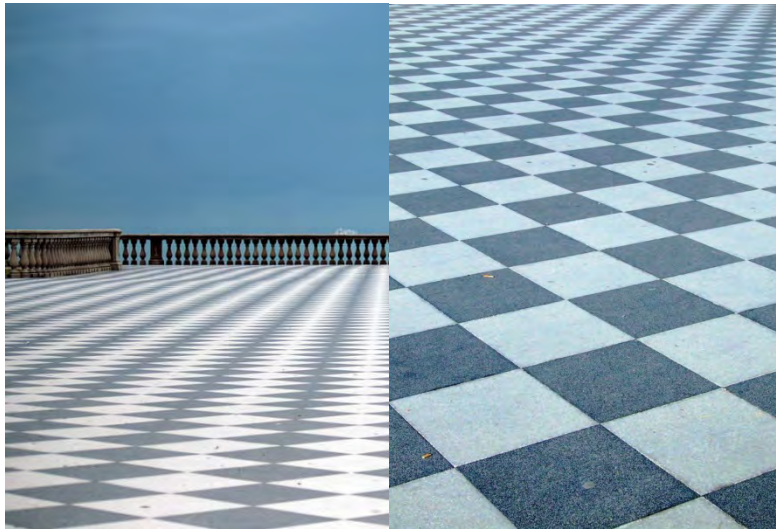
**Figure 5.4.1:** *Bao Bao by Issey Miyake*, Moment, Tokyo, c.2013 (Photography: DesignBoom ©) [051 Bao Bao]

In this interior I specifically refer to the use of black and white glazed tiles which is a contemporary iteration of the intype 'harlequin'. The archetype is described as: "a checkered pattern (alternating coloured squares) oriented in a 90° or a 45° angle typically made of marble, wood, or clay tiles" (Intypes, sa). This pattern is traditionally applied in public

58.) See, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies.

59.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

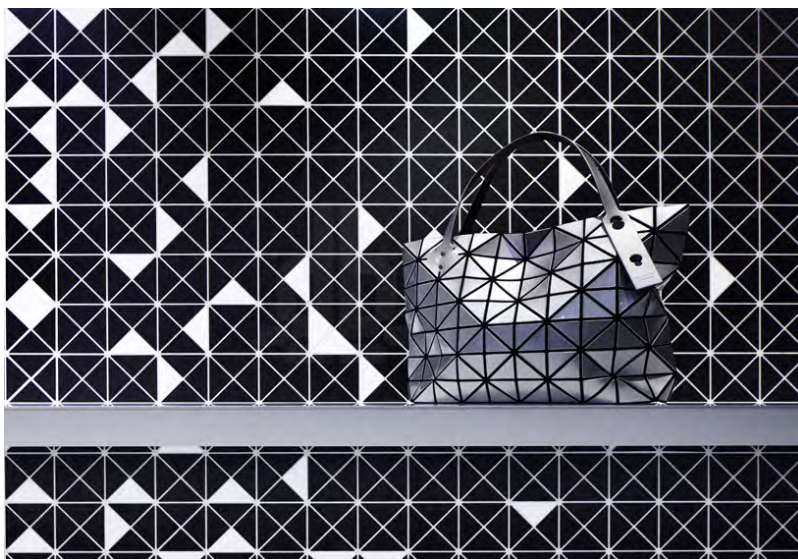
spaces and was historically used to connote a higher class of occupants in hotels through its associations with palaces and cathedrals (Intypes, sa) (see Figure 5.4.2).



**Figure 5.4.2:** The use of harlequin checkered tiles at *Terrazza Mascagni*, Enrico Salvais, Livorno, c.1925 (Photography: SergioBarbieri ©; ZioDave ©) [051 Bao Bao]

Although this interior (*Bao Bao*) does not reflect the typical application of this archetype I feel that it is an iterative expression of a traditional application of colour and material.<sup>60</sup>

In *Bao Bao* the theme is further iterated and re-used within the artefact. The tile pattern is not only an historic interpretation; it also interprets the product on offer (handbags); and is gradually changed within the interior (see Figure 5.4.3). This interior is a very apt example of the commercial interior becoming an object of consumption which facilitates other objects of consumption; these are presented as a complex mega-object.<sup>61</sup>



**Figure 5.4.3:** *Bao Bao* by Issey Miyake, Moment, Tokyo, c.2013 (Photography: DesignBoom ©) [051 Bao Bao]

In this way timeliness in interior design reinforces and creates meaning through external references to cultural conventions; through intertextual references; or to themes, elements, or conventions within the same artefact.

When timeliness is applied it is a method to alter existing elements to introduce innovation and new meaning in an existing interior. This further

60.) The use of *Terrazza Mascagni* only serves as example and I do not imply that it was directly referred to in the design of *Bao Bao*. There is a stronger association with the interactive *bilbao* pattern employed by Issey Miyake to change the form and proportion of the product (handbag).

61.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.



offers the opportunity for some interior artefacts to change from being the work of an individual to a collective work that is completed temporally, across generations (Scott, 2008:xvi). Scott (2008:212) concludes his text by stating that the alteration of a building should make the building incomplete and as such situate it as an element of continuity. The works included in the corpus did not consider alteration on the scale that Scott describes, but some elements of his theory are evident. In *Unknown Union* a contemporary retail interior is inserted in an eighteenth century building (see Figure 5.4.4).

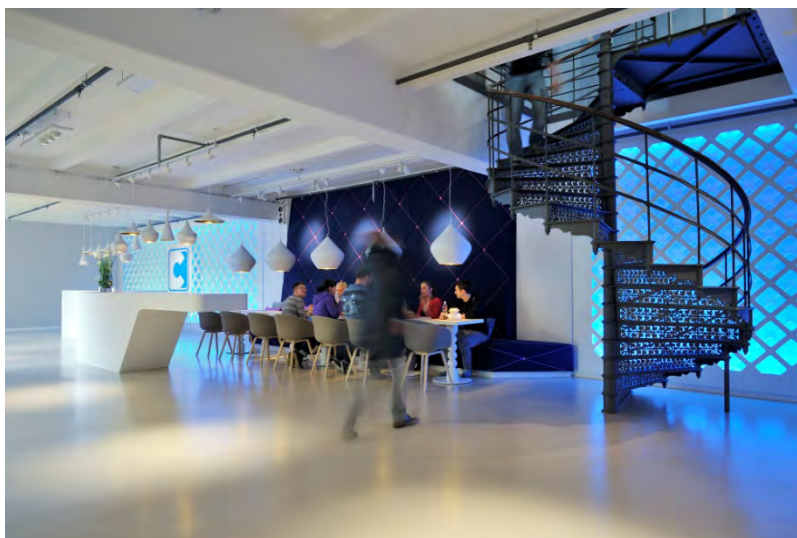


**Figure 5.4.4:** *Unknown Union*, Architecture at Large, Cape Town, c.2011  
(Photography: Jon R Wilson ©)  
[025 Unknown Union]

The original doors and windows are still visible, and it is assumed that the spiral staircase is a later addition, with the retail interior the latest alteration in a series of interventions. Another element that was altered in meaning was a column (blue in the foreground). Although the column maintains its structural purpose it is used as an organizational device; this is an example of transfunctionalisation through which second-order meaning is attached to an object.

The iteration of conventions over time is another method to introduce innovation in the interior environment. In this case the innovation, or introduction of new meaning, is not dependent on the physical alteration of existing objects. I use two examples to illustrate this:

In *Covus Central GmgH* the use of craftsmanship indicates intertextual references and the iteration of tradition (see Figure 5.4.5).



**Figure 5.4.5:** *Covus Central GmgH*, Seel Bobsin Partner, Berlin, 2012  
(Photography: Karsten Knocke ©)  
[025 Unknown Union]

Two forms of craftsmanship were identified in this interior: the lathed timber table legs; and the cast iron staircase. The lathed timber legs may

be considered as an intertextual reference to a craft method that has recently been made popular by Jaime Hayon. These references to influential designers are echoed with the use of various Tom Dixon luminaires. The designer objects and traditional craftsmanship are methods to instil cultural capital in the interior. The use of craft here can be considered as both Iterative<sup>62</sup> and Traditive.<sup>63</sup> Timeliness is introduced through innovative alterations to established forms and practices.

This interior further illustrates the timely and traditive support of craftsmanship. Craft is an important component of the interior design ontology; the profession evolved from a collection of craft-based trades such as upholstery, furniture-making, carpentry, millenary, painting, etc. (after Caan).<sup>64</sup>

In the *Otsuka-Gofukuten Kimono Store* an attempt is made to revive and promote the use of traditional Japanese apparel (see Figure 5.4.6).



**Figure 5.4.6:** *Otsuka-Gofukuten Kimono Store*, Yusuke Seki, Kyoto, c.2012  
(Photography: Takumi Ota ©)  
[049 Kimono]

A contemporary iteration of a *tokonoma*<sup>65</sup> is present in the display of a painted branch; this object is supported with a manikin dressed in a kimono, and the display units housing kimonos and textiles. This is a cultural specific use of objects and in this interior it is utilised without overt ethnographic connotations. The contemporary expression of a traditional offering indicates that cultural innovation may be dependent on iterative practices. Change in culture is introduced incrementally, and gradually, over time.

62.) Archetype, Convention, Craftsmanship, Iteration, Style, Tradition, and Typology, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

63.) Archetype, Convention, Craftsmanship, Iteration, Micro-ecology, Object, Performance, Signage, Style, Taste Good, and Tradition, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

64.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Craftsmanship.

65.) A built-in recess in which artistic objects are displayed.

In *Truth Coffee* timeliness is expressed in the combination of elements from different historical traditions and eras (see Figure 5.4.7).



**Figure 5.4.7:** *Truth Coffee*, Haldane Martin, Cape Town, 2012  
(Photography: Micky Hoyle ©)  
[045 Truth Coffee]

In this interior an industrial use (coffee grinding and roasting) is combined with furniture (upholstered chesterfield sofa and tub chairs) which carry more traditional connotations of luxury. In the material use the interior combines materials which connote different eras (e.g. the pressed steel ceiling panels which are re-used on the counter and galvanized mild steel used in the manufacture of a canteen-bench). In this interior timeliness combines different traditions and eras and it is repeating elements from the past and combining them with contemporary elements.

I have discussed the synthetic establishment of narratives and rituals earlier in this chapter;<sup>66</sup> if narrative (with the inclusion of ritual) is considered as the sequential occurrence of meaningful events it becomes clear that narrative is established temporally.<sup>67</sup> For the purposes of this thesis narrative is considered as a reference in the interior to an external story.<sup>68</sup> In the set design and decoration for *Interior. Leather Bar* an external narrative is established synthetically, which is then destroyed to reveal the artificiality of the story (see Figure 5.4.8a).



**Figure 5.4.8a** (cropped appearance): Set design and decoration for *Interior. Leather Bar*, Liz Philips, 2013.  
(Photography: Keith Williams ©)  
[030 Interior Leather Bar]

In this set an external reference is made to a domestic setting; this is established through the combination of a constellation (sofa with coffee table arranged on a carpet) and furnishings (satin upholstery with

66.) See, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design; particularly the discussion of the *Granny.F Salon* (see Figure 5.2.8).

67.) In my analysis narrative was classified as a Semiotic and Associative method; it plays a greater role in the inference of external meaning than in the bringing of Timeliness to the interior; however it is discussed here since it is supported in this category, see, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.

68.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Narrative.



embroidery and an oriental carpet); the use of taste goods (vintage sofa and re-used items (assumed) connote and element of thrift. A meaningful event in the film is established by locating it in an interior. In this way timeliness establishes and determines the traditional uses and associations of objects; the recognition of the domestic setting is dependent on the traditive and conventional acceptance as such by the audience.

When the broader interior setting is considered, the scene takes place in a sound stage which is revealed in the film. A double narrative becomes evident; the first is the reconstruction of a scene from a movie,<sup>69</sup> the second is physical setting of this scene in the manufacture of a documentary film (see Figure 5.4.8b). (During the screening of *Interior. Leather Bar* both versions of the interior is revealed.)



**Figure 5.4.8b** (full appearance): Set design and decoration for *Interior. Leather Bar*, Liz Philips, 2013.

(Photography: Keith Williams ©)  
[030 Interior Leather Bar]

When the interior is revealed (i.e. when the sound stage with its contained set is shown) inappropriate objects become evident which have their own temporal and iterative connotation, e.g. the presence of a ladder behind the sofa connotes a working interior, this is supported with the black surroundings and the cameramen. This 'destroys' the believability of the original narrative and indicates a second; the production of the first.

In this manner timeliness questions the traditional uses and associations of objects; if objects are paradigmatically out of place they may destroy or distort meaning. In this example this was used as a deliberate method.

The same interior indicates that timeliness may add meaning to, or change the inherent meaning of traditional and conventional interior settings. In this scene a traditional and conservative (and somewhat feminine) interior (the living room) is altered by firstly introducing elements of gay male sexuality (which masculinises and radicalises the frumpy interior); and secondly by changing the technical use of the space.

If a technical object's first communicative act is to say what its function is; then this interior serves as an example where transfunctionalisation is first used to convey the second-order meaning (i.e. the associations of place and the domestic interior) before it reveals the first-order meaning (a sound stage, not a domestic living room). In this interior the iteration between the traditional accepted notions of a domestic interior and its new use was deliberately made so large that it distorted the inherited and handed down meaning.

This interior indicates that the timely and worldly message of an interior artefact is not 'added on' a message, but is the message itself (after Baudrillard). The technical use of an object serves as a secondary function

69.) *Cruising*, 1980, Will Friedkin.



of cultural generation and its connotative meaning is of primary importance.<sup>70</sup>

As an iterative method timeliness establishes direct associative connections; in this section I will discuss direct associative connections between timeframes.<sup>71</sup> The *Restaurant Farma Kreaton* is a contemporary restaurant with traditional references from earlier times (see Figure 5.4.9).



**Figure 5.4.9:** *Restaurant Farma Kreaton*, Minas Kosmidis (Architecture in Concept), Komotini, 2012. (Photography: Karmatrendz ©) [040 Farma Kreaton]

It is specifically in its use of various vernacular containers and vessels to generate an ensemble (shelving with an arrangement of objects) that this interior evokes nostalgia. Nostalgia is an emotion that expresses longing for an (imagined or fictive) past; this emotion can be created by using objects that cause a wistful memory of such a time.

In the *Foursquare Headquarters* an associative connection to an earlier time is made through the use of an iconic connection (the telephone booth) (see Figure 5.4.10).



**Figure 5.4.10:** *Foursquare Headquarters*, Foursquare and Designer Fluff, New York, 2012. (Photography: Dezeen ©) [002 Foursquare]

The telephone booths are a new reconstruction and can be considered as an iteration or interpretation of earlier phone booths. These objects are an ironic use of nostalgia by an ITC company which refers to an earlier time when mass communication (specifically privately) was dependent on the small private spaces which a booth would provide. This association

70.) Refer to my discussion of transfunctionalisation in the analysis of the location of the corpus, see, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

71.) For the discussion of direct associative connections within a fictional setting, or within the current time frame, refer to the discussion of *The Martian Embassy*, see, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design (see Figure 5.5.3).

with a well known and recognizable icon is used to comment on issues of global change and inhabitation.<sup>72</sup>

Both these interiors contain nostalgic references which introduces the concept of temporal emotions. Temporal emotions are suggested by Lois (2010:441) who claims them as belonging to a class of emotions “that can only be felt by crossing timeframes, and thus may be more useful (than non-temporal emotions) in constructing a continuous self over time”. She continues to describe the characteristic of all emotions to be experienced in the present, remembered from the past or anticipated in future, but some emotions can only be experienced by bridging the present either to the past or the future; these include: nostalgia, regret, ambition, hope, optimism, disillusionment and dread.

These temporal emotions are based on timeliness and as such they have an important effect in construction a continuous sense of self over time. In other words, the ontological function of recognizing ‘oneself’ over various timeframes may be dependent on these temporal emotions. The temporal emotions tie the other life experiences together to provide a sense of continuity and durability (Lois, 2010:44).

If this concept is considered as formal theory and applied to the substantive area under discussion here (the construction of meaning in the contemporary commercial interior) it can then be surmised that the use of timeliness in interior design to evoke temporal emotions provides a sense of continuity and durability to the production of meaning. Meaning in the interior is then (re)constructed from past meanings, or it may anticipate the construction of new meanings in future.

In this case the interior artefact is not merely the product of cultural recycling and a continuous search for the new, but forms part of an inherited legacy of works and it contributes to the continuous dimension of critical reflection (after Baudrillard).<sup>73</sup> The interior artefact is not dependent on the cyclical, fashionable updating of commodity and significance.

The references to nostalgia in these two interiors (*Farma Kreaton* and *Foursquare*) are sufficient for the theoretical grounding of the temporal emotions. This class of emotions and its use in the interior should be studied in greater depth.<sup>74</sup>

72.) The question emerges: does a telephone booth provide communication privacy in the digital age?

73.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field, and, see, Chapter 6 Modes of Cultural Production in Interior Design.

74.) See, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

In the same way as the temporal emotions serve to construct a continuous and durable identity over time, so does timeliness bring transfunctionalised meaning from earlier iterations to the current time. I discussed the deliberate, synthetic, use of isochrestic styling earlier in this chapter.<sup>75</sup> Isochrestic styling is the result of consistently completing a task in a community (after Fisher).<sup>76</sup> In *Camper Paris* isochrestic styling is used to evoke an earlier (and cruder) construction method (see Figure 5.4.11).



**Figure 5.4.11:** *Camper Paris*, Studio Bouroullec, Paris, 2009 (Photography: Studio Bouroullec ©) [054 Camper Paris].

In this interior style is used temporally to bring meaning from an earlier time to the current era. This meaning can be altered or improved in subtle ways (e.g. the aesthetic improvement of the bracket) to introduce innovation. This supports innovation as an iterative, collective process that is based on the original ideas generated by individuals acting within a social system that is expressed over time.<sup>77</sup>

In *Camper Paris* timeliness is introduced in the interior through the innovative and iterative use of an *idea*; this could also be done through the re-use of a found object. In *Freedom Café* such a found object is represented by the shipping container (see Figure 5.4.12).



**Figure 5.4.12:** *Freedom Café*, Egg Designs, Durban, 2012 (Photography: Taste Freedom ©) [023 Freedom Cafe].

75.) See, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design; specifically the discussion of *Camper Paris* (see Figure 5.2.14).

76.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Style.

77.) See, Chapter 2 Theoretical Background; specifically the discussion of creativity and innovation in the introduction, see, 2.1 Introduction.



When a technical object is used for its intended purpose, it is imbued with the meanings associated with that purpose.<sup>78</sup> Since shipping containers are so recognizable and ubiquitous, and since their function is so well known their change in function is not sufficient to strip them of their previous use. This re-used object carries its own associations.<sup>79</sup> To re-use an object extends the life of the object and counters the consumer system and its display of conspicuous use.

To render this characteristic of timeliness more general and abstract it is useful to consider not only the re-use of objects but of all artefacts (i.e. all cultural residues).<sup>80</sup> In this case timeliness could be considered as the re-use of any existing function, pattern, use, ritual, object, etc. in new or existing ways.

I now return to the recurring theme of the use of archetypes in the interior. In my discussion on the synthetic establishment of archetypes it became clear that archetypes are temporally established and expressed as continuous and iterative instances of a recognizable theme. This property is also an indication of the overlapping nature of the categories of interior design methods to construct meaning.

In *Aesop Newbury Street* the archetype 'plinth' is used to emphasize a washing through (see Figure 5.4.13).



**Figure 5.4.13:** *Aesop Newbury Street*, William O'Brien Jr., Boston, c.2012  
(Photography: Dezeen ©)  
[046 Aesop Newbury].

The archetype ('plinth') is a "technique that raises a three-dimensional object slightly off the floor ... The device isolates and calls attention to the object on display" (Intypes, sa). The effect of the archetype (to call attention to the object on display) is created iteratively and traditively since the user (and reader) of the space is aware of this conventional use of the plinth.

The association of the tiles used in *Bao Bao* with the archetype 'harlequin'<sup>81</sup> serves as another example of the iterative and innovative use

78.) See, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.

79.) See, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.

80.) See, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies.

81.) See, Figure 5.4.1, above.

of archetypes. In this interior the archetype (although still recognizable) underwent considerable alteration and its expression is stronger in its effect (as a unifying, decorative plane) than its associations.

In the *Muriel Grateau Gallery* three iterative archetypes are used in a synthetic manner (see Figure 5.4.14).



**Figure 5.4.14:** *Muriel Grateau Gallery*, Muriel Grateau, Paris, 2012

(Photography: Oleg Covian ©)  
[041 Muriel Grateau].

The intype 'spectrum' is used as an organisational device to arrange the merchandise which is offered in a range of colours. The archetype is described as a "display technique in which items are arranged chromatically, exhibiting the full range of available colours as well as unifying the surfaces on which the items are arranged" (Intypes, s.a). This archetype is made more effective since it is applied with 'white box' which is an undecorated interior in which all the surfaces are white (Intypes, sa) and 'white out' in which all planar surfaces and furniture are devoid of colour. The white interior as a gallery space is a space devoid of meaning which places emphasis on the objects on display; this elevates those objects to the level of primary meaningful importance. In this interior the reader understands the importance of the displayed object since similar interiors was experienced before.

These examples serve to inform the notion that the use of archetype is an iterative, traditive, and timely method to transfer meaning from an earlier age to the current era. The archetype will connote the inherited meaning which is associated with it, but it allows for innovation and paradigmatic adaptability.

Timeliness is of particular importance in the establishment, repetition, comment on, and use of cultural conventions. I will discuss the specific uses of convention, and the timely action thereon in interior design with reference to several examples.

In the *Labyrinth of the Eternal Archetype* installation<sup>82</sup> timeliness is introduced through the initial repetition of established social conventions (see Figure 5.4.15a).



**Figure 5.4.15a:** *Labyrinth of the Eternal Archetype*, Shyra de Souza, Montreal, 2013  
(Photography: Shyra de Souza ©)  
[004 Eternal Archetype].

This complex interior artefact is richly connoted and comprised of a number of found objects, each carrying its own connotations and second-order meaning (see Figure 5.4.15b). The installation is kitsch, humorous and ironic. I associate it with overly decorated fussy spaces; I perceive it to be strongly gendered and expressive of material excess.



**Figure 5.4.15b (detail):** *Labyrinth of the Eternal Archetype*, Shyra de Souza, Montreal, 2013  
(Photography: Shyra de Souza ©)  
[004 Eternal Archetype].

The installation removes a domestic motif (the symbolic motif 'den' is expressed as a dressing table) from its private realm and displays its archetypal form in a public setting (the Montreal underground). In this way the symbolic motif is transfunctionalised; its original meaning as a place of refuge and self-care is subverted. Timeliness is expressed through the repetition of a social convention (the den) and comment on the convention is provided by misplacing it.

82.) This artwork is considered as a 'boundary object' (see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Boundary Object); as such it represents the intersection of several social worlds, and several material expressions. Strictly speaking, this is an artwork which exhibits interior design characteristics (see, 4.2.2 Criteria). My analysis and comment here is not art criticism but consider this artefact as an interior.



This artefact, in its assembly of taste goods (e.g. gilded flowers and leaves; a table lamp with a silk shade; and various containers, amongst others) indicates a sense of old-fashioned opulence and conservatism. Taste functions epistemically to construct identity. Timeliness here finds an expression in the construction of an (artificial) identity that forms part of a larger ecosystem that transcends time. In its reference to earlier objects and an established archetype the artefacts brings memes from the past into the present.

To use a more typical interior design example I refer to the use of a hand-wash basin in the *Espacio Cutlural The Clinic: The Mall* (see Figure 5.4.16).



**Figure 5.4.16:** *Espacio Cutlural The Clinic: The Mall*, Cristián Contreras, Santiago de Chile, 2012-2013  
(Photography: Rodrigo Rojas ©) [014 The Mall].

Like *Eternal Archetype* this project places a private function in an inappropriate position; by placing the hand-wash basin in the reception area of this interior it introduces the philosophical concept of interiority and it questions conventional notions of privacy and inhabitation.

In a more general application it can be inferred that placing a convention in an inappropriate location, or altering a convention, may inform, or indicate a change in ritual which indicates a change in time.

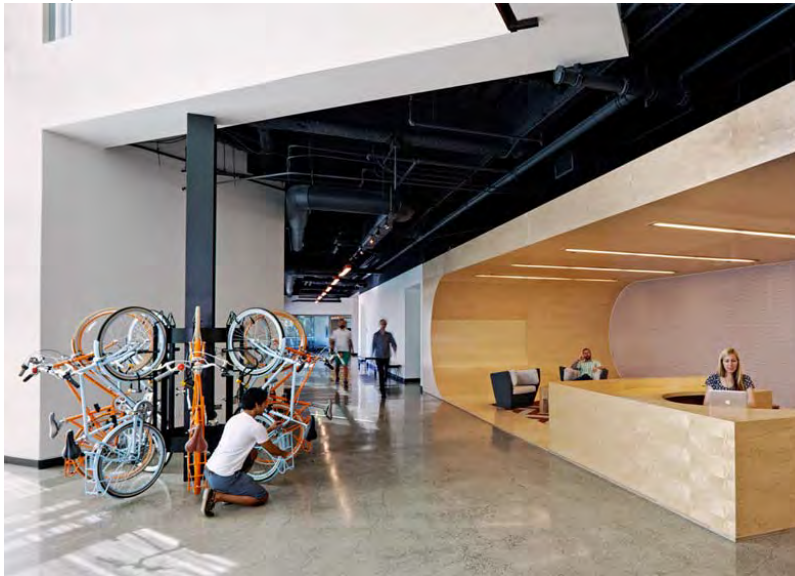
Social functions and conventions are (re)constructed through repetition. In the interior this is dependent on providing the tangible aspects to support them.<sup>83</sup> In the interior social structure (and functions supported by it) is indicated by using small scale metaphors; Ardener (1981: 2) described these metaphors as 'micro-ecologies'. I interpret micro-ecologies to indicate identifiable units in the interior which assists in the establishment or retention of social structure (e.g. differentiating between served and service spaces).<sup>84</sup> Ardener (1981:2) continues that space reflects social organization, but that once space is bounded and defined it is no longer a neutral container it is influential in repeating the social conventions that informed it.

83.) *Id est* interior artefacts are tangible objects which serve as vehicle for the expression of intangible cultural practices (such as social hierarchy and ritual), see, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study ,and, see, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies.

84.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods.



In the shared foyer designed for *395 Page Mill First Floor* such a conventional function is indicated in the reception counter (see Figure 5.4.17).



**Figure 5.4.17:** *395 Page Mill First Floor*, Studio O+A, Palo Alto, 2011  
(Photography: Jasper Sanidad ©)  
[009 Page Mill].

The social convention is expressed through the use typology. Typology concerns aspects of interior design production that can be grouped due to similarity (Jennings, 2007:48). Typology in this case is clearly indicated through a conventional and technical use (reception counter).<sup>85</sup> The reception counter here serves as an example of the timely use of micro-ecology since it is a recognizable unit of interior design that expresses a social function and differentiates served from service space.

The tangible aspects of this micro-ecology include the counter itself; its workspace and associated furniture and equipment (e.g. computer and chair); the bulkhead which marks its territory (and the associated waiting area) as separate from the rest of the interior; and the use of lighting.

In interior design timeliness determines the contemporary (or paradigmatically appropriate) applications of conventions and precedents. This provides further support for the suggestion that interior design constructs meaning in an iterative and innovative fashion. I will refer to the *Regis Racine Gymnasium* to illustrate this point (see Figure 5.4.18).



**Figure 5.4.18** *Regis Racine Gymnasium*, Atelier D'Architecture, Paris, 2011  
(Photography: Guillaume Clement ©)  
[005 Timber Gym].

85.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Typology; and Use.

This example is a fairly conventional example of the morphological and use type (indoor sporting facility / gymnasium). The project generates free associations with indoor sports, mainly due to its functional expression and the use of materials and signage (which are functionally and conventionally determined). The use of markings (setting out fields of play on the floor), symbols and equipment are functional in nature. Since the floor functions as a playing surface, and the boundary walls support that, design effort is focused on the design of the soffit. Materials (timber and concrete blocks), technemes (bleachers) and lighting are all determined by the type.

Although a large proportion of the design cannot be altered the final expression is still contemporary and paradigmatically appropriate. Functional and material choices create intertextual references (to other examples of the same type) by default.

I have discussed the use of timely associations in a number of projects above;<sup>86</sup> timeliness in interior design supports the Associative<sup>87</sup> methods.<sup>88</sup>

In *La Favorita de Insurgentes* the morphological typology (diner) is indicated conventionally (see Figure 5.4.19).



**Figure 5.4.19:** *La Favorita de Insurgentes*, ARCO Arquitectura Contemporánea, Mexico City, 2012  
(Photography: Jaime Navarro ©) [008 La Favorita].

In this interior these conventions function through their traditive associations. These traditive elements includes the bar counter (which is created synthetically through the combination of the counter, the signage above (menu), and bar stools); objects (such as the spherical pendant) and material associations (such as the chrome plated chairs).<sup>89</sup> In the establishment of the morphological typology (form) the timely associations support the Technical<sup>90</sup> methods.<sup>91</sup>

86.) *Bao Bao by Issey Miyake* (see Figure 5.4.1); the set design for *Interior. Leather Bar* (see Figure 5.4.8); *Freedom Café* (see Figure 5.4.12); and the *Regis Racine Gymnasium* (see Figure 5.4.18).

87.) Analogy, Boundary Object, Form, Image, Intertextuality, Iteration, Material, Narrative, Performance, Tradition, and Wit, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

88.) See, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.

89.) Also refer to the discussion of the synthetic assembly of this interior, see, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design (see Figure 5.2.19).

90.) Archetype, Craftsmanship, Form, Light, Material, Techneme, Typology, and Use, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

91.) See, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.

The application of archetype was discussed as a timely method to infer meaning with reference to *Aesop Newbury Street*.<sup>92</sup> I will briefly refer to the use of craftsmanship in this project (see Figure 5.4.20).



**Figure 5.4.20:** *Aesop Newbury Street*, William O'Brien Jr., Boston, c.2012  
(Photography: Dezeen ©)  
[046 Aesop Newbury].

Shelving is made up through the combination of oak mouldings (with traditional connotations) and oak battens. The use of craftsmanship (cabinetry) is playing a role in creating ornament; it also gives physical form and expression to the traditive connotations. Craftsmanship in this instance can be considered as both Traditive and Technical; these applications are used in conjunction to create contemporary meaning.

*La Favorita* and *Aesop Newbury Street* illustrates that the Traditive,<sup>93</sup> Iterative,<sup>94</sup> and Temporal<sup>95</sup> methods support the Technical<sup>96</sup> methods in interior design.<sup>97</sup>

92.) See Figure 5.4.13.

93.) Archetype, Convention, Craftsmanship, Iteration, Micro-ecology, Object, Performance, Signage, Style, Taste Good, and Tradition, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

94.) Archetype, Convention, Craftsmanship, Iteration, Style, Tradition, and Typology, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

95.) Inhabitation, Performance, Temporality, Tradition, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

96.) Archetype, Craftsmanship, Form, Light, Material, Techneme, Typology, and Use, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

97.) See, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.



In its application timeliness effects the indication of function by using cultural conventions. In this way timeliness communicates first-order meaning. In the *Táňa Kmenta Hair Salon* the function of the place (hair salon) is indicated through the use of conventions (see Figure 5.4.21).



**Figure 5.4.21:** *Táňa Kmenta Hair Salon*, Studio Muon, Brno, 2012 (Photography: Studio Muon ©) [002 Tana Kmenta].

The use of the place is indicated in the conventional assembly of the colour mixing station. This station is indicated through technemes with conventional associations (sink, shelf and drawer); use (storage and display of dyes; this ensemble also acts temporally to indicated the passage of time, as tubes of dye are used and re-arranged); furniture (hair-wash chair) and images (hairstyling photographs).

In indicating second-order meaning timeliness acts by establishing and communication social functions.<sup>98</sup>

Timeliness can serve as a method to transfunctionalised second-order meaning. In the *Starbucks Espresso Journey* this is achieved through an iterative process which reinterprets a technical function inherited from another use typology (see Figure 5.4.22).



**Figure 5.4.22:** *Starbucks Espresso Journey*, Nendo, Tokyo, c.2012 (Photography: Daici Ano ©) [070 Starbucks Library].

In its conventional appearance this interior is a library and the technical use it communicates is that of the storage of books. This conventional appearance is largely created through the use of a techneme (fixed

98.) As an example I discussed the creation of the dialectic between served and service spaces, refer to the discussion of 395 *Page Mill First Floor* (see Figure 5.4.17).

shelving). This techneme indicates the morphological (library) and use (storage) typologies. The techneme is applied conventionally as the shelves are placed against the boundary of the space (the space is too small to house book stacks and the interior is kept clear to allow the placement of furniture). This subverts the expected morphological typology (coffeehouse).

This iteration of the library typology is interpretive and serves to replace the conventional menu board. The selected items are selected by choosing a 'book' from the shelving and using that to place a request.

An inappropriate techneme is utilised for libraries, since fixed shelving will have practical limitations.

The change in function and iterative change in the morphological typology serves to indicate the transfunctionalisation of second-order meaning which timeliness may introduce through iterating earlier practices in novel ways.

Iteration allows for the repetition and adaptation of the design identity created by another discipline (for instance the spatial translation of a graphic design identity) and its application in the interior.<sup>99</sup>

In public interiors timeliness can be expressed in the temporary occupation of a portion of the interior. In this way timeliness is the inhabitation of a space and the temporary indication of the presence of that inhabitant, the inhabitants claiming of ownership and marking of a territory.

This temporary inhabitation is dependent on two factors: 1.) the existence of territory that can be occupied; 2.) utilising ways to indicate inhabitation.

The proximal assemblies are useful to create small territories that can be occupied; it is specifically the two inhabitable proximal assemblies that are referred to (constellation and symbolic motif).<sup>100</sup> As an example, the constellation (dining table with chairs) in the *Concrete Blonde Restaurant* represents such a territory that is available for temporary inhabitation (see Figure 5.4.23).



**Figure 5.4.23:** *Concrete Blonde Restaurant*, Dreamtime Australia Design, Sydney, 2011 (Photography: Arhitekturaplus ©) [042 Concrete].

Once a territory is occupied temporary inhabitation can be signified through the use of objects and ensembles. In *Concrete Blonde* an inhabitant will use the ensemble (place-setting comprising glasses, napkins, cutlery, etc.) and disturb it. As the inhabitant uses and rearranges the objects her presence is indicated.

99.) Refer to my discussion of the *MenScience Androceuticals Flagship Store*, above, see, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design (see Figure 5.2.22).

100.) See, 5.3 The Use of Proximal Assemblies in Interior Design.

Timeliness in the interior will also indicate the actual passage of time; as an example I refer to the consumption of water in *Aesop Chez 'Merci'* (see Figure 5.4.24).



**Figure 5.4.24:** *Aesop Chez 'Merci'*, Ciguë, Paris, 2011 (Photography: Louis Baquias ©) [048 Aesop Chez Merci].

In this installation temporality is indicated through the process of water consumption and disposal. In this laboratory table the water services are self contained; potable water is stored in a clear glass cylinder and waste water in a galvanized mild steel conical container. As water is used the passage of time is indicated; it is further notable that the difference between potable and waste water is signified through the use of material (transparency is indicative of clean water, while the polluted, waste water is kept in an opaque container) and form.

The genesis of spatial expressions of narratives and rituals through the synthetic use of symbolic motifs was discussed earlier.<sup>101</sup> Since narratives and rituals are dependent on the sequential depiction or experience of events they are timely. Timeliness is therefore important in the telling of narratives and in setting up rituals.

In the *Clinica Dental* a typical service ritual (reception, wait, service) is generated through the combination of a number of methods (see Figure 5.4.25).



**Figure 5.4.25:** *Clinica Dental*, Paulo Merlini, Oporto, 2013 (Photography: João Morgado ©) [016 Oporto Dental].

The service ritual is dependent on four inhabitable proximal assemblies and a micro-ecology: the user arrives at the reception counter (in which the service : served dichotomy is indicated micro-ecologically) and is instructed to wait in the waiting area (indicated with a constellation of

101.) See, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design (*Granny.F Salon*, see Figure 5.2.8).



couches), a journey to the consultation room is indicated with a symbolic motif (journey) at which point the edge (symbolic motif) is penetrated through a threshold (symbolic motif) and the destination is reached (this completes the narrative. The ritual can be completed by following the journey up the staircase (the destination is indicated through a window in the double volume); or by following the journey to the back of the space (where the destination is indicated through an open doorway).

Intertextual references are informed in a timely and traditive fashion when a contemporary interior contains references to other interiors.<sup>102</sup>

In the *IkHa Pop-up Restaurant* intertextual references are repeated from the Ikea furniture chain to the temporary restaurant (see Figure 5.4.26).



**Figure 5.4.26:** *IkHa Pop-up Restaurant*, Oatmeal Studio, Den Haag, 2012  
(Photography: Nadine Stijns ©; Ikea©)  
[017 IkHa].

The intertextual references are present in the organization of the space (which mimics Ikea's sequential, cellular arrangement) and the use of objects and furniture (which is sourced from the Ikea range). The repetition of these elements generates consistent meaning (to users that are familiar with Ikea's conventions) which informs the user's expectations.

The incremental changes that are used (e.g. combining Ikea objects in unconventional ways, such as the combination of shelving and dining tables) introduce innovation. Intertextual references may produce entirely new practices, or repeat existing patterns without much alteration.

In the commercial interior timeliness may be used to connote history in an effort to communicate that a brand is trustworthy and experienced.

102.) For example in the *Regis Racine Gymnasium* (see Figure 5.4.18) intertextual references are present in the reference to interior artefacts of similar functional type.

In the *New Balance Boston Experience Store* the brand's history and positive connotations are expressed throughout the interior (see Figure 5.4.27).



**Figure 5.4.27:** *New Balance Boston Experience Store*, Nikole Nelson, Boston, c.2012 (Photography: Conor Doherty ©) [059 Nikole Nelson New Balance].

In this interior a history to the brand is portrayed by revealing the interior alterations (e.g. retaining existing hexagonal penny tiles on the floor in the entrance). The age of the brand is clearly depicted with a historic statement which indicates its founding. The brand's association with the Boston Marathon is depicted with a plaster map of the Boston Marathon route.

#### 5.4.1 Properties of Timeliness

'Timeliness' is the category of interior design methods that relate to ideas of worldliness and changes over time. These methods express customs and conventions handed down from earlier generations which are constructed and reconstructed through repetition. These methods situate the contemporary interior artefact paradigmatically.

The category emerged from the combination of three concepts: the Iterative methods; the Temporal methods; and the Traditive methods.

The Iterative concept involves those methods that enact meaning through repetition. The concept comprises seven codes: archetype; convention; craftsmanship; iteration; style; tradition; and typology. 'Iteration' is the prominent code which denoted the concept. In interior design iteration reflects interior design's historical base which is identifiable in current design practice. Design iterations evoke 'archetypal symbols' which informs their origins (Tan, 2011:44). All contemporary artefacts reflect earlier artefacts (Baudrillard, 2009:53).

The Temporal concept involves those methods that relate to worldliness and timeliness. This is the dominant concept in this category and denoted the category through inflection. The concept comprises four codes: inhabitation; performance; temporality; and tradition. 'Temporality' is the prominent code which denoted the concept. In interior design temporality incorporates the emergent need of commercial interiors to undergo a succession of rapid transformations and it reflects the relatively short life-span of commercial interior projects. This quality was expanded to include all notions of time in the interior and to reflect the traditive and iterative practices and to separate the timely interior as a worldly artefact which is distinguishable from other (considered as timeless or enduring) meaningful artefacts (e.g. those that inform religious or national identities). Timeliness is closely associated with spatiality since space is experienced through time (Edwards, 2011:115).

The Traditive concept involves those methods relating to customs and conventions handed down from earlier generations. The concept comprises eleven codes: archetype; convention; craftsmanship; iteration; micro-ecology; object; performance; signage; style; taste good; and tradition. 'Tradition' is the prominent code which denoted the concept. In interior design tradition indicated the physical manifestation of practices handed down from the past. This is enacted from positions of conformity of individuality (Taylor & Preston, 2006:11); innovation in tradition and convention can be introduced through gradual, iterative change. The interior design profession emerged out of a craft tradition which makes it reliant on the transfer of tacit knowledge of making (Friedman, 2003:520).<sup>103</sup>

In his discussion of antiques Baudrillard (1996[1968]:75) asserts that timeliness is a characteristic of the immemorialisation of a former time in the concrete form of an object. This indicates nostalgia for the origins of identity (Baudrillard, 1996[1968]:75). In my view this nostalgia for an ancestral origin of identity is a culture-wide expression of a temporal emotion and a search for durability of identity; feelings of durability and continuity contribute to an enduring identity (Lois, 2010:441). Timeliness in the interior is such an expression of an enduring identity that is expressed in an object that will live for a short period of time. Interior artefacts (in their re-use of ideas handed down from earlier generations) are expressions of culture as an inherited legacy of meanings.

To use an object to imbue the contemporary interior with meaning from the past is an act to make the object into a sign; the object indicates 'ancestral significance' (Baudrillard, 1996[1968]:82). This is a myth

103.) See, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.

signifying birth and value – there is beauty in objects that are signs of an earlier life; for the purposes of this thesis, the methods related to timeliness are isolated to enable the interior designer to imbue contemporary (or future) interior artefacts with appropriate signs of earlier meaning.

In a complementary expression of timeliness contemporary functional objects indicate our current technological mastery (Baudrillard, 1996[1968]:82-83). Timeliness in interior design is an expression of both the traditive (that handed down from earlier generations) and the innovative (that which is made anew in the current era). The generation and interpretation of meaning is dependent on the temporal context of that meaning (Eco, 1979[1976]:171). This temporal context is an indication of timely meaning from another era and the sense of shared time during the generation and interpretation of spatial messages. In the utilization of both traditions our current objects signify the ambivalence between the want to remake ourselves anew and to be descended from someone.

### Properties

From the content analysis of the corpus it is possible to describe identifiable characteristics and properties of timeliness:

Timeliness reinforces meaning through references to the past or to cultural conventions inherited from earlier generations. It can generate meaning through intertextual references to objects from the distant or the immediate past;<sup>104</sup> or to meaning and conventions within the same artefact.

Timeliness allows the possibility of altering existing elements to introduce innovation and new meaning.

Through consecutive executions timeliness can iterate meaning over time to introduce innovative alterations to established forms and practices.

Timeliness can act in a synthetic manner by combining elements from different traditions and eras, or by repeating elements from the past and combining them with contemporary components.

Timeliness can (in its contemporary expression) add to, or change, traditional meanings. If the changes between these iterations are too large it may destroy or distort the inherited meaning.

Timeliness serves to establish, determine and question the traditional uses and associations of objects. The introduction of inappropriate objects may destroy or distort meaning.

### Actions

In its application timeliness takes the following actions:

Timeliness establishes direct associative connections between timeframes.

Timeliness evokes the temporal emotions which are essential in generating an enduring identity.

Timeliness brings transfused meaning from earlier iterations to the current time.

Timeliness can be utilized to re-use a found object in existing or new ways.

This 'object' can be considered as an artefact and as such expanded to include any existing function, pattern, use, ritual, object, etc.<sup>105</sup> The found objects carry their own associations; their re-use extends the life of the artefacts and counters the consumer system.

104.) By referring to objects from the immediate past timeliness can be a method for the contemporary contextualisation of a new interior.

105.) *Id est* any cultural residue.

Timeliness supports and uses archetypes; in their application it connotes the meaning inherited with them.

Timeliness uses cultural conventions and can reintroduce an existing convention in the current era.

Through its contemporary application timeliness comments on social conventions. In their repetition timeliness can offer novelty and innovation to existing conventions.

Timeliness repeats conventions by providing the tangible aspects needed to support and express them.

Timeliness determines the contemporary application of conventions and precedents.

By placing a convention in an inappropriate or novel context timeliness indicates a change in ritual or practice which implies a change in time and signifies innovation.

Timeliness supports craftsmanship.

Timeliness supports the Associative methods.

Timeliness supports the Technical methods.

### Effects

In its application timelines has the following effects:

Through the use of established conventions timeliness is effective in indicating the function of an interior; this communicates first order meaning.

Timeliness establishes and communicates social functions; this indicates both first-order and second-order meaning.

Timeliness transfunctionalises second-order meaning.

In the contemporary iteration of a design identity created by another professional discipline timeliness is interpretive.

Timeliness is expressed in the inhabitation of a space and the temporary indication of the presence of an inhabitant; of the inhabitants claiming ownership; and their marking of a territory.

Timeliness can indicate inhabitation through the synthetic assembly and use of objects. The passage of time is indicated as these objects are used, moved, and rearranged over time.

Timeliness indicates the passage of time.

Timeliness sets up rituals and tells ritualistic narratives.

Timeliness informs intertextual references.

In repeating intertextual references timeliness generates consistent cultural meaning which informs user expectations. These iterations can introduce innovation through incremental change; by introducing entirely new patterns; or by repeating existing patterns.

Timeliness can connote history and experience to establish a sense of trust.



## 5.5 ASSOCIATIONS IN INTERIOR DESIGN

For the purposes of this thesis interior design is considered as a semiotic phenomenon and the creation of meaning is made analogous with the production of culture in the broadest sense. When semiotics is considered in its most elementary definition, as the study of the exchange of messages, it becomes clear that for meaning to be successfully generated it is dependent on the transmission of a coherent message from a sender (who generates the message) to a receiver (who interprets the message).<sup>106</sup> The message is contained in the sign and its transmission is the process of semiosis.<sup>107</sup> The sign and its transmission are dependent on the associations which are produced in the mind of the sender and the receiver (who are temporally removed); it is assumed that meaning is dependent on correlation and overlap of these associations.

When interior design is regarded as a semiotic phenomenon it implies that its processes to generate meaning would be dependent on the associations it evokes and creates. The use of associations in interior design involves those methods that generate connections in the mind<sup>108</sup> between different components, and those methods that infer meaning. As synthesis is an instrumental and primary interior design method,<sup>109</sup> so is the use of associations in interior design, without the association between an object and its referent no meaning would be generated.

The associations that are generated by interior artefacts are an expression of intertextuality in which the current interior artefact can be related to identifiable objects and texts (referents). This creates connections in the mind between the interior and other objects. In the *La Petite Bretagne Crêperie* a range of references are used to generate associations which express the identity of the place (see Figure 5.5.1a).



In this interior associations are created with old fashioned home-industry; which, on a deeper level, created gendered associations (with femininity). The most prominent example is the use of the gingham<sup>110</sup>

**Figure 5.5.1a:** *La Petite Bretagne Crêperie*, Paul Crofts Studio, London, c.2012  
(Photography: Chris Tubbs © [012 La Petite Bretagne]).

106.) Both these processes are creative acts which are instrumental in generating meaning.

107.) See, 2.3 Semiotic Interpretation.

108.) Of the interior designer and the user; or the 'sender' and the 'receiver'; or the 'writer' and the 'reader' (of a 'text'); etc.

109.) Since it determines both the physical components and immaterial methods that are combined to generate meaning, see, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design.

110.) Gingham is associated with Dorothy's blue dress in the *Wizard of Oz* and Brigitte Bardot was married in a pink gingham dress in 1959.



pattern which is screen printed on the tabletop. References like these are repeated throughout the interior: e.g. painted timber chairs (which evokes nostalgic references to domestic kitchens); bevelled glazed tiles; bottled preserves; cooking implements; newspaper holders; lace; images; and ornate signage (see Figure 5.5.1b).



**Figure 5.5.1b:** *La Petite Bretagne Crêperie*, Paul Crofts Studio, London, c.2012 (Photography: Chris Tubbs ©) [012 La Petite Bretagne].

The use of associations in this interior functions to transmit the meaning and cultural capital contained in the referents to the current interior. Although this is a new interior (and identifiable as contemporary or paradigmatically appropriate) it generates associations to homemade confectionary and connotes a traditional, wholesome, offering.

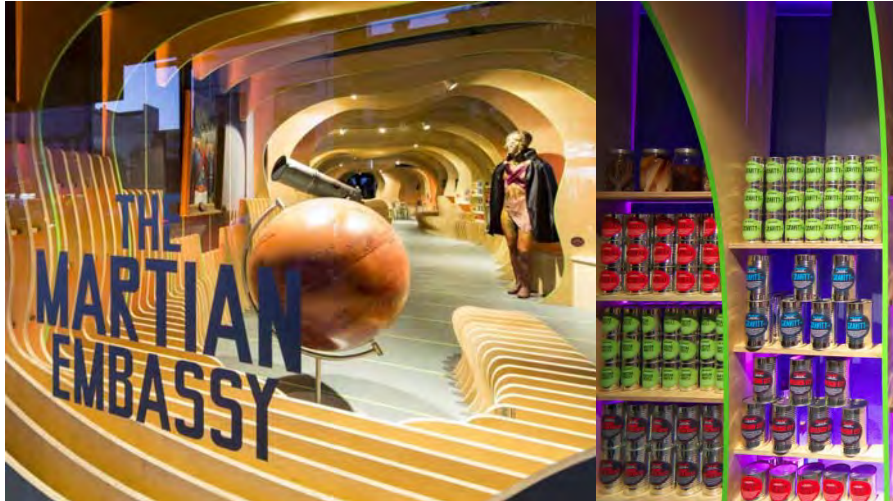
In another traditional interior associations generate direct connections to inform meaning in the interior. In *Pizza Faro* the ceiling is decorated with rolling pins which directly refer to the baking process (see Figure 5.5.2).



In this interior the associations are very direct and include objects (the rolling pins); materials (exposed stock bricks and a home-made quilt used as a wall-hanging); and furniture (various re-used timber chairs and timber tables with painted legs). The rolling pins themselves represent a synthesis of methods: object, iconic connection and wit. This direct iconic connection and material use connote a traditional product (pizza) and its associated interior (pizzeria).

**Figure 5.5.2:** *Pizza Faro*, Yvette Romanin, Thornbury, c.2012 (Photography: Decisive Cravings ©) [065 Pizza Faro].

Although these interiors are traditional they illustrate the general property of associations to generate direct connections in the mind between various components, objects, ideas, and meanings. In these interiors direct associative connections were established between time frames (through evoking the temporal emotions by referring to an earlier time frame).<sup>111</sup> Associative connections can also be made within the same time-frame (i.e. the current era) or to fictional or imaginary worlds. In *The Martian Embassy* associations to science-fiction is used to inform meaning in a creative writing workshop for children (see Figure 5.5.3).



**Figure 5.5.3:** *The Martian Embassy*, LAVA, Laboratory for Visionary Architecture, Sydney, 2012  
(Photography: Brett Boardman, Peter Murphy ©)  
[019 Martian Embassy].

Associations to the theme (Mars) are made through the use of objects (e.g. a globe of Mars, a telescope, and a manikin in 'Martian' attire) and words expressed in signage ('Martian').

The meaning of this interior is formally contained within a strong and distinctive boundary. Since this interior is so fictionalized it is dependent on the strong boundary to isolate it from the rest of the world in order to generate the small world necessary for the user to suspend their disbelief. This boundary is created by the organic form enveloping the boundary walls and soffit (this also allows for functional uses such as seating and shelving). This interior illustrates the reliance on the Formal methods<sup>112</sup> to generate connections in the mind or to infer meaning.

In the examples so far the associations were very direct and easy to decipher. This may indicate a need for the interior designer to consider the layperson (and his minimal understanding of the interior) when establishing associations in interior artefacts. This further indicates that associations are dependent on a certain 'naive theorizing';<sup>113</sup> and it implies that in interior design where a message must be interpreted rapidly and accurately by a large audience<sup>114</sup> that messages must directly imitate that for which they stand (after Eco, 1979[1976]:187). This implies a level of superficiality in the generation of meaning which cannot be favourably resolved when all possible interpretations and the independence of the reader are considered.<sup>115</sup>

111.) See, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.

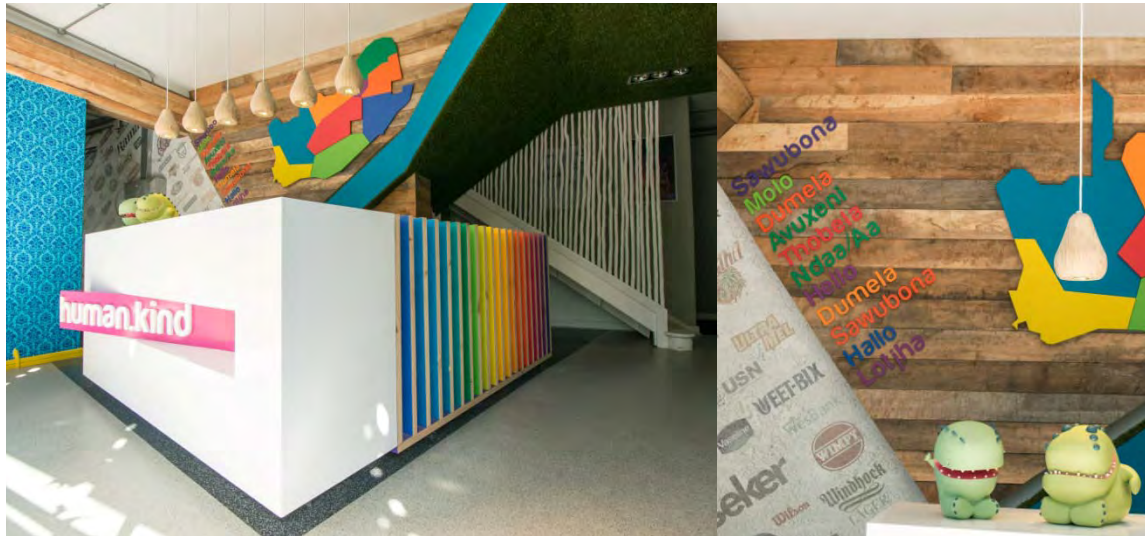
112.) Archetype, Boundary, Form, and Typology, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

113.) Umberto Eco (1979[1976]:194) used this term in his discussion of iconic connections; I feel it is appropriate here.

114.) Particularly the commercial practice.

115.) I refer to my discussion of cultural production (see, 2.2 Cultural Production); specifically the comparison between Structuralism and Poststructuralism. In generating messages the interior designer must feign a (somewhat) Structural position and assume that meaning has universal characteristics; whereas it is impractical to complete a Structural analysis of meaning in interior design, it is impractical to generate meaning in a Poststructural way.

Associations can function in a synthetic fashion when interaction between memetic devices is introduced. The *Human.Kind Advertising* offices is rich in associations which interact with each other (see Figure 5.5.5).



In the reception various elements (with their own associations) are collected. These include humorous objects (such as the figurines of dinosaurs); materials (reclaimed timber, Astroturf, *nieu-baroque* printed wallpaper, and wattle slats); a map (of South Africa); signage (with greetings in various local languages); and images (of brands and logos associated with the agency). The range of associations communicates a sense of diversity, eclecticism and fun. The interaction between meaningful elements generates depth and diversity in the message which makes it more subtle than if single elements were employed. This indicates the reliance on the Synthetic<sup>116</sup> methods to generate associations in the interior.

In generating associations the use of signage is a direct (and obviously noticeable) method to openly add and communicate meaning in an interior. In this way the interior designer<sup>117</sup> can introduce the brand identity and associations it carries by using its name or logo.

**Figure 5.5.5:** *Human.Kind Advertising*, PPS Architects, Johannesburg, 2013 (Photography: Lizl Sheridan ©) [027 Human Kind].

116.) Colour, Constellation, Curation, Ensemble, Light, Material, Object, Style, Symbolic Motif, Synthesis, Taste Good, and Techneme, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

117.) Or graphic designer.



Although the *Clae Pop-Up Shop* is a temporary installation it can evoke the more permanent meanings which are associated with the brand by utilising the brand identity (see Figure 5.5.6).<sup>118</sup> In Baudrillard's (197[1968]:191) words: "The brand's primary function is to designate a product; its secondary function it to mobilize emotional connotations."



Associations are generated by using iconic connections to transfer meaning. An iconic connection is a type of sign which carries a physical resemblance between the signifier and signified;<sup>119</sup> in the case of interior design the icon will be placed in the interior and it will be associated with its message through the physical resemblance to its referent. An iconic connection is not reliant on a complete resemblance since an iconic portrait does not resemble the actual person in form or texture, neither does it have personal characteristics such as speech or emotion (Eco, 1979[1976]:192). Although the incompleteness of the iconic connection is applicable for all the senses, for the purposes of this thesis I will refer to the visual sense only.<sup>120</sup>

Since I highlighted the perceived superficiality and naiveté in the application of associations in commercial interior design above; I will illustrate this superficial application of iconic connections by referring to two examples. Thereafter I will illustrate a more interpretive case in point:

**Figure 5.5.6:** *Clae Pop-Up Shop*, mode:lina architekci, Poznan, 2012  
(Photography: mode:lina architekci ©; Clae ©)  
[033 Clae Pop-up].

118.) The use of logos is a ubiquitous interior design method which is evident throughout the corpus.

119.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Iconic Connection.

120.) Its application to the other senses, although it can be inferred, cannot be determined from the corpus.

In the *simmlINN Flight Simulation Centre* an iconic connection is used to generate an association between training and aircraft (see Figure 5.5.7).



The iconic connection is incomplete since the 'aircraft' in the simulation centre is not fully three-dimensional and it uses two dimensional images in generating the associations (e.g. images of aircraft windows on the wall). Iconic styling is present in the use of markings and artefacts to refer to air travel.

This project further utilizes indexical connections to generate associations (e.g. the throttle within the simulator). An index is a type of sign that carries a physical connection between the signifier and the signified (e.g. the aircraft / simulator offer a physical response when the throttle is engaged).

In the *Yandex St. Petersburg Office* the types of sign are expanded to include symbolic connections and iconic connections (see Figure 5.5.8).



An iconic connection is present (as represented by the oversized clock; this unusual object can be considered as an example of the use of wit in the interior). The red pie-chart is an example of a symbolic connection. This is a type of sign which does not carry a physical resemblance between the signifier and the signified, neither are they physically connected. When compared to indexical and iconic connections they are considered to be semantics of a higher order (Haverkamp, 2013[2012]:248).

The inclusion of all three types of sign (index; icon; and symbol) means that this characteristic can be expanded as such: associations use signs to infer meaning.

**Figure 5.5.7:** *simmlINN Flight Simulation Centre*, Boris Banozic Architecture / Scenography, Stuttgart, 2011  
(Photography: Boris Banozic ©)  
[037 Flight Simulation].

**Figure 5.5.8** *Yandex St. Petersburg Office*, za bor architects, St. Petersburg, c. 2012  
(Photography: Peter Zaytsev ©)  
[034 Yandex].

An interpretive example of the use of icons is present in *Haberdash* (see Figure 5.5.9).



Eco (1979[1976]:195) describes the similarity or resemblance between an icon and its referent as displaying the property of 'similitude'. This property implies a physical resemblance in many respects (e.g. they are similar in proportion but different in scale); this allows for the possibility of transformation in the resemblance between an icon and its referent (Eco, 1979[1976]:199).<sup>121</sup> I wish to highlight two icons in *Haberdash* which exhibit a degree of similitude and transformation between the sign and the referent:

The first icon is the use of a trestle-table leg to support credenzas and display tables. Since a trestle table is adjustable and the splayed legs are hinged and the legs in this interior are not adjustable or hinged, the icon in this case only bears a formal resemblance and the functional resemblance is omitted. Despite the lack of functional meaning the association remains intact and meaning is transferred successfully.

The second icon is visible in the resemblance between the display unit at the back and a printer's tray. As a printer's tray was used to store and organize a typesetter's alphabet set, and in later interpretations was used domestically to display small objects,<sup>122</sup> a large scale shelving unit is used to display and organize merchandise (see Figure 5.5.9b).

**Figure 5.5.9a:** *Haberdash*, Form Us With Love, Stockholm, 2012 (Photography: Jonas Lindström ©) [061 Haberdash].

121.) The amount of transformation permissible and the amount of similitude required is culturally defined; it falls beyond the scope of this thesis to determine that application in interior design. This would require further research, see, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

122.) I remember such a display from my childhood; my grandmother had two and my sisters and me used to ask special permission to stand on a chair and look at the small objects.





**Figure 5.5.9b:** *Haberdash*, Form Us With Love, Stockholm, 2012  
(Photography: Jonas Lindström ©)  
[061 Haberdash].

The use of form and function to establish the resemblance to a printer's tray (but at a change of scale) is an indication of transformation and similitude of the icon and its referent. This strategy and use is further efficient in generating the intype 'specimen'.<sup>123</sup> At this point the overlap between archetype and icon serves to indicate the associative nature of archetypes. Since the archetype is an ideal example from which other models are iterated the archetype functions through the association created between the current manifestation and its referent. The current manifestation of the archetype functions as an icon which displays similitude to, and allows for transformation from, its referent. In this manner the use of associations in interior design supports the use of archetypes.

The initial definition indicated that associations are the result of involving connections in the mind between different components; these 'connections in the mind' can also be the result of the associations that may be present between methods.<sup>124</sup> I will illustrate this idea by referring to the association between a constellation and an archetype in *Truth Coffee* (see Figure 5.5.10).



**Figure 5.5.10:** *Truth Coffee*, Haldane Martin, Cape Town, 2012  
(Photography: Micky Hoyle ©)  
[045 Truth Coffee]

In this interior I will firstly refer to the intype 'plinth'. Plinth is defines as a "display technique that raises a three-dimensional object slightly off the floor (usually one low step). The device isolates and calls attention to the

123.) The intype 'specimen' was discussed above, see, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design (*UNIQLO Ginza Flagship Store*, see Figure 5.2.16.).

124.) This indicates the synthetic nature of associations and supports my earlier notion that synthesis is the primary interior design method to construct meaning, see, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design.

object on display.” (Intypes, sa). The plinth can then also be considered as a method to isolate and separate an area from the larger interior. In *Truth Coffee* the plinth is occupied by three repetitions of a constellation (dining table and chairs).

The constellation is large in scale and inhabitation of the constellation is possible; further the constellation demarcates a space and separates it from the larger interior. They are also functional arrangements of furniture which allow certain social behaviours to manifest.<sup>125</sup>

There is thus a functional relationship and association between the archetype and the constellation; both demarcate a space and separate it from the larger interior. They are further both inhabitable, and, in this case, serve to call attention to the inhabited area. As archetypes are supported by associations, so are the proximal assemblies.

Technemes generate stylistic meaning through their associations. This is specifically achieved through the process of transfunctionalisation. Since transfunctionalisation is the process through which an object acquires its socially sustained meaning (which exceeds its immediate function). In architecture the primary functions (immediate functions) are those that are recognized by the functionalist tradition, while the socially sustained (or second-order) meanings are those that are classified as the symbolical value of architecture.<sup>126</sup>

In this distinction it can be argued that technemes (as the smallest unit of technological information) represent the primary and technical function of an object (after Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:7); in contrast, style (as the use of aesthetic judgements) represent the socially sustained meaning of an object (after Sunley, 2008:683). Since isochrestic styling is the result of consistent ways of manufacture; it represents the transfunctionalisation of the techneme to generate style. This is evident in the *Charles Smith Wines Tasting Room and Headquarters* (see Figure 5.5.11).



**Figure 5.5.11:** *Charles Smith Wines Tasting Room and Headquarters*, Olson Kundig Architects, Walla Walla, 2011 (Photography: Charles Smith Wines ©) [031 Charles Smith Wines].

In this interior isochrestic styling is present in the visual appearance of the truss manufacture; this styling is generated through the manufacture process itself. In the manufacture of the truss a number of technemes are combined synthetically (these include truss plates, bearing plates, chords, braces, etc.). The technemes have first-order (technical) meaning which expresses their immediate function; in their combination the process of transfunctionalisation is active and their combination generates the second-order meaning (isochrestic styling) which generates meaning

125.) See, 5.3 The Use of Proximal Assemblies in Interior Design.

126.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions, Transfunctionalisation.

through associations. Although the trusses in this interior forms part of the architectural host (and was not designed specifically) the decision to expose them indicates that the designers was aware of this meaning and wanted to exploit it by making it available.

Associations are active in the process to transfunctionalise technemes in the generation of style.

This interior, through its use of isochrestic styling, provides evidence for the relationship between associations and timeliness. Associations are also iterative and traditive when they establish connections in the mind between the current era and the past.<sup>127</sup> As far as tradition is established through customs handed down from earlier generations, associations support the Traditive<sup>128</sup> methods.

The first-order meaning (function) of an interior is indicated through associations, this is evident in a number of the interior artefacts discussed above:

In *La Petite Bretagne* (see Figure 5.5.1) the place's function as an eatery and its traditional product offering is communicated through associations;

in *Pizza Faro* (see Figure 5.5.2) associations play a similar role to generate associations with public eating and bread making (pizza making);

in the *Clae Pop-Up Shop* (see Figure 5.5.6) the function (retail – footwear) is made by association to the brand identity; and

in the *simminN Flight Simulation Centre* (see Figure 5.5.7) the function is indicated through the use of iconic connections.

These examples illustrate the effect of associations to indicate function and communicate first-order meaning.

I discussed the use of associations to generate style through transfunctionalisation above.<sup>129</sup> It follows that if associations are indicative of an interior artefact's technical use (or first-order function) then they can also be useful to establish second-order meaning through transfunctionalisation.

In *Haberdash* the iconic connections between functional objects (e.g. display tables and shelving) and their referents (trestle tables and printer's tray) serves as an example of transfunctionalisation.<sup>130</sup>

127.) E.g. *La Petite Bretagne* (see Figure 5.5.1); and *Pizza Faro* (see Figure 5.5.2).

128.) Archetype, Convention, Craftmanship, Iteration, Micro-ecology, Object, Performance, Signage, Style, Taste Good, and Tradition, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

129.) Refer to the generation of isochrestic style in the *Charles Smith Wines Tasting Room and Headquarters* (see Figure 5.5.11).

130.) See Figure 5.5.9.

In the *Play Pot Restaurant* furniture is used for their associative purpose even when the technical-use is redundant (see Figure 5.5.15).



**Figure 5.5.12:** *Play Pot Restaurant*, Lim Tae Hee Design Studio, Seoul, 2012 (Photography: Youngchae Park ©) [011 Play Pot].

The Tolix bar stools are functional objects which allow seating at the bar; but more importantly the associations established by their status as a designed object (which is currently very fashionable) bring further levels of meaning to this interior.<sup>131</sup> Although the history of the object must be 'known', and does not form part of the general meaning of the object, it serves as a vessel of this information which is inferred in the interior through the transfunctionalisation of the technical use. *Id est*, I assume that the object's associated secondary meaning in some way informed the designer's choice (albeit possibly subjectively).

Secondary meaning (such as the importance of an artefact) can be established through association. In *Camper Soho* the importance of the merchandise is indicated by using a complex artefact (see Figure 5.5.13).

131.) The example in this interior is the H Stool. The Tolix company was established by Xavier Pauchard (who was a plumber) in 1909 as a boiler making workshop. The sheet-metal division was added in 1933. The H Stool is an iterative version of the famous *Model A* outdoor chair (1934) (Byars 2004[1994]:559).



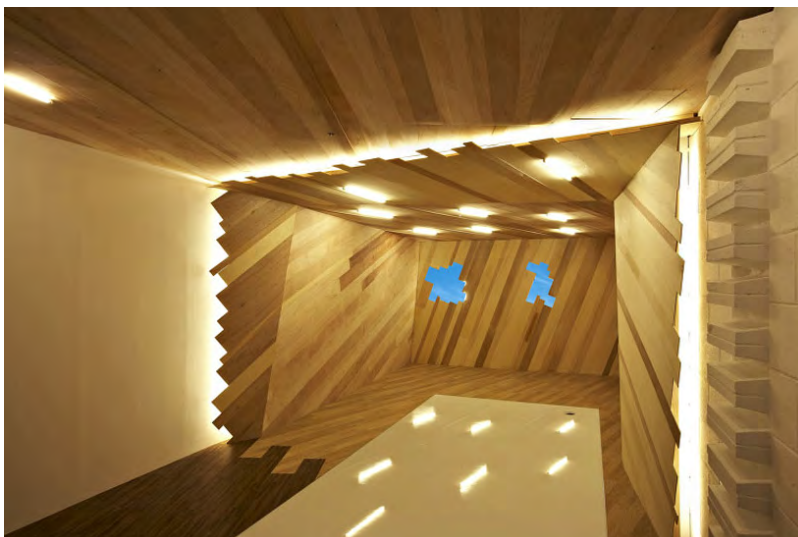


The merchandise (shoes) is displayed in a billboard spanning the length of one wall. The shelving is constructed in such a way that the merchandise is not visible on entering the shop, but only when the user turns around. The display itself is embodied in the intype 'billboard': "Billboard describes a treatment for an entire planar surface as a blank canvas for art, text, graffiti or photography," (Intypes, sa). It is comprised of a techneme (shelving which is angled on plan), colour (red and white), lighting (spot-lights on merchandise), and signage ('Camper'). This establishes the merchandise display as a complex object in an otherwise simple interior.

The contrast between the billboard and the remainder of the interior generates a strong message which places the product, and its association with the brand, as the most important aspect of this interior. It is through the contrast between a simple interior and complex object that secondary meaning is associated; in this interior associations generate second-order meaning which exceeds the technical function of the artefact.

In the *S. The Yoga Studio* a symbolic boundary separates an interior from a larger space (see Figure 5.5.14).

**Figure 5.5.13:** *Camper Soho*, Shigeru Ban Architects and Dean Maltz Architects, New York, c. 2012  
(Photography: Marian Montoro ©) [055 Camper Soho].



I consider the boundary in this interior (separating the space clad in timber) as 'symbolic' since it is only established through inference, a physical boundary do not exist, nor is there a threshold between the spaces. The boundary is established by the proximity and synthesis of a techneme (light-well) and lighting (artificial recessed lighting creating a halo around the boundary). This boundary forms the threshold to the intype 'incubate'. This is described as a "shared spatial unit that is isolated

**Figure 5.5.14:** *S. The Yoga Studio*, YoonSpace Design & Architecture, Gyeonggi, c. 2012  
(Photography: Song Gi Myoun ©) [057 S the Yoga].

from a larger environment,” (Intypes, sa). Although this intype is usually a shared space in an office environment it is applied in a fitness context as a space of retreat and reflection. The boundary is established ‘symbolically’, i.e. through association or inferring meaning (that a boundary condition between two spaces exists). As the proximal assemblies can be used to isolate an interior from a larger environment; so can the use of associations.

Associations play an important role in the establishment of individual identity. It can be argued that since a lay-person is able to interpret the identity of a place they are also able to compare the identity of the place with their own. If an affinity between the tangible identity of the place and the intangible identity of the user exists, it will establish connections in the mind (i.e. associations) between these identities.

I will illustrate the effects created through associations which are important in establishing or expressing the identity of the user within an interior. In *Club MUSÉE* associations are created between the identity of the place and the identity of the user (see Figure 5.5.15).



In this interior the symbolic motif den is employed to create areas of retreat (niches with banquettes). Users of the club can retreat into the dens and recede into the background and observe the interior from there. This space provides the place where an individual can perform their identity. If the user can create a connection in the mind between their identity and the identity of the place it informs the process of constructing and projecting their identity.

I want to support this argument through the use of an analogy with fashion design. As fashion is a method to convey our identity through the external signs that they display; and as it serves as a method to mark membership within groups (Adamo, 2011) so does the choice of interior to inhabit. My argument here is that in a similar manner as when clothing is chosen, when a person decides to enter an interior, they consume that interior (and its constructed meaning) through that choice; this implies that the user established a positive association between themselves and the interior. In their affinity with certain spaces or types of spaces the user can express themselves.

As clothing is an effective and established method to establish and convey an individual’s gender (and societal role) publicly (Adamo, 2011) so are some interiors gendered (male, female, or neutral) which allows their inhabitants to establish associations between an interior and its product offering; as an example I refer to *Takeo Kikuchi* which is clearly gendered masculine with associations to traditional masculinity (see Figure 5.5.16).

**Figure 5.5.15:** *Club MUSÉE*, Parolio & Euphoria Lab, Madrid, 2011  
(Photography: Maria Primo ©) [039 Club MUSÉE].





**Figure 5.5.16:** *Takeo Kikuchi*, Schemata Architecture Office, Tokyo, c. 2012  
(Photography: Schemata Architects ©) [050 Takeo Kikuchi].

In contrast *Adidas by Stella McCartney* is a female interior (see Figure 5.5.17). Female identity is established by identifying connections between identity and everyday experiences (Perolini, 2011:169). Although the coffee table in the foreground has no clear functional use; it may be useful as an identity-creating element through its associations with domestic interiors.



**Figure 5.5.17:** *Adidas by Stella McCartney*, APA London, London, 2012  
(Photography: Ed Reeve ©) [026 Adidas Stella].

The gendered connotations of these spaces are not created through their material palette (neither have stereotypical associations) or their use of lighting or material (with similar lighting schemes and material palettes). A consumer of clothing from these retailers would, in part, communicate their gender through the use of clothing. Their consumption of the interior plays a similar role. This correlation between identity, product, and place is established through associations (between product and place, product and identity, and place and identity). The interior must provide its inhabitants with a sense of belonging and a sense of identity (Perolini, 2011:164).

As clothing and dress serves as a symbolic language to portray identity through conventional codes (Adamo, 2011) so does the interiors where these clothing items are acquired and used. Interiors in general, and commercial interiors specifically, are subject to the aesthetic preferences of their occupants (who will choose not to occupy, or even enter them, if there is aesthetic discordance between a potential user and an interior). The expression of preferences is a manifestation of value, attitude and identity (Ritterfeld, 2002:373). Through the exercise of preferences a person locates themselves in the social world (Ritterfeld, 2002:373)

The den in *Club MUSÉE* contains an image of the 1960's supermodel Twiggy (Leslie Lawson) (see Figure 5.5.15); this image is iconic and Twiggy is identified by her cropped hair and androgyny. The presence of the image generates associations and the temporal emotion, nostalgia, through references to an earlier time. When this space is occupied and used it allows the user to evoke temporal emotions which is used to support their identity as it is constructed over time.

Whereas the earlier examples used to indicate the use of associations in interior design could be considered as direct and superficial<sup>132</sup> I now wish to indicate the use of associations to create subtlety or interest in the interior.

The use of incomplete associations will require greater creative input from the interpreter to complete the act of communication. As examples I refer to the use metonymy and synecdoche. Metonymy is the substitution of the name of an attribute for the name of the referent (e.g. 'crown' for 'king'). This is not to say that metonymy is metaphoric. While both generate associations by substitution, metaphors function on substitution through similarity while metonymy functions on substitution through contiguity (Eco 1979[1976]:280).

Synecdoche is contrasted as a figure of speech in which a part is made to represent the whole, or vice versa (e.g. 'wheels' referring to 'car'; or "South Africa lost the cricket").

Although these definitions represent linguistic phenomena they can be applied in all semiotic circumstances. Eco (1979[1976]:280) states that semantic phenomena that function through substitution are dependent on the 'encyclopedic' model of interpretation.

In *The Limits of Interpretation* Eco (1990:143) describes two semantic models to explain the production and understanding of texts:

In the 'dictionary model' meaning can be explained as concise definitions composed by a finite set of semantic universals. This model is criticized by Eco as "undoubtedly pretty artificial", but useful since it depicts the competence of average human beings. In my assessment of the corpus the dictionary model explains direct and artificial connotation such as those encountered in *La Petite Bretagne* and *Pizza Faro*; they enable the user of the space a fairly accurate and speedy interpretation. The dictionary model can only lead to an elementary list of meanings unable to explain social function and its complexity (Eco, 1979[1976]:98); in this model signs are used to infer symbolic meanings (using *Pizza Faro* as example, 'rolling pin' symbolizes 'pizza').

The 'encyclopedia model' is based on a belief that every semantic unit must be interpreted by every possible association that is established through cultural convention; in this model "every sign can be interpreted by another sign that functions as its interpretent" (Eco, 1990:143).<sup>133</sup> The encyclopedia model implies that "there can be cases of incomplete codes [and] disconnected lists of semantic properties attributed to a sememe by the layman, and so on" (Eco, 1979[1976]:112).<sup>134</sup> This introduces great complexity and difficulty in interpreting the meaning of artefacts: for a scientific reading all possible meanings must be considered hierarchically; for a popular reading the interpreter must choose from an array of connotations (Eco, 1979[1976]:114). For interior design this implies a deeper level of analysis in which connotations carry multiple meanings

132.) E.g. *La Petite Bretagne Crêperie* (see Figure 5.5.1) and *Pizza Faro* (see Figure 5.5.2).

133.) In the Peircian triad the sign is the relationship between the *representamen* (concrete physical aspects); the *object* (evoked impression); and the *interpretent* (subjective meaning), see, 2.3 Semiotic Interpretation.

134.) Although the term 'sememe' implies a specifically linguistic application (see, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions, footnote) I interpret it broadly to include all meaning-carrying agents, i.e., all memes.

such as is evident in the establishment of the multiple narratives and spaces in the set design for *Interior. Leather Bar*.<sup>135</sup>

To understand the semantic relation between the part and the whole (which is essential to the understanding of incomplete codes) I will refer to the relationship of two technemes in *Les Grandes Tables du 104* (see Figure 5.5.18).



**Figure 5.5.18:** *Les Grandes Tables du 104*, Ciguë, Paris, 2010  
(Photography: Ciguë ©)  
[024 *Les Grandes Tables*].

The articulated armature represents a canopy above a food stall. This armature can be considered as a techneme which communicates the fact that it is adjustable. This armature is comprised of a number of smaller technemes (e.g. hinges, struts, and coil);<sup>136</sup> the technemes and armature have a semantic relation to each other which established mental connections between them.<sup>137</sup>

The semantic relationship between the constituent elements (technemes) and the object (armature) serves to illustrate the concept of meronymy. Meronymy is the relationship between an element denoting a part and an element denoting the corresponding whole (Cruse, 1986:159). In this example meronymy describes the relationship between the technemes and the armature; this is a reciprocal relationship where each techneme denotes the armature (holonymy) and the armature denotes its constituent technemes (meronymy). In other words the armature denotes its constitutive parts and is considered as a holonym of its technemes; while the technemes are meronyms of the armature.<sup>138</sup>

This relationship between the part and the whole has little practical application in interior design, but the understanding of meronymy is essential to inform the application of other 'incomplete codes'.

135.) See Figure 5.4.8.

136.) I will return to the characteristic of nesting technemes later in the chapter, see, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design (see *Les Grandes Tables du 104* Figure 5.6.3).

137.) This is in addition to the physical connections.

138.) This thesis takes the position that interior design is not a language per se, at best the generation of meaning in interior design can be made analogous with the generation of language (see, 2.2 Cultural Production). It is therefore not necessary to consider all the lexical requirements of meronymy (e.g. optionality and necessity; congruence; sense-spectra; and heading (Cruse, 1986:162-165); for the purposes of this thesis it suffices to note that there is an associative relationship between the part and the whole and that each denotes the other reciprocally.

As an example I will refer to the use of synecdoche in the *Blockbuster: Itinerant Film Exhibition* (see Figure 5.5.19).



**Figure 5.5.19:** *Blockbuster: Itinerant Film Exhibition, Work!*, Mexico City, 2012  
(Photography: Victor Deschamps ©)  
[007 Blockbuster].

Analogy is considered as a correspondence or partial similarity between items;<sup>139</sup> or it is considered as a native and mysterious relationship between “things or between images and portrayed things” (Eco, 1979[1976]:200). Analogy is therefore the presence of a vague sense of similarity between items. In this interior I feel that the armature that supports the lighting in the centre of the discussion area can be considered as analogous to a camera dolly.

The relationship is vague and partial and is therefore dependent on an interpretive model to understand the text. It can therefore be said that an interpretation that is reliant on a partial code (or incomplete relationship in form) between the armature and a camera dolly is an encyclopedic interpretation. In this interior there are not clear and artificial (but semantically universal) connection between a representamen (armature) and its interpretent (camera dolly). This association is subjectively created by the interpreter and illustrates the creative collaboration of the interpreter in understanding the meaning contained in a text.

Since this ‘camera dolly’ is also only partial (it does not have wheels, track, or camera) but represents a complete object it can be considered as an example of synecdoche; and since the part represents the whole it serves as an example of meronymy.

139.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Analogy.



In *A Cantina* an analogy is used to generate interest in mysterious area (see Figure 5.5.20).



**Figure 5.5.20:** *A Cantina*, ARCO Estudio Nómada, Galicia, 2012 (Photography: Santos-Diez/BISimages ©) [071 A Cantina].

The analogy in this interior is with dining *al fresco* under trees. The connotation with the trees is established through a formal (branched) and material (timber) resemblance. The analogy is only partially visible from the next room is combined with the use of symbolic motifs (edge, threshold, and mystery) to establish a narrative in this interior. The narrative is expressed as the sequential movement through space.

In the *Labyrinth of the Eternal Archetype* associations are employed to transfer meaning from the domestic to the public realm (see Figure 5.5.21).



**Figure 5.5.21:** *Labyrinth of the Eternal Archetype*, Shyra de Souza, Montreal, 2013 (Photography: Shyra de Souza ©) [004 Eternal Archetype].

In this installation a domestic motif (the dressing table) is placed in a public setting to provide social commentary.

This transfunctionalisation of motifs from one realm to another can be useful in more conventional interiors. In *Café Craft* domestic and educational motifs are transferred to an eatery (see Figure 5.5.22).



The L-shaped sofa and its furnishings (various shades of upholstery) with its associated ensembles (luminaires and coffee tables) create an atmosphere of relaxation and informality through its associations with a domestic setting (represented by the symbolic motif 'den').

In a more formal arrangement associations are made with library tables and table lamps; in this space associations with education and privilege are introduced.

In this interior the ubiquity of domestic meaning is synthesized with public cultural meaning to generate new associations in a novel place-setting.

The use of associations in the interior artefacts discussed thus far serve as example of the characteristic of Associative<sup>140</sup> and Semiotic<sup>141</sup> methods to connote external references and to generate intertextual meaning.

**Figure 5.5.22:** *Café Craft*, POOL, Paris, c.2012  
(Photography: Samuel Kirszenbaum ©)  
[021 Cafe Craft].

140.) Analogy, Boundary Object, Form, Image, Intertextuality, Iteration, Material, Narrative, Performance, Tradition, and Wit, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

141.) Analogy, Iconic Connection, Indexical Connection, Intertextuality, Narrative, Signage, Symbolic Connection, and Symbolic Motif, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.



In the *Foursquare Headquarters* associations are used to evoke temporal emotions and through their application to provide social commentary (see Figure 5.5.23).



Social commentary is provided by evoking a sense of irony to indicate changes in communication and entertainment. To realize the irony the user must be aware that Foursquare is an internet based social network; this is contrasted with objects which make associations to an earlier time (such as telephone booths and black boards); the inclusion of analogue games (e.g. table tennis) strengthens this irony.

The objects employed act as signs<sup>142</sup> which generate connections in the mind between objects in the interior and topical meaning (such as societal changes over time).

**Figure 5.5.23:** *Foursquare Headquarters*, Foursquare and Designer Fluff, New York, 2012. (Photography: Dezeen ©; Karmatrendz ©) [002 Foursquare]

142.) Indexes (occupation of telephone booths); icons (e.g. telephone booths); and symbols (e.g. timeline).

### 5.5.1 Properties of Associations

'Associations' is the category of interior design methods that involve connections in the mind between different components and those methods that infer meaning. The successful transmission of messages in interior design is partially dependent on the correlation and overlap in the associations generated in the mind of the interior designer (sender) and the inhabitant (addressee). The use of associations is considered as an instrumental and primary interior design method since no meaning would be generated without the association between an object and its referent. In the Peircian sense meaning is dependent on the connections in the mind between the *representamen* (concrete physical aspects); the *object* (evoked impression); and the *interpretent* (subjective meaning).

The category emerged from the combination of two concepts: the Associative methods; and the Semiotic methods.

The Associative concept involves those methods that concern connections in the mind between different components. This is the dominant concept in this category and denoted the category. The concept comprises eleven codes: analogy; boundary object; form; image; intertextuality; iteration; material; narrative; performance; tradition; and wit. No prominent code emerged to denote the concept. The concept was named descriptively to connote the eleven constituent codes. For interior design the use of associations is considered as an iterative form of production which is reliant on the knowledge of existing codes and meanings. When these codes and meanings are applied in a direct and superficial manner it can be said that they comply with the dictionary model of interpretation. In the dictionary model meaning can be explained as concise definitions composed by a finite set of semantic universals. A more complex model of interpretation is incorporated in the encyclopedia model; in this model meanings must be interpreted by every possible association that can be established through cultural conventions. This introduces great complexity and difficulty in generating and interpreting meaning in interior artefacts (after Eco, 1979[1976]; 1990).

The Semiotic concept involves those methods that infer meaning. This is an ancillary concept in this category. The concept comprises eight codes: analogy; iconic connection; indexical connection; intertextuality; narrative; signage; symbolic connection; and symbolic motif. No prominent code emerged to denote the concept. The concept was named descriptively to connote the eight constituent codes. In interior design the use of semiotics implies the exchange of messages (or meaning) between the interior designer and the inhabitant of the interior artefact. Interior design has the ability to interiorise semiotic phenomena and can be considered as a practice of spatially expressing the sign.<sup>143</sup>

For the purposes of this thesis (which aims to exploit the generation of meaning as an interior design method) associations are considered as the external meaningful units connected to a preceding sign. In other words it is possible to identify and isolate cultural units in interior artefacts through the process of denotation; the process of connotation thereafter established connections in the mind to external semantic units which informed the original (after Eco, 1979[1976]:85). The associations of a meaningful unit would incorporate both its first-order meaning (technical use or function) and its transfunctionalised second-order meaning (connotations) (after Gottdiener, 1985:991).<sup>144</sup>

From a poststructural perspective it becomes evident that the associated meanings are unstable and dependent on the interpretation of the reader (in the case of an interior artefact this is dependent on the

143.) See, 2.3 Semiotic Interpretation.

144.) See, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.

interpretation of the inhabitant or user). This introduces two scenarios for the interior designer:

In the first, the interior designer selects the most stable codes that exist within a cultural context; in their application the interior designer functions according to a semantic theory of denotative language (after Eco, 1979[1976]:100). This may give rise to a basic set of dictionary items that may be useful to encode meaning that could be interpreted by a lay-person, without ambiguity, in a short period of time. Although this may be interpreted as a shallow approach it is relevant in the commercial practice of interior design where messages must be decoded accurately and quickly to denote a product or service offering.<sup>145</sup>

In the second, the interior designer accepts the instability of the connoted meaning and realises that meaning is dependent on its physical and temporal location (i.e. its paradigm) and its interpretation. In this scenario the interior designer must consider multiple connotative possibilities and make a selection from an array of non-coordinated connotations. This is a synchro-diachronical spectrum and allows the designer to distinguish between possible readings available across time spans (after Eco, 1979[1976]:114).<sup>146</sup> Following an encyclopedic approach the interior designer may exploit contemporary interpretations of cultural practices to speculate on possible meanings and overlapping connotations; Eco (1979[1976]:114) asserts that this constitutes aesthetic achievement. Eco implies that this is a difficult task; in such a context we are not only referring to the mental associations that are generated but have to refer to all the correlations posited in a cultural context (Eco, 1979[1990]:101). In the commercial practice of interior design an over-reliance on this connotative (as opposed to denotative) approach may lead to the creation of vague or subtle messages; in such cases the product or service offering may be inaccurately depicted.

### Properties

From the content analysis of the corpus it is possible to describe identifiable characteristics and properties of associations:

Associations generate meaning by making connections in the mind to other objects; in this way it transmits meaning and cultural capital from other objects to the interior artefact.

Associations use signs (indexes, icons, and symbols) to infer meaning.

Associations connote the product or service offering of an interior.

Associations establish denotative or connotative connections between time frames, or within the current time frame.

Associations are used synthetically since they allow for the interaction between meaningful units to generate meaningful syntagms (or strings of signs).

Associations may be used to add and communicate meaning in a direct way.

### Actions

Through their application associations take the following actions:

Associations support and use archetypes; in their application they connote the meaning inherited from them.

145.) The large majority of artefacts included in the corpus generates meaning in such a way, e.g. through the use of signage, symbols, colour, and other semiotic devices that are universally understood.

146.) *Id est* inferring multiple readings from the past, generating multiple possibilities in the present and at least recognising variable interpretations in future.

The three proximal assemblies (ensemble, constellation, and symbolic motif) are supported through the associations between the constituent components; and through the associations between the proximal assemblies and external meaning.

Technemes are transfunctionalised to generate style through their internal associations with each other; and through their associations with external meaning.

Associations support the Traditive methods by providing connotations to the past and by evoking the temporal emotions.

Associations rely on the Formal methods.

To generate meaningful syntagms associations rely on the Synthetic methods.

### Effects

Through their application the use of associations has the following effects:

Through the association with other technical objects the primary function of an interior is indicated; this communicates first-order meaning.

Associations generate second-order meaning through the process of transfunctionalisation.

Through the contrast between complex artefacts and simple surroundings (or vice versa) secondary-meaning (such as importance) is associated.

Associations connote external references and generate intertextuality.

By inferring boundaries through association it becomes possible to demarcate an interior and to separate it from the rest of the world.

Associations can generate connections in the mind between the tangible identity of a place and the intangible identity of inhabitants.

Associations allow inhabitants to construct, portray, or perform their identities in a physical location.

When they evoke the temporal emotions associations support the construction of a durable identity over time.

By using incomplete codes associations can avoid the direct and superficial application of meaning.

Associations can generate interest by revealing possible destinations and mysteries.

The use of associations can generate or synthesise new meaning by transferring meaningful units between realms (e.g. between the public and private realms).

Associations are effective in connoting narratives and rituals.

Through the use of irony associations can provide social commentary; they can also generate connections between signs and topical meaning.

## 5.6 TECHNIFICATION IN INTERIOR DESIGN

This thesis is concerned with physical interior artefacts<sup>147</sup> and how meaning was created and is portrayed in these artefacts.<sup>148</sup> In Chapter 1 I introduced the interdependence of tangible and intangible cultural content which can be considered as the symbolic meaning, artistic dimension and cultural values that originate from identities. This includes all the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills and the instruments associated with it (such as objects, tools, spaces, etc.) (UNESCO, 2003; 2005).<sup>149</sup>

Although the generation of meaning in the interior artefact was considered as it is generated and expressed in the material object (interior) the preceding four grounded theory categories<sup>150</sup> could be considered as those methods that are concerned with the generation of intangible cultural content. In contrast technification can then be regarded as those methods that are concerned with the physical expression of meaning. This category of methods provides formal and technical expression to the meaning created by the other categories of methods. In other words technification provides the tangible expression of the intangible ideas and is related to techniques, craft and applied methods. This technical expression can be considered as the *essential* sphere of expression whereas the expression of psychological and sociological needs and practices is *inessential* (Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:5).<sup>151</sup> A sign is produced when an object is created that communicates something more than its technical function (Eco, 1979[1976]:151).

This generation of a sign or an utterance is an act of labour which involves producing the signal, selecting from a set of signals, articulating the signal, isolating units of meaning, and composing them as a string of signs, a text, an artefact, or an object (Eco, 1979[1976]:151). This category is denoted to reflect the creation of a 'technical object'.<sup>152</sup> The technical object is described by Simondon in Baudrillard (1997[1968]:6):<sup>153</sup>

*The technical object may thus be said to have a primitive form, an abstract form, in which each theoretical and material unit is treated as an absolute needing to be set up as a closed system if it is to function properly.*

The generation of a technical object therefore implies the synthetic assembly and establishment of a cohesive whole ('closed system');<sup>154</sup> it is iterative and timely ('primitive' and 'abstract'); and functions through

147.) *Id est* with 'objects', for the differentiation between the general category 'artefact' and the specific application 'object', see, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies.

148.) See, 4.2 Selection Criteria, and, see, 4.4 Limiting the Application of the Study.

149.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

150.) Synthesis; Proximity; Timeliness; and Associations.

151.) This is supported when it is considered that the primary communicative function of an object is to denote its use (first-order meaning) while its connotations and associations are of secondary importance (second-order meaning), see, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions, Transfunctionalisation, and, see, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

152.) This overlaps with the grounded theory process of denoting the categories; this category emerged from the code 'techneme', see, 5.6.1 Properties of Technification.

153.) Gilbert Simondon's (1980[1958]) thesis *Du mode d'existence des objets techniques* is only available through an unpublished, partial English translation; in this translation (1980[1958]:14) the quote reads thus:

*Also, there exists a primitive form of the technical object, its abstract form, in which each theoretical and material unity is treated as an absolute that has an intrinsic perfection of its own that needs to be constituted as a closed system in order to function.*

154.) This supports Synthesis as the primary interior design method, see, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design.

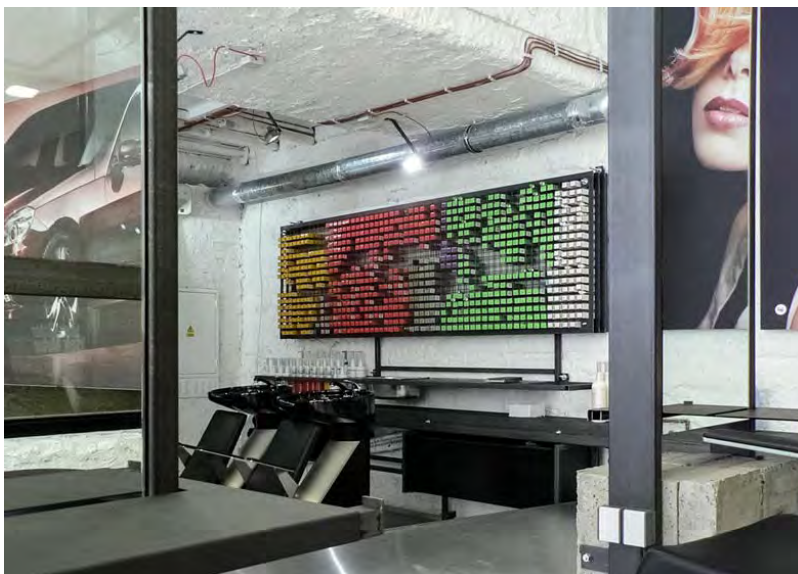


making associations ('theoretical unit'). I do not consider technical objects to be mere machines that are devoid of external meaning; in my interpretation (which serves this thesis) they are material artefacts with functional (use) characteristics. This is supported by Baudrillard (1997[1968]:8) when he states that practical objects exist in a dialectic relationship between their technical structure within a technological system and their meaningful structure within a cultural system. In use objects the levels of denotation and connotation cannot be separated in the way that language (*langue*) and speech (*parole*) can in linguistics (Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:9-10). This is a poststructural position in which it is accepted that not only is it not possible to determine a linguistic structure for culture, but that the structure of culture and that of individual expressions cannot be understood in isolation.<sup>155</sup> The technical object is both semantically and functionally informed; this allows me to consider the *meaningful* characteristics of technification and to de-emphasize the functional characteristics which are expressed in the fields of building science and construction.<sup>156</sup> This approach is supported by Gottdiener (1985:989):

*Objects possess a material existence, and it is only when they are used to signify second-order functions that they can be said to communicate meanings. Here the sign becomes an object in the communicative act and is manipulated by the intentionality of the sender.*

The basis of the process of technification is the techneme, which is the smallest unit of technical or technological information (Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:7). Technemes are carriers of the memetic information that enables an object to signify its function.<sup>157</sup> Since technemes are analogous to phonemes (which nest together to produce words and sentence) it can be deduced that technemes nest together to constitute larger technical objects. Since the combination of technemes can be considered as the primary method of technification I will illustrate this point with four examples from the corpus:

In the *Táňa Kmenta Hair Salon* technemes (sink, shelf, drawer, tap, etc.) are combined to create a washing station (see Figure 5.6.1).



**Figure 5.6.1:** *Táňa Kmenta Hair Salon*, Studio Muon, Brno, 2012 (Photography: Studio Muon ©) [002 Tana Kmenta].

155.) See, 2.2 Cultural Production, and, see, 2.3 Semiotic Interpretation.

156.) The technical knowledge areas form part of the cultural system (and may be studied as such), but to determine interior design's methods of cultural production it is not necessary to describe how a partition is assembled.

157.) For a full discussion of technemes, see, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies, Technemes.



In the *Freipost Headquarters* a partition is constituted from a number of technemes (timber studs and panels, nuts, bolts) (see Figure 5.6.2).



**Figure 5.6.2:** *Freipost Headquarters*, ITN Architects, Richmond, 2012 (Photography: Designboom ©) [044 Freipost].

In these examples the combination of simple techniques generated simple artefacts. I wish to deviate from Baudrillard's definition, in which a techneme is considered as the simplest unit of technical information to indicate a hierarchical nesting of technemes. In such a case those technemes higher up the hierarchical tree can no longer be considered as 'simple' technical units.

I will discuss the assembly of the cart in *Les Grandes Tables du 104* as an example of a hierarchical nesting of technemes in the interior (see Figure 5.6.3).



**Figure 5.6.3:** *Les Grandes Tables du 104*, Ciguë, Paris, 2010 (Photography: Ciguë ©) [024 Les Grandes Tables].

The cart serves as an analogy for a market stall; this connoted meaning indicates the interrelationship between first- and second-order meanings. The cart is generated through the synthetic assembly of a number of technemes (e.g. wheels, hinges, panels, flaps, fixing mechanisms, etc.); of importance is the adjustable armature which can be considered as a technical component (i.e. a techneme) of the cart. The armature however is comprised of its own set of technemes (coils, struts, hinges, etc.). This provides empirical support for some deviation from Baudrillard's definition of a techneme. These technemes are semantically interrelated and denote each other.<sup>158</sup>

158.) Refer to my earlier discussion of meronymy, see, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design (see Figure 5.5.18).

In *Aesop Chez 'Merci'* the interior is comprised of a number of objects which are comprised of nesting technemes (see Figure 5.6.4a).



The interior is a volumetric object, composed of the additive assembly of various other objects. In this interior two objects are under consideration: a laboratory table, and a set of shelving. Both these objects are comprised of nesting technemes: In the case of the laboratory table these include a planter, a sink, trestle legs (with nesting technemes: brace, strut, foot, etc.), and a water reticulation system (with nesting technemes: glass storage container, pipes, taps, and a waste water storage container). In the case of the shelving unit these include shelving, brackets, panels, and trestle legs (with nesting technemes: brace, strut, foot, etc.).

In the two preceding examples (*Les Grandes Tables du 104* and *Aesop Chez 'Merci'*) technification is executed when larger objects are constituted through the morphological relationships of nesting technemes. Morphology is isolated here as one of two classifications (with use or function) for architectural typology (Jennings, 2007:48); I specifically discuss the use of form since it provides greater support for the meaningful function of technification.

Form originates from five possible sources: function generates form, but this is not the only determinant as divergent spaces support similar functions; form is conceived by the designer's imagination, this may lead to the establishment of a designer's identity but is not translated to a particular paradigm; contemporary visual culture influences the generation of form through the designer's interaction in the cultural milieu, this reflects the paradigm but not simultaneous variations within it; form is influenced by socio-economic considerations, the designer should act as thought-leader when selecting from competing forms and criteria; form is generated through inherited principles and theory (Edwards, 2011:90).

In expressing the meaning that will be embedded in a material artefact it becomes necessary to consider the morphological relationship between meaning carrying elements (e.g. technemes) in the object.

**Figure 5.6.4a:** *Aesop Chez 'Merci'*, Ciguë, Paris, 2011 (Photography: Louis Baquiast ©) [048 Aesop Chez Merci].



In *Aesop Chez 'Merci'* the various technemes are formally and materially related to ensure the generation of cohesive material objects (see Figure 5.6.4b).



The exposed, but refined provision of services is visible throughout the *Aesop* chain of outlets; in *Aesop Islington* the provision of water connotes associations with laboratory settings and pharmacology while the technemes are formally and stylistically related to those used elsewhere (see Figure 5.5.5).

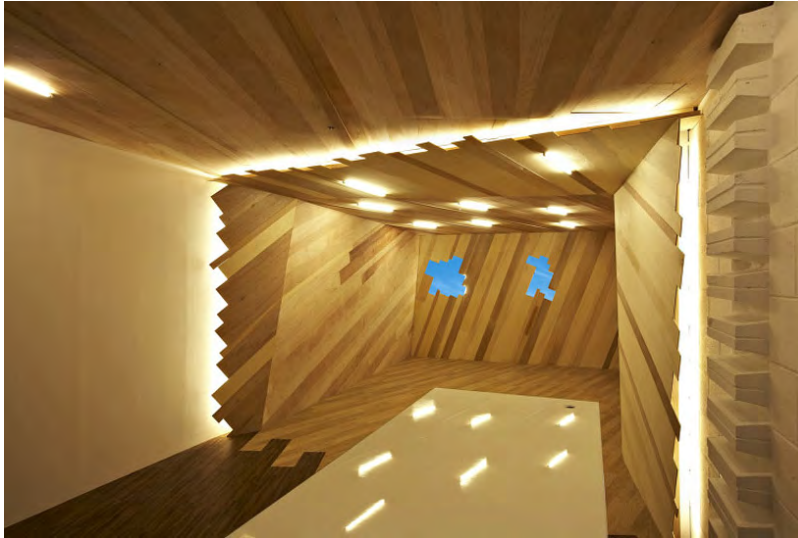
**Figure 5.6.4b:** *Aesop Chez 'Merci'*, Ciguë, Paris, 2011 (Photography: Louis Baquiast ©) [048 *Aesop Chez Merci*].



These examples provide empirical support for the idea that technemes, although primarily functionally informed, act as meaning carriers through their form and materiality and also in their interaction with other technemes when constituting larger artefacts (i.e. meaningful syntagms). In Baudrillard's (1997[1968]:55-56) interpretation functional forms connote the technical power of human kind and serve to embody meaning as a formal expression of the void between man's physical power and the modern world.

**Figure 5.6.5:** *Aesop Islington*, Ciguë, London, c. 2012 (Photography: Innerdesign ©; Dezeen ©) [047 *Aesop Islington*].

If a gesture is considered as an action to convey intent then the provision of a symbolic boundary in the *S. The Yoga Studio* can be considered as a technical gesture, as it is constituted from technemes (see Figure 5.5.6).



**Figure 5.6.6:** *S. The Yoga Studio*, YoonSpace Design & Architecture, Gyeonggi, c. 2012 (Photography: Song Gi Myoun ©) [057 S the Yoga].

In the sorting of interior design methods the boundary was considered as a greater Low-order<sup>159</sup> code, while technemes are considered as lesser Low-order<sup>160</sup> codes.<sup>161</sup> This is indicative of a hierarchy of complexity in the application of methods; as technemes constitute larger artefacts, lower order methods can be embedded in higher order methods.<sup>162</sup> In this interior the proximity and synthesis of a techneme (light-well) and light (artificial cove lighting) creates a symbolic boundary between two spaces. The boundary is communicated in a technical gesture of intent (separation).

159.) The greater Low-order codes are: boundary; boundary object; ensemble; iconic connection; indexical connection; inhabitation; iteration; performance; symbolic connection; synthesis; taste good; temporality; and tradition. See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Hierarchy.

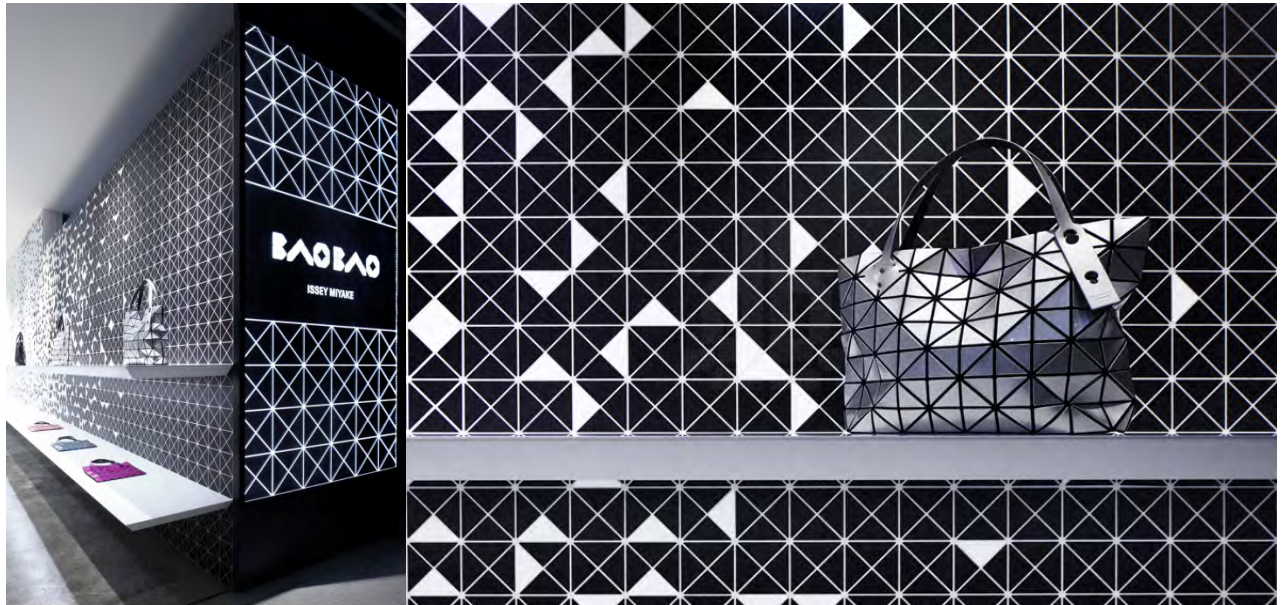
160.) The lesser Low-order codes are: colour; craftsmanship; decoration; form; furnishing; image; intertextuality; light; material; object; signage; and techneme. See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Hierarchy.

161.) See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Hierarchy.

162.) This is also illustrated in the hierarchical nature of the proximal assemblies, see, 5.3 The Use of Proximal Assemblies in Interior Design.



In *Bao Bao by Issey Miyake* the hierarchical use of methods indicates status and expense and serves to communicate the expected level of service (see Figure 5.6.7).



The floating shelf is devoid of any visible tectonic fixings, but it is obvious that the shelf is supported internally with a number of hidden technemes (e.g. supporting pins, sleeves, expansion bolts, and screws). The tectonic simplicity of the technical resolution provides coherence to the convention to display expensive merchandise sparsely. In this installation the hierarchical assembly of technemes and a convention supports the communication of second-order meaning. The connotation is that this outlet would offer a high level of service and that the majority of the stock is kept at the back of house. The items on sale are expensive and require (or deserve) a high level of care.

In *Takeo Kikuchi* the hierarchical combination of methods is more complex (see Figure 5.6.8).

**Figure 5.6.7:** *Bao Bao by Issey Miyake*, Moment, Tokyo, c.2013 (Photography: DesignBoom ©) [051 Bao Bao]

**Figure 5.6.8:** *Takeo Kikuchi*, Schemata Architecture Office, Tokyo, c. 2012 (Photography: Schemata Architects ©) [050 Takeo Kikuchi].



The curtain wall that constitutes the boundary between the interior and the exterior is made up of a combination of materials (aluminium, timber, and glass) and technemes (mullions, hinges, panes, etc.). The curtain wall in turns contributes to the intype 'sunspine'; this establishes the hierarchy: techneme/material > boundary > archetype.<sup>163</sup>

163.) This hierarchy becomes more complex when other contributing methods are taken into account, such as the interaction between the boundary and light; and the formal reliance on geometry to generate the archetype.

The technical use of form is illustrated by *S. The Yoga* (see Figure 5.6.6) and *Takeo Kikuchi* (see Figure 5.6.8): In *S. The Yoga* the intype 'incubate' is established formally to generate a sense of containment. In *Takeo Kikuchi* the intype 'sunspine' is dependent on the curtain wall extending across the entire length of the façade (Intypes, *sa*). This illustrates the use of Technical<sup>164</sup> methods to establish archetypes.

The preceding examples indicate the importance of selecting the appropriate technical gestures (e.g. technemes, material, form) and constituting them in appropriate syntagmatic arrangements. It must be taken into consideration that meaning is not only carried as semantic entities but that meaning is arranged on axis of opposition in relation to other semantic units (e.g. *Bao Bao* (which is tectonically simple) can be placed on an axis of opposition to *Aesop* (which is tectonically expressive)) (after Eco, 1979[1976]:27).

Objects are sign-vehicles for their use (and all possible uses) (Eco, 1979[1976]:28); this use-function of an object is its first-order meaning. The process of technification (i.e. the material expression of imbedded meaning) is reliant on the synthetic combination of other methods to convey the functional meaning.<sup>165</sup>

In *Barber Amsterdam* the synthetic combination of meaning derived from a variety of methods convey the functional meaning of the interior (see Figure 5.6.9).



In this interior objects (e.g. the barber's chair, laboratory sink, and towels); materials (glazed tiles) and a constellation (barber's chair with mirror) are used in combination to indicate the function of the interior (barber). The communication of first-order meaning is therefore reliant on the synthesis of other methods.

**Figure 5.6.9:** *Barber Amsterdam*, Ard Hoksbergen, Amsterdam, c.2012  
(Photography: Wouter van den Brink ©)  
[032 Barber Amsterdam].

164.) Archetype, Craftsmanship, Form, Light, Material, Techneme, Typology, and Use, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

165.) This supports synthesis as the primary interior design method to construct meaning, see, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design.



In *LYHTY – Habitare* a vernacular form (that of an igloo) is interpreted and regenerated with the use of geometry (see Figure 5.6.10).

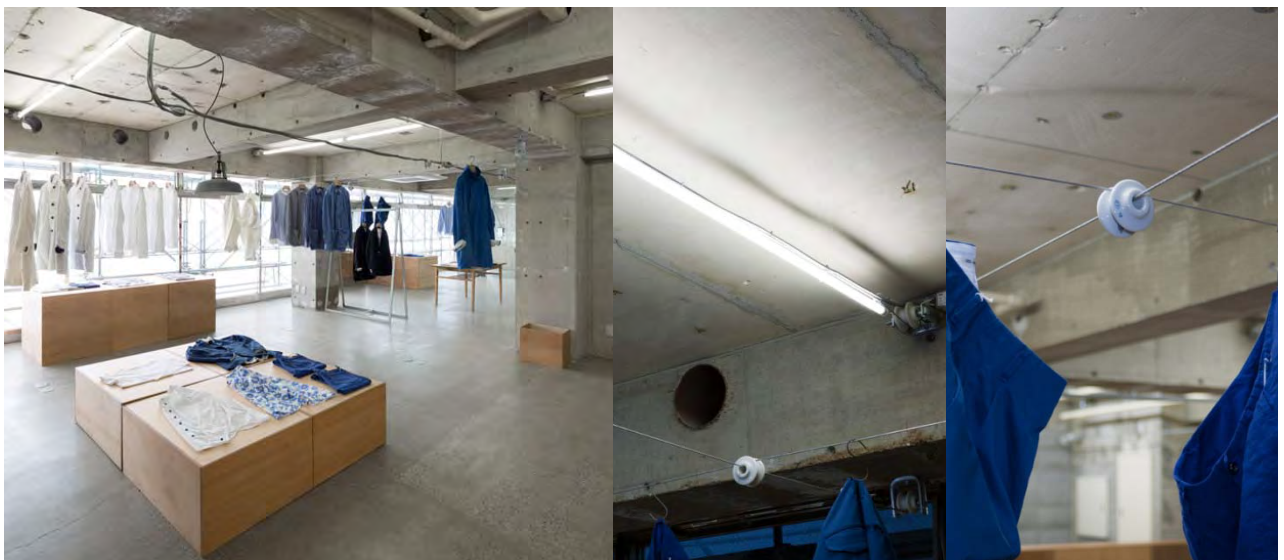


The vernacular geometry is expressed in a contemporary medium, combining panels and joints (technemes) with back-lit lighting to provide a feeling of warmth and inhabitation. The interior connotes a place of shelter and light during an arctic winter. This artefact, if it is considered as a technological advancement (or technical innovation) of the original vernacular object represents what Baudrillard (1997[1968]:57) calls “the unceasing forward march of *techné*” in which the natural world will eventually be replaced by an intelligible artificial world. Baudrillard (1997[1968]:61) continues to state that form is generated by a discourse in which forms are relative to one another and refer to other homologous forms; form is informed by the idea of nature which determines the articulation of form. He concludes that despite efforts of concealment and decoration the connotation to nature remains present (Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:62). In this artefact the iterative interpretation of a (‘natural’, in as far as it represents a simple climatic response) vernacular form is evident; it is stripped of decoration and its connotations are obvious. Technification can be used as a method to interpret and regenerate vernacular expectations and connotations.

In *EEL Nakameguro* the use of inappropriate technemes and styling places focus on the merchandise through contrast (see Figure 5.6.11).

**Figure 5.6.10:** *LYHTY – Habitare*, Erkko Aarti Architecture, Helsinki, 2012  
(Photography: Pyry Kantonen ©) [058 Lyhty].

**Figure 5.6.11:** *EEL Nakameguro*, Schemata Architecture Office, Tokyo, 2013  
(Photography: Takumi Ota ©) [001 EEL Nakameguro].



The use of crude and functionalist technemes from applications not associated with retail (e.g. exposed wiring, porcelain insulators, exposed concrete and fluorescents, etc.) can initially be considered as culturally inappropriate in this application. This effect is enhanced with a 'blank' materiality (of shutter concrete and) plywood which connotes thriftiness; in this case the interior is stripped to serve as a container for the merchandise. The merchandise becomes the most important identity carrying mechanism which is emphasized through contrast with the interior. The initial inappropriate choice of technemes indicates that the designer is dependent on knowing which Technical methods are appropriate and that the Technical<sup>166</sup> methods convey cultural meaning.

The unexpected use of technemes is applied in *Puma Lab* when shelving is placed in front of a window (see Figure 5.6.12).



It is not conventional to block a window with a shelving unit; in this case the constellation (shelving with a billboard above) and light (daylight from window) is used in a dissociative manner. The unconventional combination of methods could be considered as an innovative practice which is dependent on the application of timeliness in interior design; this establishes an association between these categories.<sup>167</sup>

In *Camper Granada* Technical methods are utilised to encode meaning in the interior (see Figure 5.6.13).

**Figure 5.6.12:** *Puma Lab*, Plajer & Franz, Santiago de Chile, 2011 (Photography: PumaChile ©) [052 Puma Lab].

166.) Archetype, Craftsmanship, Form, Light, Material, Techneme, Typology, and Use, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

167.) See, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.





In the merchandise display technemes (shelving and light well) is combined with light (alcove and effect lighting) to encode meaning. The technical use here (adequate display illumination) serves to connote the importance of the merchandise. The lighting is further used to enhance the colour red, which is associated with the brand (Camper). This interior serves (with various others in this section) to illustrate the characteristic of the Technical<sup>168</sup> and Formal<sup>169</sup> methods to encode meaning.

**Figure 5.6.13:** *Camper Granada*, A-cero, Granada, c.2012 (Photography: A-cero ©) [053 Camper Granada].

As timeliness is a method to determine contemporary applications of conventions and precedents,<sup>170</sup> so is technification utilised to determine the contemporary applications of materials. This provides further support for the suggestion that interior design constructs meaning in an iterative and innovative fashion. I will refer to the *Regis Racine Gymnasium* to illustrate this point (see Figure 5.6.14).

**Figure 5.6.14:** *Regis Racine Gymnasium*, Atelier D'Architecture, Paris, 2011 (Photography: Guillaume Clement ©) [005 Timber Gym].



Technification acts in an iterative manner in this interior by interpreting precedents and conventions to determine the current application of materials; these are based on functional (e.g. timber playing surface) and aesthetic (e.g. the repetition of materials on the soffit) requirements. The

168.) Archetype, Craftsmanship, Form, Light, Material, Techneme, Typology, and Use, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

169.) Archetype, Boundary, Form, and Typology, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

170.) See, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.

use of Technical<sup>171</sup> methods (in this case technemes and materials) serves to inform intertextual references (e.g. the use of timber floors in other indoor sports facilities).

In the *Clae Pop-Up Shop* an association between material and technemes indicate the technical and associative nature of these methods (see Figure 5.6.15).



Recycled packing palettes (comprising of technemes: planks, nails, etc.) indicate thrift and temporality; the material and application (to clad the walls and floors) are associated with timber construction and functional building types (such as barns). To facilitate this application a techneme (shadowline) is used to terminate the cladding where it joins the soffit.

The intype 'specimen' is generated by displaying merchandise in a taxonomic array. This archetype is dependent on the synthesis of various methods including: technemes (peg-board); light (spotlights and general illumination); material (timber); and objects (shoe boxes and a ladder). The synthetic combination of methods conveys the functional meaning of the interior (retail) while the associations between materials and technemes have decorative implications and serves to create adornment.

I wish to elaborate on the use of the intype 'specimen' in this interior artefact. The intype is established formally; specifically as far as the taxonomic arrangement of objects in a display (Intypes, sa) is concerned. In this case the archetype should be considered as a formal typology (a morphological typology); a formal variation of the intype is present: the objects are not displayed in boxes but are arranged on the same surface (Intypes, sa).

When Technical methods are used to establish and indicated morphological typology (and by extension archetype) it involves the typology's associated, connoted, and transfunctionalised meaning.

In the *Nike Pop-Up Showroom* both morphological and use typologies are established by technical means (see Figure 5.6.16).

**Figure 5.6.15:** *Clae Pop-Up Shop*, mode:lina architekci, Poznan, 2012  
(Photography: mode:lina architekci ©)  
[033 Clae Pop-up].

171.) Archetype, Craftsmanship, Form, Light, Material, Techneme, Typology, and Use, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.





**Figure 5.6.16:** *Nike Pop-Up Showroom*, Maggie Peng and Albert Tien, Beijing, 2012 (Photography: Jonathan Leijonhufvud ©) [029 Nike Pop-Up].

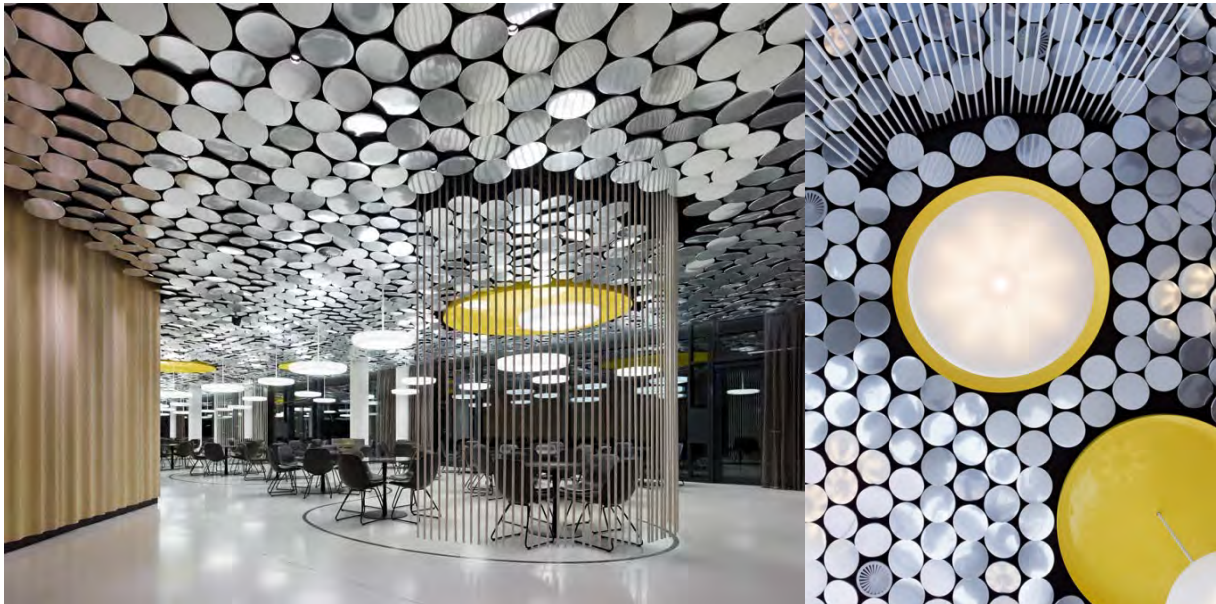
The intype ‘white box’ is described as “an undecorated space with white walls, white ceiling and a continuous neutral floor” (Intypes, *sa*). The Intypes project states that in the showroom application of the white box archetype additional devices such as display plinths are typical (Intypes, *sa*); in this interior display plinths and bulkheads are parallel to the floor and coloured white. This archetype is established through the use of typology: In the first instance, morphological typology is established formally, the display plinths and parallel bulkheads serve as containers for the items on display. This is supported by the second application of use typology for the purposes of a gallery display.

The Technical methods (use and form) established typology, and by extension archetype. Morphological typology is indicated through the use of form in the interior; use typology (in contrast) is indicated through the technical characteristics of the interior artefact which communicates the first-order meaning. Typology is a lesser High-order<sup>172</sup> code which contributes to the higher order (greater High-order code).<sup>173</sup>

172.) The lesser High-order codes are: analogy; constellation; curation; narrative; and typology. See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Hierarchy.

173.) The greater High-order codes are: archetype; convention; micro-ecology; style; and symbolic motif. See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Hierarchy.

In the *Kantine for Der Spiegel* form is applied to emphasise a proximal assembly (see Figure 5.6.17).



The indirect use of colour (applied on a circular bulkhead) in combination with a boundary (palisade) are methods to place emphasis on a constellation (dining table with chairs). The emphasizing methods are not applied throughout the interior.

This interior illustrates the use of technification to place emphasis on the proximal assemblies (or other objects) and to create variation and interest in the interior.

I discussed the synthetic generation of style earlier in this chapter.<sup>174</sup> The combination of technemes generates style; this is applicable to all three types of styling: skeuomorphic styling;<sup>175</sup> isochrestic styling;<sup>176</sup> and iconic styling.<sup>177</sup> The generation of style represents the semiotic process of transfunctionalisation to generate stylistic meaning.

**Figure 5.6.17:** *Kantine for Der Spiegel*, Ippolito Feitz Group Identity Architects, Hamburg, 2011

(Photography:  
Markus Tollhopf ©)  
[069 Spiegel Kantine]

174.) See, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design.

175.) See, the *Charles Smith Wines Tasting Room and Headquarters* (Figure 5.2.13).

176.) See, *Camper Paris* (Figure 5.2.14).

177.) See, *Acondicionamiento Vainilly & Chocolate* (Figure 5.2.9).



In *The Martian Embassy* form is used for technical and semiotic purposes (see Figure 5.6.18).



In this interior the form of the boundary (which is made up of a shelving system) defines the edge and soffit. The semiotic use of this boundary (shelving) is to communicate the edge of the space; additionally it communicates the technical uses that are incorporated (such as seating and display). The use of form in this interior indicates that form is an agent of meaning and utility. Form maintains both the Technical<sup>178</sup> and the Semiotic<sup>179</sup> methods.

In *Freedom Café* a synergy is created between form and adornment (see Figure 5.6.19).

**Figure 5.6.18:** *The Martian Embassy*, LAVA, Laboratory for Visionary Architecture, Sydney, 2012  
(Photography: Brett Boardman, Peter Murphy ©)  
[019 Martian Embassy].



In this artefact interiority is maintained by establishing a strong boundary between the interior of the container and the exterior world; this boundary is emphasized with the use of bright red (adornment).

In this example an association between the Decorative<sup>180</sup> methods and the Formal<sup>181</sup> methods are indicated. *Freedom Café* indicates a strong

**Figure 5.6.19:** *Freedom Café*, Egg Designs, Durban, 2012  
(Photography: Taste Freedom ©)  
[023 Freedom Café].

178.) Archetype, Craftsmanship, Form, Light, Material, Techneme, Typology, and Use, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

179.) Analogy, Iconic Connection, Indexical Connection, Intertextuality, Narrative, Signage, Symbolic Connection, and Symbolic Motif, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

180.) Colour; Decoration, Furnishing, Furniture, Light, Material, Object, Style, and Taste Good, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

181.) Archetype, Boundary, Form, and Typology, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

synergy between form and adornment; these methods are supported technically.<sup>182</sup>

In *Covus Central GmgH* the cultural capital that is obtained by employing intertextual references and designer objects are supported by traditional craftsmanship (see Figure 5.6.20).



**Figure 5.6.20:** *Covus Central GmgH*, Seel Bobsin Partner, Berlin, 2012  
(Photography: Karsten Knocke ©)  
[028 Covus]

Examples of craftsmanship in this interior include the upholstery in the banquette; the wood turned table legs; and the cast iron staircase.

In *Aesop Newbury Street* traditional craft (woodworking) is interpreted to create the shelving (see Figure 5.6.21).



**Figure 5.6.21:** *Aesop Newbury Street*, William O'Brien Jr., Boston, c.2012  
(Photography: Dezeen ©)  
[046 Aesop Newbury].

Shelving is made up through the combination of oak mouldings (with traditional connotations) and oak battens. The use of craftsmanship gives physical form and expression to the traditive connotations. Craftsmanship in this instance can be considered as both Traditive<sup>183</sup> and Technical;<sup>184</sup> these applications are used in conjunction to create contemporary meaning.<sup>185</sup>

182.) See, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design.

183.) Archetype, Convention, Craftsmanship, Iteration, Micro-ecology, Object, Performance, Signage, Style, Taste Good, and Tradition, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

184.) Archetype, Craftsmanship, Form, Light, Material, Techneme, Typology, and Use, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

185.) See, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.



Craftsmanship is traditionally characterized by the ‘whims of individual demand’ (Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:9); insofar as interior artefacts are mediators between small scale and mass production<sup>186</sup> it retains characteristics of individual manufacture and individual demand. The interior artefact (in its execution) enjoys a degree of autonomy from the field of power but is still subject to a level of outside control and critique.<sup>187</sup>

If interior design is considered as a linguistic system (which its consideration as a semiotic phenomenon implies) it must be borne in mind that it is not a language in the full sense<sup>188</sup> (after Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:188), but in this ‘linguistic’ context the results of craftsmanship can be made analogous to individual utterances (i.e. *parole*).<sup>189</sup> This implies that the interior artefacts under consideration in this corpus must be considered as such individual utterances which are the result of the whims of individual demand and manufacture. The technical expression (material manifestation) of the communicative ideas embodied in the interior artefact (i.e. its connotations) is analogous to an expression in language but does not indicate the existence of an interior design language. Design is not a language.

The function of creating adornment through technification is evident in the use of craftsmanship in *Aesop* and *Covus*; I will elaborate on the relationship between technification and decoration by referring to two examples.

In the *Play Pot Restaurant* the choice of materials informs the choice of technemes (see Figure 5.6.22).



**Figure 5.6.22:** *Play Pot Restaurant*, Lim Tae Hee Design Studio, Seoul, 2012 (Photography: Patric Young Chae ©) [011 Play Pot].

Yellow and white candy stripe canvas is stretched against the soffit; this decorative application is employed for its associative function (it may refer to street-food or market stalls). A techneme (turnbuckle) is employed to stretch and fix the canvas. Another techneme (catalogue drawer label holder) is used to evoke a sense of nostalgia. The use of technemes in this

186.) After Hesmondhalgh (2006:214), refer to the background to cultural production, see, 2.2.1 Background.

187.) See, 2.2.4 Domain Gatekeepers.

188.) Insofar as it lacks a coherent syntax and grammar, amongst others: Baudrillard (1997[1968]:189) states that in the system of objects (which incorporates interior design) the linguistic analogy is limited by a syntax that moves back and forth between the ‘rigorous syntax of technology’ and the ‘loose syntax of needs’. Human needs (and their incorporation in products) are incoherent and no reciprocal structure results between form and function.

189.) For a further discussion of the relationship between the Saussurian concepts *langue* and *parole*, see, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions.

interior indicates that technification contributes to the Decorative<sup>190</sup> methods. Technification provides physical expression for adornment.

In another application the reciprocal relationship between a technical method (form) and adornment is illustrated when colour is used to emphasise form in *Van Alen Books* (see Figure 5.6.23).



**Figure 5.6.23:** *Van Alen Books*, LOT-EK, New York, 2011 (Photography: John Hill ©) [013 Van Alen].

The form of the staircase is established tectonically through the additive assembly of technemes (these include: refurbished doors, cables, nuts, bolts, washers, etc.). In this interior the form of the staircase is supported through the use of colour. The staircase itself is yellow, while its profile is repeated on the walls in a matching tint. The combination of form and colour is instrumental in establishing the intype 'showcase stair'. This is described as:

*[A]n extravagantly designed architectural feature in which the stair itself becomes a prominent display element. Its functionality is often secondary to the spatial drama created by the stair's structure, form, materials and lighting (Intypes, sa).*

In this interior archetype is established in the synthesis between form (which is established through the synthetic combination of technemes) and colour; this provides empirical support for the notion that technification is reliant on the Decorative<sup>191</sup> methods.

The use of technical objects in an interior indicates the first-order meaning of an interior. In the *Táña Kmenta Hair Salon* technical objects such as washing stations and hair wash basins indicates the function of the interior (see Figure 5.6.1).

190.) Colour, Decoration, Furnishing, Furniture, Light, Material, Object, Style, and Taste Good, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

191.) Colour, Decoration, Furnishing, Furniture, Light, Material, Object, Style, and Taste Good, see, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Concepts.

In the *Clinica Dental* the dentist's chair and equipment fulfils the same role (see Figure 5.6.24).



The service ritual (reception, wait, service) in this interior is indicated in a timely fashion.<sup>192</sup> Although this ritual is established through the application of timeliness it is technical in its application as it instructs the user on the appropriate use and the associated functions that the inhabitant must perform in this interior. Technification instructs the user on the function of a space by denoting the first-order meaning.

Throughout this section the general effect of technification to transfunctionalised second-order meaning was indicated; this includes the support of adornment, generating nostalgia, evoking craftsmanship and its traditive associations, etc.

In the *SUPPA Sneaker Boutique* the use of the interior is indicated with constellations (see Figure 5.6.25).

**Figure 5.6.24:** *Clinica Dental*, Paulo Merlini, Oporto, 2013 (Photography: João Morgado ©) [016 Oporto Dental].



Two constellations are present in this interior: sneakers are displayed in a grid in the wall; and there is a central display area in the shop. These constellations indicate the speciality nature of this retail outlet. The display area provides additional functional support in the provision of furniture that facilitates the fitting of shoes. The primary function of this interior is to serve as a retail outlet for sneakers. Secondary functions, such as the sale of clothing, are facilitated with a display rail.

**Figure 5.6.25:** *SUPPA Sneaker Boutique*, DLF Product Design, Stuttgart, 2012 (Photography: Daniele Luciano Ferazzano ©) [020 SUPPA].

192.) See, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design (see Figure 5.4.25).



Tectonically relevant details are repeated in the assembly of luminaires (both standard lamps and pendants). In this interior technification has the effect of connoting the primary function and supporting secondary functions.

In the *Old Street Kobiteh* technification establishes social functions (see Figure 5.6.26).



**Figure 5.6.26:** *Old Street Kobiteh*, NC Design and Architecture, Hong Kong, c. 2012 (Photography: Dennis Lo Designs ©) [064 Kobiteh].

Two reciprocal archetypes communicate the social function and indicate the separation between served and service spaces:

The intype 'bottoms up' is described as:

*[A]n architectural element comprised of a significant cornice above, and a corresponding counter below, that frame a spatial void for service function activities between them (Intypes, sa).*

The service function contained in the 'spatial void' is supported by the intype 'dual desk'; this is a bi-functional furniture unit with different working heights for different functions. The intype differentiates public from private spaces (Intypes, sa). In this restaurant the service spaces are contained behind the counter ('dual desk') which is contained between a cornice and a counter. These archetypes are established formally, and through technical expression (comprising technemes). This interior illustrates the effect of technification to establish and communicate social functions (e.g. the dialectic between served and service spaces).

In *EEL Nakameguro* opaque and transparent boundaries are isolated from each other (see Figure 5.6.11).

A transparent boundary (which is generated from a glazed curtain wall layered with merchandise) is contrasted opaque boundaries elsewhere in the interior (in-situ concrete walls, soffit, and floor). The formal use of boundaries (of differing qualities) in this interior serves to demarcate the interior and to separate it from the rest of the world.

In *Aesop Islington* a destination is indicated formally (see Figure 5.6.27).



**Figure 5.6.27:** *Aesop Islington*, Ciguë, London, c. 2012 (Photography: Dezeen ©) [047 *Aesop Islington*].

A strong boundary is created between the main retail space and a smaller space at the back of the shop; this space is lit naturally with a skylight. A symbolic motif (threshold) indicates a place of refuge (a second symbolic motif is employed, the den). Technification is used in this interior to isolate an area of refuge; this can be generalized to generate other destinations. In addition technification has the effect of telling internal narratives.

The use of incomplete associations to increase the creative participation of the inhabitant of an interior was discussed earlier in this chapter.<sup>193</sup> In the *Blockbuster: Itinerant Film Exhibition* incomplete associations find physical expression as material objects (see Figure 5.6.28).



Incomplete references to the movie industry are present in the formal correlation between the armature's (used to support luminaires) resemblance to a camera dolly; the use of a red carpet, and typical *porte cochere* signage. By using incomplete codes technification can avoid the direct and superficial application of meaning.

**Figure 5.6.28:** *Blockbuster: Itinerant Film Exhibition, Work!*, Mexico City, 2012 (Photography: Victor Deschamps ©) [007 *Blockbuster*].

193.) I specifically refer to my discussion of metonymy and synecdoche, see, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.

### 5.6.1 Properties of Technification

'Technification' is the category of interior design methods that are concerned with the physical expression of meaning. This category of methods provides formal and technical expression (in the form of a material artefact or object) to the meaning created by the other categories of interior design methods. This category is denoted to reflect the creation of a 'technical object' which implies the synthetic assembly and establishment of a cohesive object. Technical objects are material artefacts (objects) with functional (use) characteristics. Technical objects exist in a dialectic relationship between their technical structure within a technological system and their meaningful structure within a cultural system (after Baudrillard). In interior design they therefore represent a functional interior artefact which is culturally relevant and expressive. If it is considered how interior design constructs meaning (and by extension produces culture) the expression of meaning as contained in a material interior is implied.

The category emerged from the combination of two concepts: the Formal methods; and the Technical methods.

The Formal concept involves the outward form and appearance of the interior artefact. This is an ancillary concept in the category. The concept comprises four codes: archetype; boundary; form; and typology. 'Form' is the prominent code which denoted the concept. For interior design form is considered as that which identifies the space to be a specific shape of an interior (Edwards, 2011:90); this includes the form of the boundary which separates an interior from the larger world.

The Technical concept involves the mechanical arts and applied sciences. This is the dominant concept in this category and denoted the category. The concept comprises eight codes: archetype; craftsmanship; form; light; material; techneme; typology; and use. 'Techneme' is the prominent code which denoted the concept. A techneme is conventionally considered as the smallest carrier of technical information; it is a simple technical element (Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:7) which function as a sign vehicle to indicate function (or first-order meaning) (Gottdiener, 1985:986). For the application as an interior design method I deviated from Baudrillard's definition to include the possibility of a hierarchical nesting of technemes; i.e. simple technemes can be embedded in more complex technemes. In such a case those technemes higher up the hierarchical tree can no longer be considered as 'simple' technical units (and can contain simpler technical units embedded within them).

For the purposes of this thesis the technical expression of an interior artefact is considered as the *essential* sphere of expression; this formal expression generates objects which will contain the second-order (or *inessential*) meaning (after Baudrillard, 1997[1968]:5). This is indicative of the primary communicative function of an interior which is to communicate its use.

#### Properties

From the content analysis of the corpus it is possible to describe identifiable characteristics and properties of technification:

Technification generates material objects by nesting technemes (simple technical elements which convey functional meaning) and embedding them to constitute larger artefacts.

Technification is executed when larger objects are constituted through the morphological relationships between embedded technemes; technical elements indicate the morphological typology or the functional typology.

Technification allows a hierarchical nesting of embedded technical gestures (e.g. technemes, materials, and form) and the arrangement of these gestures in meaningful syntagms.

Technification is reliant on the selection and synthesis of appropriate methods and principles to construct functional meaning. This specifically relates to the physical object. As such, technification is the overriding method to generate material artefacts and it determines the application of the other methods (synthesis, proximity, timeliness, and associations).

Technification can be used as a method to interpret and regenerate vernacular expectations and connotations; this establishes technification as an iterative and traditive method.

The unconventional combination of Technical methods can be considered as an innovative practice which is dependent on the application of timeliness in interior design; this establishes an association between these categories.

### Actions

Through its application technification takes the following actions:

Technification encodes meaning.

Technification determines the contemporary application of technical gestures.

By creating associations between technical gestures technification has decorative implications and creates adornment.

Technification establishes archetypes; in their application it connotes the meaning inherited with them.

Technification indicates the morphological typology through the form of the interior artefact; the typology can then be considered as contributing to the higher order (archetype).

Technification indicates the use typology through the technical characteristics of the interior artefact; the typology can then be considered as contributing to the higher order (archetype).

The three proximal assemblies (ensemble, constellation, and symbolic motif) are emphasised through the application of form.

Technemes are combined to generate style; technemes are transfunctionalised to carry stylistic meaning.

Technification supports craftsmanship.

Technification maintains the Technical methods through the application of form. There is a strong synergy between form and adornment with generates an association with the Synthetic methods.

Technification contributes to the Traditive methods.

Technification maintains the Semiotic methods through the application of form.

Technification contributes to the Decorative methods.

Technification relies on the Decorative Methods.

### Effects

In its application technification has the following effects:

Through the use of technical objects the function is indicated; this communicates first-order meaning.

Technification instructs the inhabitant on the function of a space by denoting the first-order meaning.

Technification generates second-order meaning through the process of transfunctionalisation.

Technification connotes the primary function and supports the secondary functions of an interior.

Technification establishes and communicates social functions through the formal and technical application of archetypes.

Technification establishes boundaries.

Technification demarcates an interior and separates it from the rest of the world.

Technification isolates areas of refuge or other destinations.

Technification can place emphasis on certain components or aspects by generating contrast through the application of inappropriate technemes; this supports the notion that the Technical methods convey cultural meaning.

By using incomplete codes technification can avoid direct and superficial application of meaning.

Technification can impart variation and interest to an interior.

Technification is effective in telling narratives and connoting rituals.

Technification can inform intertextual references.



## 5.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I presented a theory for the construction of meaning as it is manifested in the substantive area. This was presented in a narrative format where the five grounded theory categories were described by discussing and illustrating their general properties; the actions they undertake and the effects these create. In the text I combined analytic statements with supporting descriptions and illustrations.

This chapter presented the grounded theory hypothesis: 'Interior design produces culture through synthesis, proximity, associations, timeliness, and technification.'

'Synthesis' is the category of interior design methods that relate to the selection of meaningful components and bringing them together in a cohesive whole.

'Proximity' is the category of interior design methods that relate to the placement of objects in space to create meaningful arrangements and patterns. Proximity is differentiated from synthesis since it does not result in a new, complex artefact but maintains the discretion of the constituent components.

'Timeliness' is the category of interior design methods that relate to ideas of worldliness and changes over time. These methods express customs and conventions handed down from earlier generations which are constructed and reconstructed through repetition. These methods situate the contemporary interior artefact paradigmatically.

'Associations' is the category of interior design methods that involve connections in the mind between different components and those methods that infer meaning. The successful transmission of messages in interior design is partially dependent on the correlation and overlap in the associations generated in the mind of the interior designer (sender) and the user (inhabitant?) (addressee). The use of associations is considered as an instrumental and primary interior design method since no meaning would be generated without the association between an object and its referent.

'Technification' is the category of interior design methods that are concerned with the physical expression of meaning. This category of methods provides formal and technical expression (in the form of a material artefact or object) to the meaning created by the other categories of interior design methods.

This chapter should be considered as the foremost response to the main problem and premise addressed by this thesis. The theory presented here is the result of identifying, isolating, describing and interpreting interior design's methods of cultural production; it further offers the future possibility to synthesise these methods in a rigorous design strategy to construct meaning in the design of new interior artefacts.

## **CHAPTER 6**

# **MODES OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN INTERIOR DESIGN**

## 6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to collate the information contained in the preceding chapters to facilitate the attainment of two research aims: 1.) to speculate on the cultural role of the interior artefact within the larger cultural discourse; and 2.) to propose a rigorous design strategy to construct meaning in the design of new artefacts.<sup>1</sup> It was stated throughout the thesis that a positivist approach to the production of meaning is not feasible and that at its best the thesis will deliver an incomplete and contestable result (after Geertz);<sup>2</sup> as such this chapter is located in relativist ontology and subjective epistemology.

The chapter is presented as a theory (which is itself a collection of explanations) of interior design as a cultural process.<sup>3</sup> This chapter follows the original contributions to the interior design body of knowledge which was described in Chapter 5;<sup>4</sup> the principal contribution of this thesis is that it considers the generation of meaning in the interior artefact as a cultural practice which is summarised in the grounded theory hypothesis:

*Interior design produces culture through synthesis, proximity, associations, timeliness, and technification.*

This chapter represents the theoretical integration of this hypothesis; it is aimed to exploit grounded theory's analytic power to reach a greater level of theoretical abstraction and generalization. Although it may be argued that the description of methods presented in the preceding chapter already represents such a result, this chapter aims to integrate them further. Whereas the results presented in Chapter 5 is an over-arching theory with applicability beyond the 72 artefacts collected in the corpus the theory is still limited to the understanding of existing interior artefacts. This chapter will consider the cultural role of the interior artefact and propose a design strategy to encode future interior artefacts. The thesis reaches completion when a grounded theory is presented to generate meaning in new interiors.

The knowledge contributions of this thesis are both theoretical and practical. The theoretical and practical importance of the study was argued in Chapter 1;<sup>5</sup> it serves as a method to present and organize the findings of the thesis. In this chapter I aim to show how the thesis makes these contributions by firstly considering and synthesising the theoretical contributions of the thesis (which are presented as a discussion on the cultural role of the interior artefact) before I discuss and synthesise the practical contributions (in the form of a design strategy).

- 1.) See, 1.2.2 The main premise.
- 2.) See, 3.2 Research Approach.
- 3.) See, 3.4.3 Analytic integration.
- 4.) Chapter 5 fulfilled the first research objective, to identify, isolate, describe, and interpret interior design's methods to construct meaning.
- 5.) See, 1.4.1 The importance of the study.

## 6.2 THE CULTURAL ROLE OF THE INTERIOR ARTEFACT

This section broadly discusses the theoretical contributions of the thesis. It considers the interior artefact's cultural role as it pertains to its role in the generation of meaning. This follows Eco's moderate hypothesis of culture in which all cultural phenomena can be studied as contents of a semiotic activity and in accordance with Lewis's construct of culture as a collection of meanings.<sup>6</sup> In this context the interior artefact, as a cultural residue, can be understood as a meaningful artefact. The thesis considers culture as a noun of process; as such culture is continually produced, interpreted, and reproduced. This process is a general description of human development which could be considered as an assemblage of meanings which are made and interpreted by a group. Culture is a system of meaning,<sup>7</sup> and interior design is an active agent within that system.

The general cultural role of the interior artefact is reduced to its role as an agent of meaning. The 'interior artefact' referred to here is a product of the work of interior design (as a professional discipline) in the commercial realm and not a general product of human activity (which delivers a larger range of interiors).<sup>8</sup>

### 6.2.1 Interior Design as a Cultural Activity with Importance for Human Development

- Since culture is strategically important for human development and is a universal human characteristic; and since interior design is a cultural activity which provides the tangible vehicles for the expression of intangible cultural aspects there is a need to consider and understand interior design's role in this context.

Material objects and places create and communicate meaning; they offer the framework for situated meaning and are the result of that meaning (O'Toole & Were, 2008:618-619), *id est* material objects communicate meaning and are created meaningfully. They are the result of actions and also connote those actions. The interior artefact is such a material object or place:

*[Space and material culture] is both a **manifestation** and **influence** on our cultures, social structures, sense of agency, identity and power structures (O'Toole & Were, 2008:631) [my emphasis].*

The interior artefact exists as a technical object in the technological system (*techne*) and a meaningful object in the cultural system (*dogma*); it straddles the interdependence between the tangible and intangible aspects of culture. Like all technical (functional) objects it can be said that interior artefacts are 'in flight from the technological system towards the cultural system' (after Barthes, 1983[1967]:8).<sup>9</sup> This is an expression of the relationship between first- and second-order meaning and the process of transfunctionalisation to move between the two.<sup>10</sup> The embodied meaning of the interior artefact is considered as an utterance (after Eco, 1979). Any utterance conveys organized and analyzable content formed

6.) See, 2.2.1 Background to cultural production.

7.) See, 2.2.1 Background to cultural production.

8.) See, 4.4 Limiting the Application of the Study.

9.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions, Duality.

10.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions, Transfunctionalisation.

by a hierarchy of semantic features. The features exist as a system (Eco, 1979:176). This section aims to highlight some of the systemic characteristics of meaning in the interior artefact.

Both levels generate meaning: the technical object conveys first-order meaning in the technical system and is primarily concerned with the interior artefact's use characteristics and primary function; as a meaningful object the interior artefact carries second-order connotations in the cultural system. This embodied meaning is the primary cultural aspect of interior design; it establishes the interior artefact as a cultural object and its continuous (re)generation is consistent with considering culture as a noun of process.<sup>11</sup>

This thesis identified five interior design methods employed to construct meaning and by extension produce culture. Considering the interior artefact as *techné* or *dogma* allows me to broadly categorise the methods. The meaningful methods address the psychological needs of the inhabitants, while the technical method directs the embodiment thereof in physical objects. Interior design generates second-order meaning (connotation) through the processes of Synthesis;<sup>12</sup> Proximity;<sup>13</sup> Timeliness;<sup>14</sup> and Associations.<sup>15</sup> The technical method embodies the second-order meaning in a physical use-artefact and subsequently conveys the first-order meaning. First-order meaning in the interior artefact is generated through Technification.<sup>16</sup> O'Toole and Were (2008:618) describes the relationship between meaning and function in objects like this: "[m]aterial objects and places are ostensibly constructed and possessed for an operational purpose, but also to create and communicate meaning". The implication for interior design that is implied here is that as meaningful objects the second-order meaning to be embodied in interior artefacts must be generated first; this challenges the role of the interior designer as a technologist who is primarily concerned with the production of a physical object which protects the health and safety of the inhabitant; the physical expression of the interior is relegated to a secondary professional role.<sup>17</sup>

Eco (1979:14-40) proposes a model of interpretation based on the complexity of the text: if the text is simple few factors have impact on the message and its eventual acceptance by the addressee; for more complex texts, such as fictional texts, other factors such as the suspension of disbelief are important (Eco, 1979:16).<sup>18</sup> Meaning in the interior artefact

- 11.) See, 6.2.2.1 The generation of meaning in interior artefacts.
- 12.) See, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design.
- 13.) See, 5.3 The Use of Proximal Assemblies in Interior Design.
- 14.) See, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.
- 15.) See, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.
- 16.) See, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.
- 17.) This has implications for the establishment of interior design as a profession (also refer to König, 2010); the professional ground shifts to a concern with meaning. A professional concern with the imaginal aspects of the built-environment and relegation of the spatial aspects (or at the least a counterpoint to the spatial bias of architecture) provides a greater ontological separation from architecture and interior design is no longer 'a little bit of architecture'; it establishes a discreet practice. Perolini (2011:168) evokes Lefebvre's (1991:135) 'representational space'; in this realm space is lived through associated images which are connoted with spatial codes and symbols, see, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design. The interior design occupation, as a profession, should place greater emphasis on the generation of meaningful images.
- 18.) Or other 'metatextual propositions' (Eco, 1979:16); for a scientific text the metatextual proposition is not the suspension of disbelief but a greater sense of trust. I assume that in the technical object a sense of trust and suspension of disbelief would be required since the technical object exists in both the technological system and the cultural system. This requires a hermeneutic approach to the generation and interpretation of meaning in technical objects with constant comparison between the constituent parts and the whole and the interrelationship of the constituent parts and of the technological and cultural systems.



functions on similar principles: as technical objects interior artefacts require of their inhabitants to trust that they will fulfil their function, as meaningful objects they require a suspension of disbelief which is associated with the ambiguity and complexity of the interior artefact.

Umberto Eco (1979:40) offers a tantalising invitation to complexity of meaning in texts:

*To conclude a book of textual interpretations with a metanarrative text that speaks ambiguously and with tongue in cheek of its own ambiguity and of its own derisory nature seems to me an honest decision.*

To appropriate this invitation to the interior artefact (as a complex spatial text) requires the interior designer to be aware of the ambiguities; the unpredictability of iteration and interpretation; and the instability of meaningful codes that are embodied in the interior artefact. The generation of texts is dependent on contextual and circumstantial selections,<sup>19</sup> overcoding,<sup>20</sup> and the framing<sup>21</sup> of the text. This establishes a horizon of meaning and delimits a spatiotemporal condition which informs the codes and subcodes that are utilised in the text.<sup>22</sup>

Although the identification of codes was required as part of the research,<sup>23</sup> this thesis was not concerned with the codes,<sup>24</sup> which are sourced from the cultural milieu in general, but investigated the methods that are utilised in the generation of meaning in interior artefacts.<sup>25</sup> When it is considered as a 'text'<sup>26</sup> the interior artefact is a common and usual artefact that exists within the cultural system like any other.<sup>27</sup> This requires a temporary acceptance of the continuum principle<sup>28</sup> to enable me to consider the general qualities of interior design's methods of cultural production.<sup>29</sup> In this case the interior artefact can be considered as a (non-linear) text which contains units of meaning. This text is interiorized in a spatiotemporal horizon which is paradigmatically and contextually contained and which is dependent on unpredictable iterative sequences to convey meaning between the interior designer and the eventual inhabitant.

- 19.) Circumstantial selections and presuppositions are concerned with the shared knowledge of the sender and the addressee on which successful communication is dependent (Eco, 1979[1976]:108).
- 20.) Overcoding records commonly used strings of signs as pre-established rules (and assumed stable codes) which are extended to propose a rarer application of the previous rule (Eco, 1979[1976]:133). Outside verbal language all iconological representation is dependent on overcoding, this allows the assignation of additional meanings to minimal expressions (Eco, 1979[1976]:134).
- 21.) A frame is the mediation between a comprehensive encyclopedic representation and an instance of overcoding (Eco, 1979:20), see, 6.3.3 A strategic application of interior design's imaginal methods.
- 22.) The thesis is not concerned with what these codes and sub-codes are; they must be interpreted by using precedent and archetype on a continuous basis. It is stressed again that these units of meaning are unstable and to a large extent indeterminable although they are dependent on the recognition of previous codes (Eco, 1979[1976]:129), see, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.
- 23.) See, 3.4 Analytic Instrument. Differentiation must also be made between cultural codes of meaning, and grounded theory codes.
- 24.) Considered as units of cultural meaning taking various forms such as memes, technemes, lexemes, etc.
- 25.) This thesis aimed to identify and describe tacit *methods*; not tacit *meanings*.
- 26.) For a consideration of the artefact as text, see, 2.2 Cultural Production.
- 27.) Refer to my comparison between 'artefacts' and 'objects', see, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies.
- 28.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study, and, see, 2.3.1 Background to semiotic interpretation.
- 29.) I will return to the specifics of interior design's production below, see, 6.2.1.1 A discreet understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production.

The interior artefact functions with similarity to all artefacts in the system of objects.

When the inhabitant<sup>30</sup> identifies codes within the artefact and makes meaningful connections external properties are recognized (such as associations<sup>31</sup> and connotations<sup>32</sup>). The reader then makes indexical presuppositions<sup>33</sup> and assigns the text to an external world<sup>34</sup> (Eco, 1979:17). The interior artefact's placement within an external world<sup>35</sup> generates connections to world structures and discursive structures; these connections represent extensions of the meaning embodied in interior. Eco (1979:17) suggests that during the interpretation of a text the reader places these extensions of meaning into brackets and he labels them as 'bracketed extensions'.<sup>36</sup> During the design of an interior artefact the interior designer can foresee these bracketed extensions and should incorporate them proactively; this will produce denser meaning within the text.

During the interpretation of a text the reader is faced with a series of expressions.<sup>37</sup> The reader applies codes or systems of codes to these expressions to transform them to content (Eco, 1979:15). This is the process whereby the reader gains access to the meaning of a text and reaches understanding. For its analytic purposes this thesis followed the reverse of this process: content was analysed to reveal the expressions and their methods of generation. This allowed me to amalgamate and contextualize the codes to facilitate the isolation and description of methods to generate meaning.

During its generation the interior artefact is manufactured like any other artefact. Information is extracted from the cultural domain; the designer extends or transforms it; and embodies the new meaning in an object. This object is either rejected by the gatekeepers or validated. Once the object is validated its contained meaning is returned to the domain and made available for further transmission.<sup>38</sup>

During the inception and manufacture of the interior artefact existing meaning is reproduced, transformed, or extended in an unpredictable sequence of iterations which are impacted by various role-players.<sup>39</sup> Interior design is an innovative practice which introduces gradual change into a process of establishing enduring meaning.<sup>40</sup> This production

30.) If the interior artefact is considered as a 'text'; the inhabitant is the proxy 'reader' of that text.

31.) See, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.

32.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions, Denotation and Connotation.

33.) These are causal connections between a sign and its object (Eco, 1979[1976]:115); i.e. there is causal correlation in the mind of the inhabitant between the interior and its larger cultural domain; these constitute circumstantial selections.

34.) The properties of this external world are "transformed into pieces of encyclopedic knowledge," (Eco, 1979:17). This implies that the inhabitant enlarges the meaningful space of the interior but this external world must still be 'small' (after Eco, 1990:81-82); this 'small world' is limited and contained and to an extent contrived and fictional, see, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism. The encyclopedic yearning is one for maximal worlds, but they do not facilitate fiction.

35.) The external world can be considered as a 'small world' which is described as 'a limited and contained, contrived and fictional, world', see, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

36.) I return to the extension of meaning in the interior artefact later in this chapter, see, 3.3.4 A systematic application of interior design's imaginal methods.

37.) Eco (1979:179) also defines a sign as a correlation between a given expression and a given content; as such the identifiable signs in the interior realm can be considered as expressions. The *in vivo* codes used during the content analysis may serve as examples, see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods.

38.) See, 2.2.1 Background to cultural production.

39.) These role-players include the interior designer, the client, contractors, the existing spatial condition (and its embodied meaning), the external context, and the user (after Wilwerding, 2013:82), see, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

40.) See, 5.4.1 Properties of Timeliness.

process facilitates cultural exchange and the translation of cultural capital.<sup>41</sup> In this process the interior artefact's idiosyncrasies are conversant with the interior design process and the physical nature of the interior artefact.<sup>42</sup>

These actions do not describe cultural recycling (with its obsession with the new and novelty); but culture as it 'used to be' (after Baudrillard).<sup>43</sup> In this case culture is an iterative practice and is passed on over generations; it is a deeper process than merely introducing novelty. As an iterative practice, culturally sensitive design should integrate people with their surroundings and must not be a mere collection of cultural artefacts or references (Abimbola, 2001:57). The interior designer must aim for an integrative approach which produces 'open texts'.<sup>44</sup>

Since the interior artefact serves as a tangible vehicle for the expression of intangible cultural practices<sup>45</sup> it can be argued that the interior facilitates the close relationship between individuals and the larger cultural groupings<sup>46</sup> to which they may belong. As individuals articulate personal attributes which in their expression contribute to collective cultural identities so do individual interiors. The personal attributes of an individual can be made analogous to the specific attributes of an interior. Individual interiors which are created in iterative sequences and which express intertextuality can be considered as subsequent 'generations' of interiors. Interior design can express customs and conventions handed down over time, these can be extended or altered to introduce innovation.<sup>47</sup>

The connection and differentiation between the 'self' and the 'Other' is regulated through boundary conditions. In this context the 'power of the individual' is expressed as the individual's control over their own identity and the assimilation thereof in the larger cultural habitus. The individual will express various territorial behaviours to protect its individual identity as 'oneself'. Territorial behaviour involves marking and communication that spaces or objects belong to an individual (or smaller subgroup) (O'Toole & Were, 2008:620). The interior here serves as a tangible agent to express territorial behaviour. Individuals and interiors collectively contribute to larger cultural habitus; obversely they maintain individual identities within these larger groupings. Interiors, or marking smaller interiors within a larger space, can generate a sense of belonging and identity (Perolini, 2011:164).<sup>48</sup>

In conclusion, I assume<sup>49</sup> that as people create their personal identities and express these in personal spaces, so are public spaces created.

- 41.) The inherent dangers of cultural exchange and cultural translation are tacitly stated in the *Interiors Declaration*, see, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study. Cultural translation transcribes cultural capital obtained from the 'Other' (which may be temporally or spatially removed) in a process which enables the hegemonic agency of the 'self' (Butler, 2013).
- 42.) See, 6.2.1.1 A discreet understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production.
- 43.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.
- 44.) An open text requires flexibility and the cooperation of the reader to allow a wide range of possible interpretations (Eco, 1979:34). I return to this concept when I describe the 'encyclopedia model' of interpretation, see, 6.2.2.1 The generation of meaning in interior artefacts.
- 45.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.
- 46.) These collective cultural identities do not necessarily indicate ethnic or national groupings but merely a shared habitus in which a shared humanity enable a sharing of meaning amongst individuals.
- 47.) See, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.
- 48.) In the public domain, which was the focus of this thesis, it is specifically the use of proximal assemblies (ensemble, constellation, and symbolic motifs) which facilitate territorial behaviour and the mediation between the oneself and the 'Other' through signifying inhabitation. These actions allow inhabitants of crowded space a sense of belonging, of knowing where one belongs, having a sense of how to navigate the space, etc.
- 49.) My assumption is epistemologically grounded as a valid belief, see, 3.2 Research Approach.

Individuals employ familiar methods to denote occupation, inhabitation, and identity to mediate the boundary condition between oneself and the 'Other'. The professional practice of interior design is the best located occupation to facilitate this process in the public domain. It now becomes necessary to consider interior design specifics in greater detail.

#### 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production

- Since interior design represents its own idiosyncrasies in the production of culture; and since these cannot be made homogenous with other spatial practices (e.g. architecture) there is a need to reach a discrete understanding of them.

Interior design is a traditive discipline which carries meaning from earlier artefacts;<sup>50</sup> and it acts as other cultural practices but it includes its own idiosyncrasies. This subsection will consider some of these in greater detail to contribute to answering the ontological question.<sup>51</sup>

This thesis considered culture is as a noun of process which implies that culture is continuously renewed and reconstructed to contribute to a sense of continuity and durability.<sup>52</sup> In this iterative practice culture is (re)produced out of the medium itself and as a cultural product interior design is produced out of and for interior design ('the medium is the message'). This practice is specifically visible in the dissemination of the interior design corpus,<sup>53</sup> which was expressed in the methodology employed by this thesis.<sup>54</sup> The interior design discipline is self-referential and self-duplicating; this is evidenced by strong intertextual links between interior artefacts.<sup>55</sup> Since intertextuality implies knowledge of other interiors this supports a pedagogic underpinning which is concerned with the production of interior artefacts specifically.<sup>56</sup>

To initiate the discussion the following definition is proposed:

*Interior design is the generation a meaningful image which is expressed spatially.*

This spatial expression of an image can be considered as an 'utterance'.<sup>57</sup> The methods isolated here are primarily concerned with the

- 50.) *Id est* subsequent interiors can be considered as new generations of interiors, see, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.
- 51.) The discussion of the idiosyncrasies remains incomplete; it is merely aimed at a contribution to theoretical abstraction, see, 3.4.3 Analytic integration. For contributions to answering the ontological question (*what is interior design?*), see, 6.2.3 The theoretical contributions to interior design's ontology.
- 52.) See, 2.2 Background to cultural production; for interior design specificity, see, 5.4.1 Properties of Timeliness.
- 53.) Specifically refer to my discussion of the corpus in the discussion in Chapter 4 Data, see, 4.1 Introduction, and, see, 4.3.3 A Reflection on the Corpus.
- 54.) See, Chapter 3 Methods.
- 55.) Intertextuality was indicated in a number of artefacts, such as 007 Blockbuster; 017 IkHa; 028 Covus; and 052 Puma Lab. Intertextuality is specifically important to generate connections between interior spaces and brands (this is evident in 033 Clae Pop-Up and 062 UNOQLO); and to generate connections between franchises (such as the Camper and Aesop series that were collected in the corpus).
- 56.) Refer to my discussion of the canon, see, 2.2.4 Domain Gatekeepers. This does not imply that other cultural residues (such as architecture) become redundant although an architectural bias in interior design education and theory was observable during the discipline's establishment and pedagogic expansion; greater disciplinary specificity and a reversal of architectural bias is a recent development which is evident in works such as Brooker and Stone (2010), Caan (2011), Edwards (2011), Gigli *et al* (2007), Leydecker (2013), Massey (2001), Nussbaumer (2009), and Scott (2008), amongst others.
- 57.) An utterance conveys organized and analyzable content formed by a hierarchy of semantic features, see, 6.2 The Cultural Role of the Interior Artefact.

generation of an utterance – a meaningful text or meaningful strings of signs (syntagms). This utterance takes the form of a meaningful image which is embodied in an inhabitable use artefact (technical object).<sup>58</sup> It was indicated above that the meaningful methods address psychological and social needs and the technical method embodies those in physical objects.<sup>59</sup> During this process interior design must mediate between the tangible and intangible aspects of cultural production: it must construct the message (intangible) and then spatially express the message (tangible). As meaning is expressed in a material, physical, and volumetric artefact, the role of the interior artefact (as an inhabitable space) within the cultural domain differs from other artefacts. The interior artefact's idiosyncrasies are conversant with the physical nature of the volumetric interior.<sup>60</sup>

For interior design to produce culture (construct meaning) it must generate a physical object which is the inhabitable spatial expression of the imaginal meaning in the mind of the designer. The designer is responsible to create a material artefact to convey the design intention. This object is usually documentation of the designer's intent; it will be interpreted and constructed by a team of contractors and craftspersons. For interior design technification therefore implies the generation of two different material objects: it is the generation of drawings (imaginal texts); and it is the construction of the physical interior artefact. It can be inferred that the interior design process is primarily concerned with the generation of construction documentation; and that during the construction process the interior designer merely acts as a facilitator.<sup>61</sup>

In the interior artefact there exist two layers of meaning:

- First-order meaning (use value and denotation) in which the metatextual proposition is dependent on the inhabitant's trust in the technical execution, or in the interior artefact's ability to fulfil its function,<sup>62</sup> and
- Second-order meaning (associations and connotations) in which the metatextual proposition is dependent on the inhabitant's suspension of disbelief and trust in the message and its connoted references.<sup>63</sup>

The associations and connotations (second-order meaning) are unstable and timely; they are contextually bound and dependent on the creative participation of the inhabitant with serves as the addressee or reader when the interior artefact is considered as a text.<sup>64</sup> In generating the

- 58.) Here I distinguish between the interior as an indicator of function (first-order meaning) and its connotations (second-order meaning), see, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions, Transfunctionalisation. The built artefact is firstly functional but includes other communicative purposes; the communicative purpose supports the built artefact's primary function (Eco, 1980[1968]:13), see, 2.3.1 Background to semiotic interpretation.
- 59.) The meaningful methods are Synthesis, Proximity, Timeliness, and Associations; the technical method is Technification, see, 6.2 The Cultural Role of the Interior Artefact.
- 60.) The volumetric interior is distinct from the rest of the world; its containment offer opportunity for the generation of a contrived identity that exists discretely in the contained interior, see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Boundary.
- 61.) These project / professional issues are not studied in this thesis, see, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.
- 62.) First-order meaning is concerned with the technical nature of the profession: how the interior is constructed?; is this done safely and responsibly?; are appropriate material choices made?; does the interior environment protect the health and safety of its inhabitants?; does the interior environment protect or damage the larger natural environment?, etc.
- 63.) Second-order meaning expands interior design's professional ground beyond that of architecture.
- 64.) Consideration for the role of the future inhabitant is important during the generation of meaning; this role is specifically considered below, see, 6.3.3 A strategic application of interior design's imaginal methods.



meaningful image<sup>65</sup> the interior designer must identify and generate various levels of meaning. These levels of meaning are then embodied through analytical and iterative design practice in a hermeneutic manner. In this iterative practice the interior designer can refer to existing artefacts and collect and synthesise various meanings, both deep and superficial.<sup>66</sup>

It is possible to map the hierarchy of semantic features which forms the analyzable content of the utterance.<sup>67</sup> In this way the interior designer can investigate how the message will be structured in the artefact, or how similar messages were structured in previous artefacts. This further establishes interior design as an iterative practice.<sup>68</sup>

Throughout the thesis and the analysis of artefacts the interrelationship of meaningful methods were considered and expressed as syntagms ('meaningful strings of signs').<sup>69</sup> These exist paradigmatically and are reliant on 'contextual and circumstantial interpretations'. The transfer of meaning is dependent on correlations between the associations identified by the designer and those active in the mind of the inhabitant.<sup>70</sup> The designer must develop an emphatic response to the future inhabitant.

As the temporal emotions<sup>71</sup> facilitate the construction of a durable self identity over time by tying life experiences together to provide a sense of durability and continuity (after Lois, 2010) so do the intangible content embodied in the interior artefact contribute to the construction of enduring cultural identities. Since interior design functions like all other cultural practices when it collects and extends information that exists in the cultural domain it implies that interior design is an expression of culture as an inherited legacy of meanings which provide a sense of continuity (even though some interior artefacts have a relatively short life span). This sense of continuity is established when the interior designer imbues the contemporary interior with appropriate signs which convey earlier meaning; this establishes interior design as a traditive discipline.<sup>72</sup> This combination of inherited meanings which are continuously embodied in new artefacts which are produced with technical mastery displays a dichotomy between tradition and innovation; artefacts like these can be considered as 'new'<sup>73</sup> or as well done artistic works (after Eco, 1990).<sup>74</sup> Interior artefacts that display this characteristic exhibit the qualities of culture as a system of iterative meanings, thoughts and traditions in a continuous dimension of critical and theoretical reflection (after Baudrillard, 1998[1970]).<sup>75</sup> Interior design is traditive and innovative simultaneously and without contradiction.

- 65.) The meaningful image functions as an utterance containing the second-order meaning.
- 66.) See, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design, and, see, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.
- 67.) See, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.
- 68.) If there is an inherent structure to the message it implies the existence of a tacit interior design grammar, see, 5.2.1 Properties of Synthesis. This thesis did not identify or describe this interior design grammar, see, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.
- 69.) Specifically when the syntagmatic diagram was constructed, see, 3.4.1.6 Syntagmatic diagram.
- 70.) These are contextual and circumstantial selections; the associations and interactions between sememes and memes contained in the artefact are also worthy of consideration.
- 71.) The temporal emotions are a class of emotions that can only be experienced by crossing timeframes (after Lois, 2010:441), see, 5.5 Timeliness in Interior Design.
- 72.) See, 5.4.1 Properties of Timeliness.
- 73.) See, 2.2.4 Domain Gatekeepers
- 74.) See, 4.2.2.1 Inclusion criteria, New.
- 75.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

The analogy between individual identity and identity contained in the interior artefact can be further expanded: in commercial interiors the constructed place identity must find correlation with the personal identity of the individual who chooses to consume the interior by inhabiting it. This inhabitation is expressed when the individual occupies the interior temporarily. When the individual chooses to occupy an interior they indicate that interior artefact as an outward extension of their personality. In this instance the interior functions as a signifier for personal identity. This merely indicates an association between the identity of the inhabitant and the place, and not a shared identity.<sup>76</sup> Interior design fashions identity through artifice and participates in the staging of individual identities (Sanders, 2006[2002]:304-5).

The interior artefact is a cultural product which is produced like other artefacts, but it is maintained by its own idiosyncrasies. These idiosyncrasies were identified from the literature and are reported as some of the *in vivo* codes used in the content analysis.<sup>77</sup> The *in vivo* codes were utilised in the non-positivist and creative research<sup>78</sup> design as a response to contextually founded and unstable meanings embedded in interior artefacts. I will briefly review some<sup>79</sup> of the codes that play a role in the application of the continuum principle:<sup>80</sup>

- Archetype: interior design has its own set of ideal examples from which other models are iterated (Jennings, 2007). These interior archetypes ('intypes') are documented by the Intypes Research and Teaching Project (Intypes, sa),
- Boundary: the boundary creates the distinction between the interior and the rest of the world (Hillier & Hanson, 1984:144). Since interior artefacts are part of the cultural system the boundary mediates the identity of the interior since it protects the quasi-independence of the interior volume. The boundary offers opportunity for decoration and other expressions of the image within the volumetric space,
- Colour: although the use of colour is not idiosyncratic to the discipline it is a prominent interior design practice (Taylor & Preston, 2006:8-9),
- Decoration: interior decoration is a practice which distinguishes interior design from architecture (Königk, 2010),
- Furnishing: functional decorations and built-in furniture serve as a mediating factor between architecture and interior decoration (Sanders, 2006[2002]:303),
- Performance: the carrying out of identity has theatrical connotations (Goffman in Edwards, 2011:127). The interior is a site of events and affects (Mostafavi, 2008:1),
- Temporality: commercial interiors typically undergo a succession of rapid transformations and the interior has a relatively short life-span. The temporal conditions of the

76.) This personal expression can be considered analogous to the use of fashion to construct or extend personal identity.

77.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes.

78.) See, 3.2 Research Approach, and, see, 3.3 Research Methods.

79.) I do not view this list as complete, merely an indication of interior design's divergence from the continuum principle, see, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

80.) The 'continuum principle' is the assumption that the built environment is the product of culture in the broader sense and that similar cultural production methods inform the built environment on a number of scales, see, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

interior cannot be rigidly fixed and the architecture merely acts as an organizing envelope (Mostafavi, 2008:30), and

- Typology: interior design should develop its own set of typologies; these can be described as aspects of production that can be grouped due to similarity (Jennings, 2007:48). Following Jennings (2007) I distinguished between morphology and use typologies.

Since differentiation is made between the interior artefact and other artefacts, the built artefact (in general) must be differentiated from general texts; although built artefacts (including interiors) can be considered as texts they are fundamentally different from written texts, and meaning cannot be created in them in the same way. The interior artefact is a spatial text which cannot be made analogous to a narrative text (after Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]).<sup>81</sup> The spatial text is not read but inhabited and its connotations are contained<sup>82</sup> in a broad 'horizon of meaning'.<sup>83</sup> The general properties of linguistic texts (narrative texts) or oral utterances ('linear text manifestations') are made applicable on the interior artefact (which is interpreted non-linearly) through comparison. The interpretation, and possibly the generation, of messages and meaning is a continuous process and its timing is unpredictable (Eco, 1979:18).

The transfer of messages is dependent on the transmission of a sign between the sender and the addressee, and the existence of overlapping associations (which the sign connotes) in the mind of the reader and the addressee.<sup>84</sup> Eco (1990:143) described two models of interpretation: the 'dictionary model' is composed of a limited set of semantic universals while the 'encyclopedia model' is contrasted as a system where every semantic unit must be interpreted through every possible association. When Lefebvre's description of the spatial text is considered, it must be conceded that the spatial text, with its 'broad horizon of meaning', must be interpreted according to the encyclopedia model. Although this would generate a more nuanced interior with several layers of meaning it may be problematic since (especially commercial) interiors need to send unambiguous messages to possible inhabitants.

The dictionary model is useful to generate explicit messages that are easy to interpret. The dictionary model is effective since it depicts the competency of the laity (after Eco, 1990). In my assessment of the corpus the dictionary model explains direct and artificial<sup>85</sup> connotations. These connotations enable fairly accurate and speedy interpretation, but it may lead to a banal practice of interior design in which meaning is simply ascribed and encoded and may generate pastiche. The methods isolated by the research may contribute to the impression that interior design is easy to execute. I feel that it is only superficial pastiche which is easy and that the proposed design strategy serves to counter this argument.<sup>86</sup>

The encyclopedia model in contrast is ambiguous; it introduces complexity in the interpretation of artefacts (and their pre-emptive generation) when it is considered that the laity can attribute incomplete

81.) See, 2.2.2 Structuralism.

82.) Lefebvre uses the term 'acted'; I prefer the term 'contained' for its connotations with interiority (also refer to Colomina (in McCarthy, 2005:114) for whom "the horizon is an interior").

83.) Butler (2013:11) refers to the 'spatiotemporal horizon' in which traditions are generated and propagated in an unpredictable iterative sequence.

84.) See, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.

85.) Eco (1990:143) describes the model as "undoubtedly pretty artificial".

86.) See, 6.3 Towards a Strategy for Constructing Meaning.

connotations and disconnected associations to sememes (after Eco, 1990). The encyclopedia model's potential for unlimited semiosis will be reduced by the cooperation of the interpreter (Eco, 1979:39). This again implies that, for interior design, consideration must be made for the future inhabitant of the interior artefact.<sup>87</sup> The inhabitant of the commercial interior plays a specific role in the consumption of meaning and the generation of identity which this implies.<sup>88</sup>

When texts in general, and non-linear texts specifically, are interpreted the hypothesis of an implicit structure can form the basis of further analysis (after Williams, 1976:257).<sup>89</sup> This thesis produced such a hypothesis as the result of the grounded theory process. Since this thesis explicitly takes a poststructuralist stance it is stated again that the imaginal interior hypothesis<sup>90</sup> does not imply the existence of a positivist general account of the system of generation of meaning in all interior artefacts; the hypothesis serves to open further research in the field.<sup>91</sup> This section aimed to highlight some of the systemic characteristics of meaning in the interior artefact, this task remains incomplete. The five identified interior design methods must be considered within the poststructural context of the thesis to derive a (somewhat) predictive system of features to generate meaning in the idiosyncratic interior artefact.<sup>92</sup>

To expand the comprehension of interior design's idiosyncrasies some time will be spend on its hegemonic agency.

#### *Applying interior design's hegemonic agency*

- Since interior design has hegemonic agency (and specifically in its facilitation of cultural exchange and the translation of cultural capital may pose a threat to cultural diversity) there is a need to understand this to enable its application with circumspection, rigour and responsibility.

The design methods proposed by this thesis do not describe cultural recycling (with its obsession to display the consumer's ability to be 'in the know') but the traditional definition of culture as an inherited legacy of works, thoughts, tradition, and the continuous dimension of critical and theoretical reflection (after Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:101). In this case culture is an iterative practice and is passed on over generations. It is a deeper process than merely introducing novelty. If interior design is considered as such a cultural practice, which the use of timeliness and associations indicate, it differs from the popular image of the discipline as a form of mimetic production.<sup>93</sup> Interior design's hegemonic agency does not lie in its role as tastemaker<sup>94</sup> but in its influence on larger cultural discourses. If interior design (re)produces culture and meaning by

87.) I return to the 'model inhabitant' (which serves as proxy) below, see, 6.3.3 A strategic application of interior design's imaginal methods.

88.) I refer to my discussion of the substantive area of research which can be described as 'the everyday commercial practice of interior design', see, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

89.) Williams specifically referred to the analysis of language systems which serve as an analogy through which cultural production, in general, may be understood, see, 2.2.2 Structuralism.

90.) The imaginal interior hypothesis states that: "Interior design produces culture through synthesis, proximity, associations, timeliness, and technification".

91.) See, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

92.) I return to this later in the chapter, see, 6.3.3 A systematic application of interior design's imaginal methods.

93.) I discussed the essentialist depiction of interior design on television in my dissertation (König, 2010:36-38).

94.) The tastemaker is characterised by their casual capability and an overt refusal of didacticism (Bourdieu in Philips, 2005:218).

repeating norms and standards contained in the discipline's own cultural residues, and those it accesses from the cultural domain in general, it acts in a hegemonic fashion to re-establish existing cultural norms, to extend these, to reinforce these, or to question, or even subvert, them. This practice must be applied in a critical manner.

In the poststructural context of the thesis I consider interior artefacts as texts of a flexible type; in these texts many meanings can be legitimately realized (Eco, 1979:3). Eco continues that these texts require a "peculiar strategy of communication based upon a flexible system of signification". These texts are open and allow for various possible interpretations. This does not allow the open text to be considered as a communicative strategy without considering the eventual role of the addressee<sup>95</sup> at the time of generation. Eco (1979:3) asserts that the "foreseen interpretation is part of the generative process".

I would go further by stating that interior design exercises interpretive processes during the generation of interior artefacts. The design process itself is dependent on the interior designer interpreting and synthesising existing cultural codes and norms.<sup>96</sup> Interior design employs interpretation by using precedent and archetype on a continuous basis when it accesses the repertoire of texts.<sup>97</sup> In this way interior design is hegemonic when it reproduces existing cultural norms. I call on interior designers to not merely exercise this agency but to do so critically.<sup>98</sup> The critical application of hegemonic agency in the discipline will require a new awareness from interior designers of the cultural codes that they (re)produce. This requires empirically grounded design practices and implies a greater role for research as part of the design process.<sup>99</sup> The interior designer must identify the cultural codes and understand their interdependency in the generation of meaning in the interior artefact; this implies an interpretive practice utilising cultural residues from the discipline and cultural production in general.

It was indicated above that for interior design to service its commercial responsibility it may be necessary to generate superficial, unambiguous messages that are clear and easy to interpret. These superficial messages can be augmented with ambiguous content, which requires a greater level of participation from the inhabitant to interpret and greater design effort, skill, and creativity from the interior designer to generate.

When the inhabitant recognizes external properties connoted by the interior she assigns the subject to an external world (after Eco, 1979:17). These external links generate connections to a larger encyclopedia of knowledge;<sup>100</sup> the generation of texts is ideologically informed and so is their interpretation, even if the participants are not aware of that (Eco, 1979:22). During the content analysis of the corpus tacit interior design discourses were denoted as an initial analytic step to determine possible transfunctionalised second-order meaning.<sup>101</sup> The interior design

95.) The addressee will interpret the text; examples are the reader for narrative texts, the user of objects, and the inhabitant of spaces.

96.) See, 5.2 Synthesis in Interior Design.

97.) If interior design is considered as a cultural grouping it can be said that interior design is a text-oriented culture, see, 5.2.1 Properties of Synthesis.

98.) This is in response to the normative question (*should interior design strike a new course?*) which was posed after my reflection on the corpus, see, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field. This is a utopian stance which negatively assesses the status quo in response to the general question, *what ought to be?*

99.) See, 6.3.2 New research methods for interior design.

100.) See, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.

101.) See, 3.4.1 Analytic protocol for the content analysis of artefacts.



discourses were identified simultaneously with the *in vivo* codes from the literature and emerged in an open manner as part of the initial coding process;<sup>102</sup> later they were compared and synthesised to reach the current list of eight tacit interior design discourses.<sup>103</sup> They serve a similar function to the *in vivo* codes: to synoptically indicate the presence of a conceptual idea in an interior artefact.<sup>104</sup>

The tacit discourses offer interior design the opportunity to exercise its hegemonic agency with critical application by adding ambiguous or ideologically informed levels of meaning.<sup>105</sup> These additional layers of meaning must augment, and not replace, the commercial meanings that the interior artefact must convey on behalf of the client to the future inhabitant; interior design should serve its professional and commercial responsibilities first. I will briefly present<sup>106</sup> the eight identified interior design discourses:

- **Alteration:** Scott (2008:xv) defines 'pure' architecture as the production of a new building on a cleared site,<sup>107</sup> if interior design is considered as an architectural discipline, in so far as it produces built artefacts, then the act of alteration distinguishes the professional practices of interior design from architecture. This elevates the act of altering existing buildings to a major theoretical discourse for the discipline in which the interior designer's response to the host has normative implications (Scott, 2008). Interior design can be considered as a temporal discipline which in the act of alteration illustrates the failure of architecture (to reach its utopian or theoretical ideals) (König, 2010:50).
- **Episteme:** if design is considered as a way of thinking then attention must be paid to "to the thinking and considerations that inform its production," (Leach, 1997:xv). If epistemology is considered as the knowledge of knowledge systems which separate those forms of knowing which constitute defensible, and therefore valid, belief from mere opinion, then the use of episteme in design implies a normative position which distinguishes between right thinking and wrong thinking.<sup>108</sup>

102.) The list was initiated by Taylor and Preston (2006:6-14) who identified major methods and discourses in interior design theory: form; gender; inhabitation and the body; interiority; objects and artefacts; and taste and status. Sparke (2009:3) mentioned: the body; gender; identity; interiority; and taste.

103.) See, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods; the denotation of interior design discourses serve as grounded theory codes, see, 3.4.2 Coding.

104.) The thesis does not report on the content of associated meanings, merely on the methods to generate them, see, 1.5 Delimitations, and, see, 4.4.1.1 Limitations in terms of the scope of the study. When the associated content is discussed, it serves as example only.

105.) The use of the discourses allow the interior designer the opportunity to 'frame' the interior artefact, see, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.

106.) It is recommended that the discourses are studied individually, and in full, in a longitudinal and broad study which considers their function in the context of meaning production, see, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

107. Since architecture is therefore concerned with the generation of an observable three dimensional object the generation and composition of form is established as an important architectural discourse. "During the experience of an interior space, the observer has to be inside the space, from whence it is then impossible to experience the totality. The experience of interior space relies on a sequence of partial understandings of viewings of the space. The sequential partial understanding of interior space is the phenomenological agent that prohibits interior design from being a discipline of composition," (König, 2010:13).

108.) Episteme therefore also influences interior design as an institution: "Our social interaction consists very much in telling one another what right thinking is and passing blame on wrong thinking. This is indeed how we build the institutions, squeezing

Episteme is concerned with design arguments and whether these arguments are defensible. As research interferes with the perception of the objects it studies, which in turn affect the larger cultural system (Saukko, 2003:25), so does design production.<sup>109</sup>

- **Form:** the theoretical informants that contribute to the generation and use of form in design are related to the epistemological arguments about design thinking. These arguments constitute a major field of architectural theory (Königk, 2010:14), and it hardly warrants an elaboration on this field.<sup>110</sup> In interior design form relates to the specific shape of the volumetric interior (Edwards, 2011:90); this shape is determined by the host building, or architectural envelope, but can be manipulated by the interior designer. Architectural production is informed by arguments and understandings of architectural form, but these omit many important interior design characteristics (Jennings, 2007:49). Since form is an interior design vehicle for communication (Tan, 2011:46), understanding it in a discursive sense is imperative. Form as a theoretical construct explores all that is concrete, material, and objectified in the physical interior artefact (Taylor & Preston, 2006:11).<sup>111</sup>
- **Gender / Sexuality:** it is my belief that gender plays a significant theoretical role in the discipline due to its perceived acceptability as a career for women or gay men (and an implied criticism of male heterosexuality). Taylor and Preston (2006:10-11) assert that it is not possible to ignore the role of feminist theory in interior design. Interior design's feminine characteristics are historically founded in the emergence of interior decoration as a women's pastime at the end of the nineteenth century. It is argued that gay men are attracted to this profession (like fashion and theatre) due to their perceived marginalization elsewhere (Sanders, 2006[2002]:305-5).<sup>112</sup> Since gender, as a construct, is so

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each other's ideas into a common shape so that we can prove rightness by sheer numbers of independent assent," Douglas (1986:91).

- 109.) This thesis itself can therefore be considered as an epistemological design study; I hope that it will interfere in interior design's production system.
- 110.) I am not concerned with the architectural canon but include some architectural works here as example, since (as a young discipline which is informed by architecture) interior design refers to other theoretical sources (such as architecture) in an intertemporal manner (Königk, 2010:49); sources include, but are not limited to: Alexander (1964); Ching (2014 [1979]); Crysler (2003); Curtis (1996[1982]); Johnson (1994); Lang (1987); Rowe (1987); and Venturi (1966).
- 111.) As a theoretical discourse form is concerned with first-order meaning, this is expanded to include the consideration of historic interiors, or the history of interior design, which is not afforded a separate theoretical category here.
- 112.) From my own experience as a gay interior designer I need to comment personally on Sanders' assumption. Within interior design I am marginalised due to my masculinity, and I am acutely aware that my masculinity is imbued with hegemonic agency. It is also my experience that in predominantly feminine environments gay men are perceived as men first and as such pose similar threats as heterosexual men. As a man in interior design I am the 'Other'; as simply a man, I (still) occupy a normative state. During my career I have been accused by female interior designers of being 'hard', 'critical', 'intimidating', and 'lacking empathy', characteristics which I assume does not fit with the image of interior design as a caring profession. I have also been told (by women) that the discipline was unable to fully professionalise since it is filled with women and that they are therefore unwilling to fight for professionalization. Comments such as these by Perolini (2011:169) offers tacit and implied criticism of masculinity itself: "Women have a tendency to overlook dichotomies and recognise connections rather than differences. Design processes undertaken in this feminist perspective are likely to blur role distinctions between designer and client and designer and user"; she continues that women are more likely to interpret diversity and to promote spatial and visual connections between spaces. This is a misandrist position which may imply that men are, inherently,

instrumental in the establishment of individual identities it includes notions of the body, privacy, publicity and display; it is extended to issues of ontology and power. In the commercial practice of interior design a greater sensitivity to gender as a construct will enable the interior designer to design appropriate environments with greater sensitivity.

- Identity / Ontology: for Sparke (2009:3) in interior design identity addresses issues of class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, and age. This list of categories can be considered as an initial list only, and from this thesis it must be stated clearly that the construction of identity in the interior involves more complexity than merely expressing categories of belonging. This thesis itself can be considered as an ontological study of interior design.<sup>113</sup>
- Inhabitation and the Body: developments in feminist and geographic studies investigate the relationship between particular bodies<sup>114</sup> and their environment; as a specific body is located its capacities and desires are expressed and (re)produced by specific spaces (Taylor & Preston, 2006:10-11). This supports the notion that an inhabitant chooses to consume a specific interior as an expression of their self-identity. The consideration for inhabitation could be expanded to include theories that are sensitive to human beings as embodied psychological phenomena, rather than living, physical objects (Hewlett in Perolini, 2011:169).
- Interiority: the theoretical consideration of the inner self as distinct from the rest of the world is applied in interior design in the contemplation of enclosure and the differentiation between the 'self' : 'Other' conceptual pair. Interiority establishes the interior as a discrete realm and moving into the interior is a movement from the public arena to a space which can express the idiosyncrasies of identity (Hillier & Hanson, 1984:144-5). Interiority is the philosophical concept which examines the innerness of interior design as a locus for feeling and projection in which the interior environment is experienced via the body (as a 'culturally lived organism') (Taylor & Preston, 2006:11).
- Taste: when expressed in the interior taste serves as a marker of social distinction (Sparke 2009:3). The use of taste contributes to social stratification and the expression of identity; this is specifically achieved through meta-knowledge of the second-order meaning which is connoted by objects. Taste as a discourse in the interior emerged in the professional struggle between architects and upholsterers in the nineteenth century; the interior emerged as a conceptual entity which is not simply architectural, but imaginal as it involves covering the inside shell with furnishing and decoration (Rice, 2004:276). Taste as a discourse ranges from

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inferior interior designers. As a gay man I find that the place of acceptance which interior design offered me when I first joined the discipline as a student in 1999 is becoming more irrelevant as being gay has become mainstream; and the gay subculture has subsequently been eroded. These are my personal reflections and have little academic standing, but I believe that they are not unique, and are shared here to indicate the ubiquity and importance of gendered experiences for interior designers.

113.) Which partially answers the ontological question, *what is interior design?*

114.) Such as male bodies or old bodies.

De Wolfe's (1920[1913]) practical discussion of its application in the domestic interior to Bourdieu's (1984[1979]) social critique of it as a cultural construct. In the commercial interior taste is applied in the "alliance to consumption and the acquisition of possessions as a symbol of social status," (Taylor & Preston, 2006:12).

From the discussion above it is evident that the interior design discourses are interrelated and do not form discrete, autonomous fields;<sup>115</sup> these theories are primarily concerned with the construction of identity and the meaningful expression thereof. The interior design theories identify a disciplinary body of knowledge which includes social, political, philosophical, technological, and psychological fields (Taylor & Preston, 2006:8). The products of interior design act hegemonically when spaces give form and expression to social structures by encouraging and discouraging certain behaviours and when they influence the interaction of its inhabitants (Perolini, 2011:168).<sup>116</sup>

Finally, it must be noted that these discourses are not necessarily active in the mind of the designer or the inhabitant. Eco (1979:23) claims that the associations which a text connotes are only virtually present in the mind.<sup>117</sup> Associations are stored socially or culturally and are picked up, by both the generators and interpreters of texts, when needed. It is therefore assumed that, like all hegemonic practices, interior design exerts cultural control and influence in ways which are not necessarily immediately apparent to either the designer or the inhabitant, but which are ever present and available. This section calls for greater awareness of interior design's cultural role and greater critical application of its agency.

### 6.2.2 Semiosis in Interior Design

- Since the use of semiotics as analogous to cultural production in general is supported there is a need for a systematic, empirical study of the generation of meaning in interior artefacts to indicate interior design's methods of cultural production.
- There is a need to improve the praxis of interior design by identifying and describing tacit methods to generate meaning.
- Since the designed interior acts as a vehicle for the dissemination of meaning there is a need to study the interior in this context.

To consider meaning in interior design it becomes necessary to consider the successful transmission of meaning; the process to transmit meaning is known as semiosis.<sup>118</sup> Meaning is contained in 'messages' which are transmitted from a sender to an addressee. A message is a string of signs which contains a coherent meaning; the sign producer generates the message and the receiver interprets it.<sup>119</sup> This section specifically

115.) This idea is supported by the analysis of the corpus where more than one discourse is present in a specific interior artefact; it can be argued that they are all present, in all interior artefacts, to greater or lesser degree. During the denotation of interior artefacts more prominent tacit discourses were marked in bold, and the less prominent discourses remained.

116.) *Id est* interior design provides the tangible vehicles for the expression of intangible cultural practices, see, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

117.) Their virtual presence takes the form of an external 'encyclopedia' of meaning.

118.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions.

119.) See, 2.3 Semiotic Interpretation.

considers this process in interior design. It reflects on the transmission of meaning during the generation, execution and inhabitation of an interior artefact. Since this thesis takes a poststructural position<sup>120</sup> it will focus on those aspects within the power of the interior designer while considering them within the context of those under the control of others. The section will present the process of semiosis as three distinct (but interrelated) actions: the generation; dissemination; and interpretation of meaning.

The interior artefact is conceived by the interior designer, executed by contractors and finally inhabited. This contributes to a greater temporal separation between the generation and interpretation of interior artefacts than oral utterances. To respond to this it becomes necessary for the interior designer to foresee the eventual creative participation of the inhabitant;<sup>121</sup> this requires the development of a design process with recursive feedback loops between the interpretive and generative aspects of making meaning. To introduce emphatic and self-critical interpretation of their own messages I propose that interior designers develop reciprocity between the analytical and synthetic phases of the design process.

The interior artefact is an inhabitable spatial expression of the meaning in the mind of the designer.<sup>122</sup> An utterance must be transformed to: a.) content; and b.) an object. This is a semiotic shift from language, to image, to the real.<sup>123</sup> Semiosis in interior design can therefore be considered as the process to generate meaning in the mind of the designer, to interpret that message and cause a semiotic shift to the iconic representation of the message, which is then interpreted and through a final semiotic shift translated as a physical object (interior artefact).<sup>124</sup> The interior artefact can then be inhabited and the inhabitant can interpret the embodied message. This process implies that the acts of generation, dissemination, and interpretation do not follow each other linearly, but that meaning is generated and transmitted in interior design in a linear fashion: meaning shifts to the image, which then finds physical expression as an object; in other words an utterance is converted to content which is embodied in an interior artefact.<sup>125</sup>

The accurate transfer of meaning is dependent on correlations between the associations identified, selected, extended, or created by the interior designer and those active in the mind of the future inhabitant.<sup>126</sup> The designer must therefore develop an emphatic response to the future inhabitant. If these correlations are absent it will not necessarily prevent the transfer of meaning but the message may be misinterpreted.

To enhance empathy and to generate a target for the message it is proposed that the interior designer generate a model inhabitant that can serve as proxy for the eventual inhabitants of the interior artefact.<sup>127</sup> Such

120.) In other words two creative acts impact on the generation of meaning, the creative act of generating the message, and the second creative act of interpreting the message; these acts are temporally removed, *see*, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

121.) The creative participation of the contractors is not considered in depth since this thesis is concerned with matters of meaning and expression and does not deal with issues of practice, *see*, 1.5 Delimitations.

122.) *See*, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production.

123.) The general type ('artefact' – any cultural residue) is converted to the specific type ('object' – a material artefact), *see*, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies, and, *see*, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure.

124.) The built artefact can then be documented through images to produce further iconic structures or described to produce verbal structures. This introduces constant semiotic shifts between the technological, iconic and verbal semiotic structures, *see*, 2.4.1 Background to the iconic semiotic structure.

125.) This has bearing on Panofsky's (1955[1939]:16) three constituents of tangible objects: the material form; the idea; and the content, *see*, 2.3.2.1 Semiotic assemblies, Objects.

126.) Semiosis is further complicated by the interaction between the memes and sememes encoded in the artefact and the syntagms they form.

127.) *See*, 6.3.3 A strategic application of interior designs imaginal methods.



as the sign and its referent can be considered as a 'stand-for relation' (after Adamo, 2011)<sup>128</sup> so can the relationship between the model inhabitant and the actual inhabitant be considered as a stand-for relation. This proxy exists as a semiotic relationship between the sign (model inhabitant) and its referent (the eventual inhabitant).

Thus, interior design semiosis implies that the second-order meaning (connotations) is of greater importance than the first-order meaning (use function). During a process of reverse-transfunctionalisation external meaning (the connotations or second-order meaning) is attached to a technical object which carries first-order meaning (communicating its use, function, or type).<sup>129</sup> The five identified methods can be divided into two groups:

- The meaningful methods: are concerned with the intangible aspects of meaning (second-order function): Synthesis; Proximity; Timeliness; and Associations, and
- The technical method: is concerned with the tangible aspects of meaning (first-order function): Technification.

The application of these methods facilitates the dichotomy of the interior artefact existing as *techne* and *dogma*.<sup>130</sup> During semiosis duality<sup>131</sup> is collapsed and the interior artefact becomes the synthesis of meaning and form. This is supported by the obvious actuality that a functional object is firstly a sign of its function and that a logical relationship between signifier and signified is established.

During the generation of meaningful interior artefacts they must be considered as texts of the 'flexible type' of which many meanings can be legitimately realised (after Eco, 1979) – this calls for open-ended interpretation and the generation of the artefact must allow for that.<sup>132</sup> To achieve this the generation of the interior artefact must be approached in a hermeneutic manner with constant comparison between deep and superficial meanings and the comparison of the interior artefact as a cohesive text and the individual components of it.<sup>133</sup>

This section aims to propose the application of interior design semiosis in the generation of new artefacts; this will facilitate understanding the corpus in its context and proposing a new design strategy.<sup>134</sup> Since the section aims to support the generation of new artefacts it is focused on those aspects within interior design control, and those that were determined from the corpus. The section will present the three phases of semiosis: the generation; dissemination; and interpretation of meaning as distinct, but reciprocal, actions.

#### 6.2.2.1 The generation of meaning in interior artefacts

Improving the praxis of interior design by identifying and describing tacit methods to generate meaning can be considered as a major objective of this thesis which is aimed at that part of semiosis which is intuitive in order

128.) See, 2.3.2.2, Semiotic functions, Semiosis

129.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions.

130.) See, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.

131.) Duality is the division between meaning and form which describes the arbitrary connection between signifier and signified, see, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions.

132.) See, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.

133.) Here I refer to Webb (1997:207): "This may be facilitated with a hermeneutic circular approach, with constant movement between the surface (signifier) and the deep (signified), back and forth, leading to greater understanding". See, 3.3 Research Methods.

134.) See, 6.3 Towards a Strategy for Constructing Meaning.

to improve the generation of new interior artefacts.<sup>135</sup> When the generation of meaning in interior design is considered it directly addresses the design process. This thesis is not concerned with proposing a new design method but with understanding some of the tacit intuitive processes that are already employed by interior designers.<sup>136</sup> The thesis makes strategic proposals to improve the generation of meaning in new artefacts; these should be interpreted in an open-ended fashion as they are intended to open further research and experimentation.<sup>137</sup> The thesis merely provides an interpretive portrayal of the phenomena (after Charmaz, 2006:126).

Throughout the thesis creativity is distinguished from innovation: creativity is dependent on individual acts while innovation is a collective practice and process.<sup>138</sup> Insofar as this thesis is the result a process which is aimed at leading to differences in behavioural practices (specifically in the praxis of interior design) and is an evolutionary practice based on existing tacit methods and ideas in the discipline it should be considered as innovative (rather than creative). The process of innovation is relevant in the generation of meaning when it is the response to existing codes and meanings.<sup>139</sup> Innovation in the use of meaningful elements (such as memes or technemes) implies that existing meaning is applied in new ways or extended.

It must be remembered that the process of semiosis is dependent on two creative acts.<sup>140</sup> The generation of meaning is only one of two reciprocal creative acts, the other is interpretation.<sup>141</sup> As culture is (re)produced as the iterative interaction between individual creative acts and the group manifestation thereof, so is meaning generated in interior artefacts. As the production of culture is a circular process of selection, curation and synthesis,<sup>142</sup> so is the generation of meaning in interior design. The discipline of interior design was considered throughout the thesis as a collective discipline which is not solely dependent on individual creative genius.

The methods isolated here are primarily concerned with the generation of an utterance<sup>143</sup> and the semiotic shifts which are required to convert the utterance to a volumetric object.<sup>144</sup> Eco (1979[1976]:151) describes the creation of an utterance:

*This generation of a sign or an utterance is an act of labor [sic] which involves producing the signal, selecting from a set of signals, articulating the signal, isolating units of meaning, and composing them as a string of signs, a text, an artefact, or an object.*

135.) These findings are presented in Chapter 5, A Theory of Interior Design Methods to Construct Meaning; this section should be read as a summative review.

136.) See, 1.3 The Material and its Interpretation.

137.) See, 3.3.1 Constructivist Grounded Theory, and, see, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

138.) See, 2.1 Introduction to the theoretical background.

139.) See, 2.1 Introduction to the theoretical background, and, see, 6.2.1.1 A discreet understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production.

140.) *Id est* acts by individuals to generate new ideas, meanings, and artefacts.

141.) See, 6.2.2.3 The interpretation of meaning in interior artefacts.

142.) See, 2.1 Introduction to the theoretical background.

143.) As a meaningful string of signs with analyzable content.

144.) See, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.

In Eco's description the final result is still an utterance, *id est* the volumetric interior artefact (as a material object) functions as an utterance. To consider the generation of meaning in interior design it is convenient to consider the generation of that utterance in distinct phases, or to consider the generation of a verbal structure as the first utterance which is then translated through semiotic shifts to a volumetric interior (the intended utterance).

The five methods identified by the research allow the designer to take an analytic stance to existing artefacts and cultural practices; these can then be exploited in the generation of new artefacts. During the interpretation of existing artefacts interior design is an iterative practice which reproduces meaning out of the medium itself.<sup>145</sup> During the generation of a new utterance there must be an analytic phase, where the designer analyses the intended message and discovers its constituent parts and maps its organized and analyzable content. It then becomes possible for the interior designer to source these isolated components from the cultural domain, to extend them, or to create them from new. Once this is completed the designer can commence the synthetic phase of the process where the codes are assembled as meaningful strings of signs.

The tacit interior design methods to generate meaning were described in Chapter 5; I summarize them here to maintain the discussion:

- **Synthesis**: is the category of interior design methods that relate to the selection of meaningful components and bringing them together in a cohesive whole. Since synthesis informs the selection and use of the other design methods it becomes the primary interior design method to construct meaning.<sup>146</sup>
- **Proximity**: is the category of interior design methods that relate to the placement of objects in space to create meaningful arrangements and patterns. Proximity is differentiated from synthesis since it does not result in a new, complex artefact but maintains the discretion of the constituent components.<sup>147</sup>
- **Timeliness**: is the category of interior design methods that relate to ideas of worldliness and changes over time. These methods express customs and conventions handed down from earlier generations which are constructed and reconstructed through repetition. These methods situate the contemporary interior artefact paradigmatically.<sup>148</sup>
- **Associations**: is the category of interior design methods that involve connections in the mind between different components and those methods that infer meaning. The use of associations is considered as an instrumental and primary interior design method since no meaning would be generated without the association between a sign and its referent.<sup>149</sup>
- **Technification**: is the category of interior design methods that are concerned with the physical expression of meaning. This

145.) Here the medium is interior design itself as a discipline, but the medium also includes related disciplines, and cultural residue in general, see, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field, and, see, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.

146.) See, 5.2.1 Properties of Synthesis.

147.) See, 5.3.1 Properties of Proximal Assemblies.

148.) See, 5.4.1 Properties of Timeliness.

149.) See, 5.5.1 Properties of Associations.

category of methods provides formal and technical expression (in the form of a material artefact or object) to the meaning created by the other categories of interior design methods.<sup>150</sup>

To understand the application of the methods in interior design semiosis it is necessary to broadly categorise them as analytic or synthetic methods of this process:

- The analytic (interpretive) methods are: Synthesis; Proximity; Timeliness; and Associations, and
- The synthetic (generative) methods are: Synthesis; Proximity; and Technification.<sup>151</sup>

Eco (1979:10) states that a text must produce the methods to interpret it and that it can foresee its model readers. This supports the reciprocal relationship between generation and interpretation which is implied here. This further indicates that the generation of meaning is also dependent on the generation of the intended text's model reader. In the case of interior design the determination of a model inhabitant, as proxy for the future inhabitant, as part of the design process is supported.<sup>152</sup>

The reciprocity between generation and interpretation implies that the interior artefact must be composed as an integrated object with synergy between its constituent parts. This synergy is extended to include the tools to interpret the interior artefact. The meaningful and imaginal interior must be generated as an integrated whole and not as a mere collection of signs. The organized and analyzable content of the utterance includes the following: signs and meaningful external units connected to them (associations); denotation and connotation; and first- and second-order meaning (transfunctionalisation).<sup>153</sup>

If the content of the utterance is organisable and a hermeneutic hierarchy of deep and surface is present it is evident that the utterance is not merely a collection of signs and must be composed in a manner which deliberates the interactions between signs. The implication is that there exist grammar-oriented principles that are applicable in the generation of interior design utterances.<sup>154</sup> An interior design grammar implies 'correct' ways of synthesis in which interior artefacts are not simply collections of meanings, and the interaction between sememes is important in generating meaning. The thesis did not aim to identify these grammar-oriented principles<sup>155</sup> and it is proposed that the analytic phases of interior design generation include a search for this tacit interior design grammar.<sup>156</sup>

During the generation of texts, expression must be transformed to content (Eco, 1979:17-19).<sup>157</sup> Although the methods described here will assist the interior designer in this exploit steps must be taken during the synthesis of the message to avoid pastiche. It is assumed that if the message is innovative; if it is a true synthesis in which various levels of

150.) See, 5.6.1 Properties of Technification.

151.) The categorisation is not absolute since some methods have both interpretive and generative qualities.

152.) See, 6.3.3 A strategic application of interior designs imaginal methods.

153.) See, 2.3.2.2, Semiotic functions, see, 5.5.1 Properties of Associations, and, see, 6.2.2 Semiosis in interior design.

154.) See, 5.2.1 Properties of Synthesis.

155.) Although the syntagmatic diagrams did in some way explicate the interaction between meaning carrying elements, they were however limited in intent to catalyse insight, see, 3.4.1.6 Syntagmatic diagram.

156.) See, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

157.) In its analytic process the thesis followed the reverse of this process: content was analyzed to reveal methods of expression.

interpretation is possible and if various ambiguities are present then the produced interior artefact will not be a pure pastiche. In this way the interior designer can avoid the creation of no-places which exist out-of-place or out-of-time. The purpose is to retain the cultural diversity and the paradigmatic placement which will make the interior artefact appropriate to its cultural context.<sup>158</sup>

In conclusion I reiterate that meaning is contextual and the generation of meaning in the interior artefact is dependent on analytic and synthetic actions. The interior artefact, as a generated text, can be understood through a constant comparison between the interior as a whole and the individual components of it. This reveals interior design as a material culture that is embedded in the practices of interior design as a discipline and whose meanings can only be made sense of through practice and suggestion (after O'Toole & Were, 2008:621). It is not possible to generate stable meaning in the interior artefact, nor should it be attempted.

#### 6.2.2.2 The dissemination of meaning in interior artefacts

The two creative acts (generation and interpretation) on which semiosis in interior design depend are temporally removed. The intermediary process of dissemination is responsible for this temporal shift. During this process an utterance is converted to content which is embodied in a physical interior artefact which is interpreted during inhabitation. For meaning to be transferred both creative individuals must play an active part which requires a relationship of empathy and trust between the designer and the future inhabitant.<sup>159</sup> This relationship of empathy and trust is required to mediate the process of dissemination.

After the initial utterance is generated meaning becomes embedded in an encoded artefact. The interior artefact acts as such an encoded artefact which is a vessel for cultural residue. As a material object it facilitates intangible cultural practices to take place.<sup>160</sup> Further, the encoded meaning is durable and will continue to exist while the artefact survives. This makes the encoded meaning available for interpretation while the interior artefact is inhabitable.<sup>161</sup> This implies that meaning can be temporally distributed and disseminated across time frames. The interior artefact can be considered as a medium for messages in lieu of a message itself.<sup>162</sup>

Meaning is contained and embodied in the interior artefacts and disseminated in the following ways:

- Inhabitants occupying the physical interior have access to the encoded information; and
- Others interpreting representations of the interior. These include: a.) drawings before construction;<sup>163</sup> b.) imaginal representations (drawings or photographs) of the object;<sup>164</sup> and c.) verbal descriptions (of the design intent, iconic representations, or realized interior).<sup>165</sup>

158.) 'Culture' here is considered as a collection of meanings.

159.) See, 6.3.3 A strategic application of interior designs imaginal methods.

160.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

161.) The meaning may also endure in recordings (verbal or iconic) of the artefact.

162.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

163.) This is a semiotic shift from the iconic to the technical.

164.) This is a semiotic shift from the technical to the iconic.

165.) These are semiotic shifts from the verbal to the technical; the technical to the verbal; and the iconic to the verbal. These are based on Barthes (1983[1967]:6) discussion of semiotic shifts, see, 2.4.1 Background to the iconic semiotic structure.



These represent the consumption of interiors through its representations; it becomes possible to consider both the dissemination of meaning through images and physical objects.<sup>166</sup>

In conclusion I reiterate the role of dissemination in interior design semiosis stated earlier: the message is disseminated when the interior designer interprets the utterance to cause a semiotic shift to the iconic representation of the message, which is then interpreted and through a final semiotic shift translated as a physical artefact which can then be inhabited and interpreted by the inhabitant.<sup>167</sup>

#### 6.2.2.3 The interpretation of meaning in interior artefacts

It was stated earlier in this section that the processes of generation and interpretation do not necessarily follow each other linearly. To generate a message the interior designer must be able to interpret existing messages.<sup>168</sup> This implies that interpretation already plays a part at the start of the process of semiosis. Interpretation and generation may be considered as simultaneous acts which constitute the dissemination of meaning. Interior design semiosis is a non-linear process and interior design can be considered as an iterative and traditive discipline.<sup>169</sup> The interpretive aspects of generation are present when the interior designer isolates meaningful units<sup>170</sup> from the cultural domain and synthesise these as content which can be interpreted by the eventual inhabitant.<sup>171</sup>

Since the interior artefact exists contextually it exerts cultural control in ways that are ever present, even if the participants are not aware of that; this suggests that the interior artefact can be interpreted through tacit knowledge of existing cultural codes. This brings the necessity for the interior designer to search for messages in the interior canon and other cultural practices during the generation of the message into being.<sup>172</sup> Since meaning is unstable<sup>173</sup> the interior designer must identify these codes and interpret them contextually to ensure that they are contextually and temporally applicable.<sup>174</sup> Interpretation of the interior artefact also requires a hermeneutic approach which reveals several layers of embedded meaning which exists due to the dichotomy between the dictionary and encyclopedia models of interpretation.

It is proposed that currently interior design exists as a text-oriented culture in which meaning making is dependent on the interpretation of a repertoire of texts;<sup>175</sup> however it must be borne in mind that the interaction between meaning carrying elements is dependent on grammar-oriented principles.<sup>176</sup> The interior designer must interpret existing grammar-oriented principles as they occur in the cultural milieu.

166.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

167.) See, 6.2.2 Semiosis in interior design.

168.) This is specifically in interior design is considered as a text-oriented culture, see, 5.2.1 Properties of Synthesis.

169.) See, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design, see, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development, and, see, 6.2.3 The theoretical contributions to interior design's ontology.

170.) This provides support for the development of interpretive empirical techniques as part of the interior design process, see, 6.3.2 New research methods for interior design.

171.) *Id est* when the interior designer generates an utterance which is converted to content.

172.) See, 6.3.3 A strategic application of interior designs imaginal methods.

173.) See, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

174.) The interpretive aspects of interior design require that the designer use precedent and archetype, from the discipline and elsewhere.

175.) See, 5.2.1 Properties of Synthesis.

176.) See, 6.2.2.1 The generation of meaning in interior artefacts.

Although this sub-section is intended to report on interior design, and the role of the interior designer, it must be remembered that the embodied message must be interpreted by a future inhabitant. The generation, dissemination, and interpretation of embodied meaning must be geared to that.

### 6.2.3 The Theoretical Contributions to Interior Design's Ontology

- There is an ontological need for interior design to move research focus away from the discipline's professional identity and to identify and develop its theoretical underpinnings.
- Since there is a rich literature in interior design history and since the pictorial representation is so important in the age of mass communication there is a need to focus on research of contemporary design.

The thesis contributed to this as a theoretical consideration of the role of meaning in interior design, how interior design creates that meaning, and how this production of meaning influences cultural production in general. The theoretical underpinnings of the discipline contribute to answering the ontological question (*what is interior design?*). Perolini (2011:173) elaborates on the complexity of interior design and the need to include more research and theory:

*The direction of interior design needs to be a focus away from professional identity to one which allows the discovery of a larger sense of self and one's place in the world to cultivate an informed citizenry amongst design students capable of leading change. Its project needs to be redirected by significantly strengthening the theoretical position of interior design education and re-evaluating studio practice. Moreover, the types of projects considered important to facilitate student learning need to be reconsidered. Changing our perception of space depends on what we know, what we see, what we experience and the nature of the world we want to create. We need to depend more on theory to be able to think critically in order to bring new understanding to how we practice.*

This thesis specifically challenges the formal bias of interior<sup>177</sup> design by proposing a greater role for the imaginal aspects in the discipline's ontology. To this end I propose an alternative definition for interior design: Interior design is the generation of a meaningful image and expressing it spatially.

This is not intended as an elegant definition that describes the entire practice of interior design. It merely serves as a contribution to the discipline's ontology. This contribution should be considered as one of the results of the grounded theory process that was followed; it is the result of the continuous interplay between data and analysis (after Strauss & Corbin, 1994:273).<sup>178</sup> This definition of interior design is supported by the imaginal interiors hypothesis which is the result of analytic integration:

177.) This formal bias is discussed in detail in my dissertation (König, 2010). I specifically investigated the contested relationship between interior design and architecture (König: 2010, 15-19). In this thesis form-giving is considered as contributing to interior design discourses, see, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production, Applying interior design's hegemonic agency (specifically, Episteme, and Form).

178.) See, 3.3.1 Constructivist Grounded Theory.

“Interior design produces culture through synthesis, proximity, associations, timeliness, and technification”.<sup>179</sup>

These two conclusions are a synthesis of interior design’s imaginal and spatial aspects. The meaningful methods<sup>180</sup> generate the image, while the technical method<sup>181</sup> directs the spatialisation thereof to generate an object.<sup>182</sup>

Although these conclusions have general applicability in the field, it must be remembered that they reflect the substantive area of research.<sup>183</sup> The analysis undertaken was completed on the selected corpus<sup>184</sup> of iconic<sup>185</sup> representations of interior artefacts. However, it is possible that the substantive theory that is generated produce general applicability and can be considered as formal theory.<sup>186</sup> This thesis does not aim to do so, but I will reflect briefly on the theory that was constructed and whether the thesis makes a contribution to formal theory.<sup>187</sup> The concepts in formal theory are causally linked, abstract and general, and they provide a theoretical rendering that cuts across several substantive areas (Charmaz, 2006:187). How are the five grounded theory concepts<sup>188</sup> causally linked? Are these grounded theory concepts abstract and general?

The five grounded theory concepts are causally linked to generate an integrated hypothesis of meaning making in interior design. It is possible to consider this hypothesis as describing meaning making in interior design in general, across substantive areas. The imaginal interiors hypothesis can be applied across substantive areas within interior design but does not contribute to the formal theory of cultural production. When cultural production, and meaning making as analogy, is considered it is sufficient to note that the interior artefact is a conventional artefact<sup>189</sup> which contains some idiosyncrasies.<sup>190</sup>

The theory of interior design’s methods to construct meaning was presented in a narrative format in which the five grounded theory categories’ general properties, the actions they undertake, and the effects these create were described.<sup>191</sup> This must be considered as the foremost theoretical contribution of this thesis and is the result of identifying,

179.) See, 3.4.3.1 Sorting, Categories. The hypothesis itself is presented as a theory in Chapter 5 A Theory of Interior Design Methods to Construct Meaning.

180.) Synthesis; Proximity; Timeliness; and Associations.

181.) Technification.

182.) See, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.

183.) In CGT the ‘substantive area’ is defined as a delimited problem in a specific area (Charmaz, 2006:8). For the purposes of this thesis the substantive area can initially be described as ‘the everyday commercial practice of interior design’ and expanded to ‘cultural production as it is reflected in a collection of contrived, commercial interior artefacts; published after February 2011; and assembled subjectively’, see, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field, and, see, 4.4 Limiting the Application of the Study. The substantive area is formally defined as the limitations of this study, see, 4.4.1.1 Limitations in terms of the scope of the study.

184.) See, 3.2.3 Research programme, 2. Determine the corpus.

185.) See, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure.

186.) Formal theory reaches across substantive areas to generate abstract concepts which help to understand problems in multiple substantive areas (Charmaz, 2006:8). The generality that is a requirement for formal theory cannot purposely emerge from the analytic process (after Charmaz, 2006:187), see, 4.4 Limiting the Application of the Study.

187.) Even if claims of generalization are supported the results are still limited to the work of interior design as a professional discipline and not the interior artefacts (as a product of humanity) in general.

188.) Synthesis; Proximity; Timeliness; Associations, and Technification.

189.) See, 6.2 The Cultural Role of the Interior Artefact.

190.) See, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design’s idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production.

191.) See, Chapter 5 A Theory of Interior Design’s Methods to Construct Meaning.

isolating, describing and interpreting interior design's methods to generate meaning, and by extension, its cultural production methods in general. Since this theory offers the opportunity to synthesize a new design strategy they have general applicability for the discipline.<sup>192</sup>

It was taken as fact that the meaning and codes embedded in the artefacts that are contained in the corpus are unstable and paradigmatically grounded.<sup>193</sup> In contrast I assumed that the methods that were identified are stable. Since the thesis investigated a contemporary corpus it is not able to test that assumption. The general application of these methods in other timeframes can therefore not currently be determined.<sup>194</sup>

The thesis contributed to the study of contemporary design by limiting the focus to a contemporary and timely corpus. The thesis is presented from a contemporary perspective, but does not specifically offer insights on interior design as a contemporary practice. This draws attention to a potential shortcoming of the research. Since the research cannot remark on the durability of the methods it isolated, it is not possible to ascertain their longevity. This has bearing on Jennings's (2007:53) discussion on the longevity of interior archetypes:

*Archetypes represent embedded and sustained design practices. An archetype's time continuum is measured by how long a practice has existed in the culture of design. An archetype's longevity may directly represent the level of its acceptance or desirability. For example, an archetypical practice with a history that does not predate 1980 may not be as intractable as one that has been in the culture for a hundred years or more.*

This establishes the need to conduct further research on the isolated methods which considers if and how these methods were applied in the past.<sup>195</sup>

In terms of the general application of the analysis of the corpus the following conceptual meaning was determined to provide a critical and analytic position of the theoretical field: the corpus has a global character and manifests an internationalist stance; the interior artefact was considered as a component of a 'complex super-object' which is active in the realm of production and consumption; the interior design system illustrates characteristics of cultural recycling; the interior and its pictorial representations are consumed in the system of consumption.<sup>196</sup> This position allows applicability outside the substantive area, but is still limited to interior design as a commercial practice.

In terms of the discipline's larger cultural role I concluded that the professional practice of interior design is the best located occupation to denote occupation, inhabitation and identity in the public built environment.<sup>197</sup> Further the discipline communicates theoretical discourses through its cultural effluent. These discourses are virtually

192.) See, 6.3.3 A strategic application of interior designs imaginal methods.

193.) See, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

194.) See, 1.5 Delimitations; see, 4.4.1 Limitations; see, 6.2.3 A strategic application of interior designs imaginal methods; and, see, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

195.) See, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

196.) See, 4.3 Data, specifically refer to the sub-sections on the origins (see, 4.3.2 Origins) and the theoretical field (4.3.3.1 the theoretical field).

197.) See, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.

present in the mind and are picked up in ways that are not necessarily apparent, but which are ever present and available.<sup>198</sup> Although interior design discourses were identified through literature review, and are not a direct result of the grounded theory analysis of the corpus, the eight identified discourses<sup>199</sup> represent a general theoretical contribution to the discipline.<sup>200</sup>

On my reflection on the theory that was constructed I conclude that the thesis contributes substantive theory since it is the result of parsimony and fidelity to the corpus and offers theoretical interpretation and explanation of a delimited problem in a particular area. However, the theory offers some formal contributions to interior design theory in general since it cuts across substantive areas within interior design. The grounded theory process produced interior design theory with abstract and general concepts which are specifically and causally integrated. The formal contributions are limited to interior design theory, as the thesis does not contribute to the field of cultural production in general.<sup>201</sup>

198.) See, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production.

199.) Alteration; Episteme; Form; Gender / Sexuality; Identity / Ontology; Inhabitation and the Body; Interiority; and Taste.

200.) See, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production, Applying interior design's hegemonic agency, and, *see*, 7.4.1 Recommendations for further research.

201.) See, 1.5 Delimitations, and, *see*, 4.4.1 Limitations.



### 6.3 TOWARDS A STRATEGY FOR CONSTRUCTING MEANING

This section broadly discusses the practical contributions of the thesis. It proposes a strategy to construct meaning in the design of new interior artefacts. This strategy is based on the utterance as containing organized and analyzable content which features as a system of interrelated components (Eco, 1979:176). If the individual components of an utterance can be approached as a system, it becomes possible to consider the five identified interior design methods as a similar system. This section approaches the built artefact as a text in which meaning cannot be created in the same way as in written texts.<sup>202</sup> Linguistic texts and oral utterances are linear and presented in narrative form.<sup>203</sup> It is possible to identify components that are used in the generation of the linear text which can be made applicable on the spatial text which is experienced non-linearly.<sup>204</sup> This section is presented from the assumption that it is possible to infer new design strategies from those methods used in the generation of narrative texts through the synthesis of them with the interior design methods that were identified, isolated, and described in this thesis.

This strategy further proposes a model of generation (and subsequent interpretation) based on the complexity of the text. This is enforced with a hermeneutic approach with constant comparison between deep and surface, and between individual components of the interior artefact and the artefact itself. For complex texts (such as the non-linear spatial text) the suspension of disbelief is not sufficient. The spatial text, with first- and second-order meaning, requires a metatextual position in which the interpreter suspends their disbelief to trust the meaning contained and trust that the object will fulfil its technical function.<sup>205</sup>

If the cultural role of the interior artefact can be reduced to its role as an agent of meaning<sup>206</sup> then the strategy proposed here can be expanded to include cultural production in general. Just as the interior artefact was considered as the product of interior design as a professional discipline, this strategy is proposed for the professional practice of the discipline, and not for vernacular production.

#### 6.3.1 An Open Strategy

- There is a need to improve the praxis of interior design by identifying and describing tacit methods to generate meaning.

It can be said that the general purpose of semiotics is to understand that part of communication which is intuitive in order to improve the generation of new messages. This thesis contributes to that project by making tacit interior design methods explicit.<sup>207</sup> The thesis does not propose a new design method, but merely contributes to interior design production by improving one aspect of it.

The strategy is presented to augment other design methods; it is only concerned with those aspects of interior design production which promote the generation, dissemination and interpretation of meaning and not the

202.) It was noted earlier that built artefacts are fundamentally different from written texts, see, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production.

203.) This is known as a linear text manifestation.

204.) The non-linear nature of interior artefacts and the temporal separation present in interior design semiosis was indicated above, see, 6.2.2 Semiosis in Interior Design.

205.) See, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production.

206.) See, 6.2 The Cultural Role of the Interior Artefact.

207.) See, 1.3 The Material and its Interpretation.

interior design process in general. It is evolutionary and innovative, not revolutionary or creative.

The strategy is presented from the point of view that the hypothesis of a structure can form the basis of analysis and lead to further research (after Williams, 1976:257). The thesis proposed such a hypothetical structure as the result of the grounded theory analysis. The imaginal interiors hypothesis is an interrelated structure which forms the basis of this strategy.

The strategy is not restrictive however and should be approached in an 'open' fashion. Since the dictionary model of interpretation is useful to generate unambiguous messages that are easy to interpret but may lead to a banal practice in which meaning is simply encoded and which generates pastiche,<sup>208</sup> care must be taken not to produce a formulaic strategy which gives the impression that interior design is easy to execute. The generation and interpretation of texts are skilful acts which require training and experience and cannot merely be programmed and executed.

Since this thesis took a poststructural stance (which states that the encoded meaning carry little importance in itself) it is not practically important to encode an artefact with a limited set of semantic universals. It is more important to note that the codes exist in relationships to create meaningful strings of signs (syntagms), and that meaning is contextually founded. The interior designer must develop the skills to indentify codes and their relationship to other codes in order to generate meaning in the interior artefact. This implies that empirical research methods must play an important role in design production.<sup>209</sup>

Earlier in the thesis the conclusion was reached that interior design is disposed to cultural recycling<sup>210</sup> and that interior design produces objects of consumption<sup>211</sup> which facilitates further objects of consumption. It was asked whether interior design should strike a different course.<sup>212</sup> This strategy proposes such a new course for interior design. This strategy will not facilitate a constant quest for novelty, but will deliver interior design as an iterative cultural practice that builds on what was established earlier.

The strategy proposed here allows the interior designer to take an analytic stance to extant cultural effluent to identify cultural practices which can be exploited in the generation of new interior artefacts.

Since interior design semiosis is a non-linear process<sup>213</sup> and the interior artefact is a non-linear text it follows logically that the proposed strategy must be a non-linear strategy which includes recursive feedback loops. This specifically supports and enable the reciprocity between the generative and interpretive (or the analytic and synthetic) components of making meaning.

The methods isolated here are primarily concerned with the generation of an utterance.<sup>214</sup> To initiate a discussion on a possible design strategy the process of semiosis in interior design must be reiterated. The interior artefact is considered as an utterance which is the spatial expression of the meaning in the mind of the designer. The utterance must be

208.) See, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production.

209.) See, 6.3.2 New research methods for interior design.

210.) Cultural recycling is the new cultural product which presents the consumer as somebody 'in the know', or 'knowing what is going on'; this diminishes the role of culture to support mass consumption (Baudrillard, 1998[1970]:100-102).

211.) Objects of consumption convey social meaning such as status and prestige (Lane, 2009[2000]:72).

212.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

213.) See, 6.2.2 Semiosis in interior design.

214.) An utterance conveys organized and analyzable content formed by a hierarchy of semantic features, see, 6.2 The Cultural Role of the Interior Artefact.

transformed to content and an object. To facilitate using the utterance as a basis for this strategy the creation of the interior artefact was considered as the creation of subsequent utterances which are transformations of various semiotic structures.<sup>215</sup>

I return to earlier descriptions of the creation of the utterance.<sup>216</sup> Eco (1979[1976]:151 lists discrete steps to create an utterance: produce the signal; select and isolate units of meaning from sets of signals; and compose these units as strings of signs to generate an artefact.

To produce an interior artefact the meaning contained in the utterance must be converted to a spatial, inhabitable, volumetric object. This implies that the utterance must be technically executed and that it must be assigned to a use function.

Since the generation of the volumetric object (interior artefact) is temporally removed from the generation of the original utterance (which exists in the mind of the interior designer),<sup>217</sup> and since both the creative participation of the interior designer and the future inhabitant<sup>218</sup> are required to generate meaning within a text<sup>219</sup> the interior designer must include the future inhabitant in this process. It implies that the utterance is targeted at the inhabitant. Further, since meaning must be paradigmatically grounded to ensure accurate semiosis<sup>220</sup> the utterance must be contextualized. In every act of communication the categories of 'sender'; 'addressee'; and 'context' must be considered (Eco, 1979:5). For an interior design strategy these actors are the 'interior designer'; the 'inhabitant'; and the 'paradigm'.<sup>221</sup>

The following development to the generation of the utterance is proposed: 1.) target the message; 2.) encode the message; 3.) contextualize the message; and 4.) execute the message through technification. The open strategy can be summarised in two distinct stages: construct the intangible aspects of the message and spatially express the tangible aspects of the message. The meaningful methods<sup>222</sup> address the intangible aspects of the message, while the technical method<sup>223</sup> directs the embodiment thereof in physical objects.<sup>224</sup> The content of the message is obtained through innovative practices by interpreting and extending existing cultural codes or creatively by producing new ones. This introduces novelty which has the potential to lead to the improvement of the discipline in general (after Fisher, 1992:116). Further, these novel contents or artefacts can be considered as subversive in so far that they do not merely reproduce existing cultural expressions (which are recursive) and these subversive elements may signal 'cultural improvisation' (Fisher, 1992:116). This supports interior

215.) See, 6.2.2 Semiosis in interior design.

216.) See, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design, and, see, 6.2.1.1 The generation of meaning in interior design.

217.) See, 6.2.2.2 The dissemination of meaning in interior artefacts.

218.) See, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production, and, see, 6.2.2 Semiosis in interior design.

219.) See, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

220.) See, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design, and, see, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.

221.) 'Paradigm' is used here as the synthesis of the temporal and physical context and makes provision for tangible and intangible components. The paradigm is the physical and temporal context at the point of generation and execution and refers to the ultimate location(s) of the interior artefact at the point(s) of generation, dissemination, storing, reception, and interpretation of the message. The consideration of paradigm aims to answer the question, *where is the message?*

222.) Synthesis; Proximity; Timeliness; and Associations.

223.) Technification.

224.) See, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.

design as a traditive and innovative practice. It was argued earlier that well-made interior artefacts display a dichotomy between tradition and innovation.<sup>225</sup> This dichotomy is founded in the intangible content which is derived as an inherited legacy of meanings.<sup>226</sup>

The complexity of generating meaning, and the unpredictability and instability of that meaning requires the open strategy that is proposed. For its interpretive practices the discipline must generate and identify new empirical methods to interpret meaning; some speculations will be briefly introduced, before the chapter concludes with a systematic design strategy.

### 6.3.2 New Research Methods for Interior Design.

- There is a need to expand the discipline's research methodology.

In Chapter 1 the need for more sophisticated research methods for interior design was located in the notion that interior design is a cultural agent; that culture can be seen as a collection of meanings; that these meanings are arbitrary, subjective and unstable; and that meaning must be shared between participants to some extent for meaningful actions to take place.<sup>227</sup> It is not possible to develop predictive theories of meaning in the built artefact (Broadbent, 1980:350), but it is possible to gain knowledge on how meaning is executed in the built artefact. This thesis specifically addresses this for interior design. The professional development of the discipline will depend on a greater role for knowledge-based practices in the discipline. These practices will expand the discipline's ontology and generate an informed community of interior designers (Perolini, 2011:173). Further, the discipline's evolution will be supported through the development of its theoretical underpinnings and the inclusion of analytic and creative practices (Clemons & Eckman, 2011:31-32).

The results of this thesis compel me to assert that in future the design of the imaginal interior would require a greater dependence on research activities.<sup>228</sup> These activities include those utilized in this thesis: empirical research in the interpretive paradigm; the inclusion of broad representative samples (in lieu of the in-depth precedent study); content analysis; the inclusion of generative and interpretive aspects of analysis; and creative synthesis.<sup>229</sup>

For the generation of narrative texts Eco (1979:26) refers to the use of 'readymade syntagms';<sup>230</sup> research must be employed to identify meaningful elements. Since these elements are contextually founded and unstable they require a non-positivist and creative research design to ensure that appropriate codes and messages are embedded in the interior artefact.

225.) See, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production.

226.) If meaning is sourced from the cultural domain and transmitted over generations it contributes to the durability of cultural identity, see, 5.4 Timeliness in Interior Design.

227.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

228.) In the proposed strategy two phases are specifically research based: target the message; and contextualize the message, see, 6.3.1 An open strategy.

229.) See, Chapter 3 Methods.

230.) This is a meaningful string of signs that is used commonly; he uses 'on the other hand' as an example. For interior design a number of readymade syntagms may already exist, such as a constellation of artefacts, or a number of methods employed simultaneously to differentiate between public and private areas in the public domain (such as a service counter with a bulkhead). These can exist as typological rules – combinations of meaningful methods which communicate morphological- or use typology.

Creativity in research is desired owing to the imprecise and undetermined response of the interpreter, since there are no precise and empirical readers, only abstract constitutive elements (Eco, 1979:4). This creativity can be facilitated through “textual inference based on intertextual competence,” (Eco, 1979:4). For interior design intertextual competence must be developed through a broad frame of reference and the identification of appropriate interior artefacts, precedents, and archetypes to act as source material since this establishes intertextuality in the interior artefact.<sup>231</sup> Although tracing these intertextual links may be considered as a research activity, merely tracing them may deliver banal results. Ideally intertextuality establishes an interpretive context and the interpreter can use the information contained therein to interpret the artefact (Eco, 1979:21). Intertextuality allows the designer to imply additional information which is present in the cultural domain but does not have to be restated; this limits the scope of contextualization and fewer properties and actions have to be described (Eco, 1979:21-22).

If research skills become more important for the professional practice and development of the discipline there develops a subsequent need to include more research practice in the professional training of interior designers. These pedagogic concerns must address those that were included in the thesis: new forms of research and knowledge which is not located in the mechanistic paradigm or aimed at technological innovation and execution.<sup>232</sup> This will offer interior designers the opportunity to understand the complexity of the discipline and enable them to address that by including more research and theory (after Perolini, 2011:164). The thesis proposes that new forms of evidence based design is developed which can be used in the generation of new interiors.<sup>233</sup> This research can be developed from the interpretive and semiotic methodology that was applied here to ascertain how meaning is ascribed, and what that meaning may be.

In the application of research to facilitate the generation of new interior artefacts it must be remembered that these artefacts exist contextually as agents in the cultural domain.<sup>234</sup> This broadens the empirical data to include the cultural domain in general and will enable the cross-application of meaning-carrying gestures.<sup>235</sup> It is further proposed that the research methods employed allow for the incorporation of analytic and synthetic aspects of research in the development of a systematic and logical research process (after Nussbaumer, 2009:4).

The thesis is based on the idea that the generation and interpretation of meaning is unstable, and so are the circumstances under which it is interpreted. This makes it unfeasible to determine an accurate and predictable structure for meaning.<sup>236</sup> Eco (1979:5) ascribes the uncertainty of the message to the combination of various codes and subcodes; the variety of sub-cultural connotations which contribute to the context of the message; the indeterminate rate of initiative of the addressee; and that the message should be considered as a ‘text’ which exists as a network of

231.) Refer to the interior artefact as an iterative artefact which is related to earlier artefacts, see, 3.4.2.2 *In vivo* codes for methods, Iteration; and Intertextuality.

232.) This places a greater emphasis on amongst others: visual research methods; and the inclusion of computer assisted qualitative data analysis.

233.) See, 7.4.1. Recommendations for further research.

234.) See, 6.2 The Cultural Role of the Interior Artefact.

235.) This can be extended to include ways to facilitate design distribution and the production of meaning in related disciplines; this was not considered as part of this research, see, 7.4.1. Recommendations for further research.

236.) See, 2.2 Cultural production; specifically refer to 2.2.2 Structuralism, and, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.



different messages which are in turn dependent on different codes and which are working at various levels of signification.<sup>237</sup> It is therefore not possible to generate a 'crystal-like textual object';<sup>238</sup> the research methods which the discipline must employ, and the strategy proposed here, do not aim to do so, neither can itself be a crystal-like object. At best it can deliver an incomplete and contestable result (after Geertz, 2000[1973]:29).<sup>239</sup> The generation and interpretation of meaning is also temporally removed and constitutes a continuous process;<sup>240</sup> this makes the timing of semiosis unpredictable (after Eco, 1979:18).<sup>241</sup>

Finally, research methods must be determined which assists the interior designer in generating the model inhabitant which serves as proxy for the eventual inhabitant. The model inhabitant must exist to develop ontological correlations between the identity of the interior and the eventual inhabitant; this enables the inhabitant to consume the interior in such a way to project, construct, express or inform their own identity.<sup>242</sup> To enable this process to function the designer cannot merely rely on a fictionalized account of the inhabitant, but must base that inhabitant on empirical evidence.

This subsection discussed the need for new research methods, and made some proposals regarding their nature. These can now be included in a strategic application of the methods identified in this thesis.

### 6.3.3 A Strategic Application of Interior Design's Imaginal Methods

- Finally, the study is important since it reviews the production methods of an emergent discipline. There is a need to understand these systematically.

As stated earlier in this chapter, the application of the identified methods as a design strategy does not imply that I will propose a new interior design method. This strategy is merely aimed at improving the existing interior design process and it is based on the identification and description of methods that are currently employed. Since this is a strategy, and not a method, it remains open and only initial procedures are proposed. This thesis is concerned with those interior design practices that produce meaning, primarily through the application of imaginal methods. These methods allow the designer to take an analytic stance to existing interior artefacts and cultural practices which can be exploited in the generation of new artefacts.

This strategy considers the five identified categories of methods to generate meaning as an interrelated system of meaning.<sup>243</sup> Just as an utterance conveys organised and analyzable content the intended message must be organised from the outset. The organisation of meaningful components is dependent on the actions and purposes of three semiotic role-players: the sender, the addressee, and context.<sup>244</sup>

237.) *Id est* the complexity of making meaning make it unfeasible to develop a predictive theory.

238.) It is not possible to establish a finite set of metasemiotic features (Eco, 1979:176); this support the non-positivist research approach which is proposed here.

239.) See, 1.4 Rationale in Support of the Study.

240.) See, 6.3.1 An open strategy.

241.) This continuous process was discussed and made applicable on interior design above, see, 6.2.2 Semiosis in interior design.

242.) In this instance an association (or correlation in the mind) is established between the identity of the place and the identity of the individual, see, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.

243.) After Eco (1979:176), see, 6.3 Towards a Strategy for Constructing Meaning.

244.) In every act of communication the categories of 'Sender'; 'Addressee'; and 'Context' must be considered (Eco, 1979:5).

Since the actions and creative participation of the role-players occur independently and are temporally removed the organisation cannot be accurately predetermined. In this context the creative function of the designer is extended to determine which imaginal methods are most applicable and how they should be exploited.<sup>245</sup>

The sender, addressee, and context must be considered throughout the design process; as a device to organize the design strategy actions are separated and categorised as interpretation or generation.<sup>246</sup> The proposed design strategy relies on an interpretive and iterative approach to generate meaning. When the process is initiated the designer considers the following:

- *Who generates the message?*<sup>247</sup>
- *Who interprets the message?*<sup>248</sup>
- *Where is the message?*<sup>249</sup>

As an agent of content the imaginal interior is considered as an utterance which must be generated as an integrated whole and not as a collection of signs.<sup>250</sup> In this organisable message the interior designer should identify and generate various levels of meaning and include the hermeneutic circle with constant comparison between deep and surface, and between individual components of the interior and the interior artefact as a whole. The utterance is embodied in an interior artefact through analytical and iterative design practice.<sup>251</sup>

To generate and execute a meaningful message the interior designer must be able to interpret existing messages<sup>252</sup> and determine a model inhabitant<sup>253</sup> who will in turn make a creative contribution when the interior artefact is interpreted. A relationship of trust and empathy between the designer and the inhabitant stands at the core of this strategy. This relationship is considered within the temporal and physical context(s) of the existing texts and the intended text. An open ended strategy is presented: 1.) determine the model inhabitant; 2) generate the utterance; 3.) saturate the utterance; 4.) synthesise the message; and 5.) express the message spatially.<sup>254</sup> The outcome of each phase must be interpreted

- 245.) The designer is assisted in making these decisions by considering the properties, actions, and effects that each method produces.
- 246.) This is a simplification of interior design semiosis, see, 6.2.2 Semiosis in interior design. Hermeneutic layering is further enabled by considering analytic or synthetic; and denotative or connotative aspects of generating meaning.
- 247.) This question addresses the sender. In the case of interior design the designer communicates on behalf of the client, and 'imagines' the message.
- 248.) This question addresses the addressee. In the case of interior design it may include considerations for the user and the target market.
- 249.) This question addresses the context. In the case of interior design the context is active in the paradigm as both the physical and the temporal context(s) and may include the point of generation, the physical location of the interior artefact, and other points of receiving, dissemination, interpreting, generating, and storing the message.
- 250.) This implies that interior design must develop a grammar-oriented approach to the generation of meaning, in which the interactions between sememes and the construction of syntagms takes precedence.
- 251.) This specifically considers the shifts between semiotic structures; importantly from the image to the real, see, 2.4.1 Background to the iconic semiotic structure; and Technification, see, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design. The generation and interpretation of images and objects exists as a continuous process of cultural production.
- 252.) In this instance interior design acts as a text-oriented culture.
- 253.) The model inhabitant is based on Eco's (1990:81-82) 'model reader'.
- 254.) Although the process is presented linearly it must be borne in mind that recursive feedback loops are in place between phases. The phases proposed here represents a development on those presented earlier (1.) target the message; 2.) encode the message; 3.) contextualise the message; and 4.) execute the message through technification.), see, 6.3.1 An open strategy.

during the generation of the content of the proceeding phase; this incorporates the synthetic : analytic dialectic throughout the process:

- **The model inhabitant:** The model inhabitant functions as a stand-for-relation of the eventual inhabitant.<sup>255</sup> During this generative phase of the process the designer must determine and construct a model inhabitant.<sup>256</sup> As addressee the model inhabitant serves as a target for the message.
- **The utterance:** The embodied meaning of the interior artefact is considered as an utterance (after Eco, 1979).<sup>257</sup> The generation of an utterance is an act of labour which involves producing the signal, selecting from a set of signals, articulating the signal, isolating units of meaning, and composing them as a string of signs, a text, an artefact, or an object (Eco, 1979[1976]:151).<sup>258</sup> During this generative phase of the process the interior designer must be able to predict the user's perception and respond with appropriate design solutions (Perolini, 2011:164). During this stage the designer foresees several levels of hermeneutic interpretation.<sup>259</sup> The utterance is the targeted message which will be embodied in the interior artefact it is considered as a verbal structure which is the first utterance.<sup>260</sup>
- **Saturation:** Since an utterance conveys organized and analyzable content (Eco, 1979:176)<sup>261</sup> the generation of meaningful content commences during the generation of the utterance, it must further be remembered that content and its associated meaning are dependent on the creative acts of generation, transmission and interpretation;<sup>262</sup> thus, the generation of content cannot be considered as an independent phase of the strategy. During this generative phase the message is saturated with additional content which the designer obtains through three interpretive actions: searching for existing messages in the interior canon and amongst other artefacts; isolating appropriate memes, gestures, syntagms, and other semiotic devices to facilitate close texts with superficial meaning; and extending and deepening the meaning by connecting the message to world structures and theories<sup>263</sup> to facilitate open texts with deeper meaning. The content frames<sup>264</sup> and contextualises the message within the paradigm. Since this phase is dependent

255.) See, 6.2.2 Semiosis in interior design.

256.) Ideally through empirical research in the interpretivist paradigm, see, 6.3.2 New research methods for interior design.

257.) See, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.

258.) See, 5.6 Technification in Interior Design.

259.) These include the interpretive acts of the designer (during the design process) and the user (during inhabitation).

260.) See, 6.2.2.1 The generation of meaning in interior artefacts.

261.) See, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.

262.) See, 2.3 Semiotic Interpretation, and, see, 6.2.2 Semiosis in interior design.

263.) See, 6.2.1.1 A discrete understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies as an agent of cultural production, Applying interior design's hegemonic agency.

264.) The 'frame' functions as a pre-existing, easily interpreted context for the utterance to exist within (Eco, 1990:20-21).

on the interpretation of existing texts it can be considered as a text-oriented action.

- Creative synthesis: This is a generative phase of the process during which the utterance, its content, and the sememes that connote it are brought together in a cohesive whole. Since this phase is dependent on the meaningful interaction between sememes it can be considered as a grammar-oriented action. Creative synthesis is the first phase of execution of the message.
- Spatial expression: During spatial expression the message is embodied in a physical interior artefact through the process of transfunctionalisation. Connoted meaning is attached to a technical function in a use object and the functional use of the object is associated with the socially sustained use of meaning.<sup>265</sup> During spatial expression the interior designer must interiorise the content created in the preceding phases by employing several semiotic shifts between language, the image, and the real to convert the general<sup>266</sup> type to the specific<sup>267</sup> type.<sup>268</sup> This is the second, and final, phase to execute the message and for interior design must result in an inhabitable interior artefact.<sup>269</sup> This interior artefact is the intended utterance<sup>270</sup> of the process.

The five categories of interior design methods that were identified and described in this thesis was broadly categorised as interpretive (analytic) or synthetic (generative) processes.<sup>271</sup> The proposed design strategy, and its constitutive phases, contains both interpretive and generative aspects which must be taken into account when the imaginal methods are selected and applied for their optimal use. Further, phases in the strategy can be differentiated between those that deliver intangible<sup>272</sup> and tangible<sup>273</sup> aspects of culture.<sup>274</sup> This strategy is dependent on constructing and generating intangible content, which is then expressed physically. Signs, and the external meaning attached to them, are embodied in a physical artefact to generate associations in the mind of the inhabitant.<sup>275</sup>

Since the generation of these associations in the mind of the interior designer are temporally removed from their interpretation in the mind of

265.) See, 2.3.2.2 Semiotic functions. Transfunctionalisation.

266.) The 'artefact' which is represented by the cultural residue created during the preceding phases.

267.) The 'object' which is the material artefact which represents the inhabitable interior; in the case of interior design the material artefact will typically be imaginal documents which convey the designer's intent (i.e. design presentations and construction documentation).

268.) See, 2.3.2 Semiotic Devices, see, 2.4 The Iconic Semiotic Structure, and, see, 6.2.2 Semiosis in interior design.

269.) *Id est* the products of the professional practice of interior design must be interiors, this contributes to answering the ontological question.

270.) See, 6.2.2.1 The generation of meaning in interior artefacts.

271.) The analytic (interpretive) methods are: Synthesis; Proximity; Timeliness; and Associations. The synthetic (generative) methods are: Synthesis; Proximity; and Technification, see, 6.2.2.1 The generation of meaning in interior artefacts.

272.) The object (evoked impression) and interpretent (subjective meaning) in the Peircian triad, see, 2.3.1, Background to semiotic interpretation.

273.) The representamen (concrete physical aspects) in the Peircian triad, see, 2.3.1, Background to semiotic interpretation.

274.) This correlates to the two distinct stages (construct the intangible aspects of the message and spatially express the tangible aspects of the message) which were identified earlier, see, 6.3.1 An open strategy.

275.) See, 5.5.1 Properties of Associations.

the inhabitant, and since the associations themselves are unstable and dependent on the interpretive choices of the addressee, there exists several possible meanings to any artefact, but not infinite possibilities (after Eco, 1979:4). This is the basis of the poststructural turn: since the generation and interpretation of messages is unstable, as are the circumstances under which they are interpreted, it becomes impractical to determine the structure of meaning. This thesis accepts that probability: although it is not possible to exclude the role of the inhabitant, neither is it practical to consider all possible inhabitants. The designer must generate the meaning and encode it in the interior artefact through design; this is based on the assumption and possibility that the ensemble of codes will be shared by the inhabitant and that accurate semiosis will be successful.

Since the primary relationship of trust and empathy is placed at the centre of this strategy, and since the interior designer is therefore focused on the future inhabitant, this strategy can be considered as an addressee-oriented approach. An addressee-oriented approach can be expressed most elegantly in artefacts that are conceived to magnify meaningful possibilities. These artefacts are considered as artistic texts (Eco, 1990:45).<sup>276</sup> Artistic achievement is extended when it uses overlapping meanings and includes overlapping connotations (Eco, 1979[1976]:114).<sup>277</sup> Although this is a difficult task, a case for ambiguity in the meaning of an artefact is made. 'Well made' works exhibits openness in interpretation which is supported on various levels; this is sustained and improved by analogous operations at all levels. In closed texts this is impossible – they are characterised by a recital of overcoded commonplaces (clichés) and exhibiting a feeling of *déjà vu*. This is the danger of pastiche: it can generate a sense of 'anyplace' or 'ever-where' (after Eco, 1979:39).<sup>278</sup> In contrast open texts are executed in a way which invites their addressees to apply a plurality of free interpretive choices (Barthes in Eco, 1979:40).

The strategy that was proposed here specifically makes provision for this when the utterance is saturated and various levels of external content is connoted to include discursive structures and reference to world structures. This will enable to inhabitant to enlarge the meaningful space of the interior and to assign the contained interior to a larger external world. When the interior designer foresees these extensions of meaning in the interior artefact it will lead to denser meaning in the artefact.<sup>279</sup> The inhabitant is able to recognise these extended meanings and place them in brackets; this generates so-called 'bracketed extensions' (Eco, 1979:17). These extensions of meaning should be distinguishable from the core message which must be communicated efficiently and without ambiguity, specifically in the commercial interior.

In contrast to the bracketed extension, which increases ambiguity and interpretive choice, the designer can accurately frame the message to reduce ambiguity and improve clarity. The frame is a "data-structure for representing a stereotyped situation like being in a certain kind of living room or going to a child's birthday party" (Winston in Eco, 1979:20). Frames allow cognitive representations of the world which enable basic interpretive acts such as perception and comprehension (Van Dijk in Eco, 1979:20-21). The frame functions as pre-existing, unambiguous and easily interpreted meaning. The frame provides additional contextual information,

276.) See, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

277.) See, 5.5.1 Properties of Associations.

278.) In literature closed texts generates a feeling of 'any story' (Eco refers to the works of Fleming as example); they are what they are.

279.) See, 6.2.1 Interior design as a cultural activity with importance for human development.



it can be another text (to be inferred) or an encyclopedic representation (Eco, 1979:21). In interior design the comparative relations could be the archetype and typology. The archetype functions as a recurrent symbol that is present in the collective unconscious.<sup>280</sup> Typology concerns aspects of production that are grouped due to similarity.<sup>281</sup> The archetype and typology function as frames when they bring additional external information which assists in the generation of meaning. Archetypes and typologies assist the generation of the utterance since they offer ways to analyse and organise the interior and they offer insight into the operation and performance of the interior artefact (after Jennings, 2007:53).

In the case of both bracketed extensions and frames the content of the external information does not have to be repeated by the interior designer since it is already present in the cultural domain and can be picked up and utilised by the inhabitant.<sup>282</sup> All possible associations are not actually present in the mind<sup>283</sup> they are stored socially or culturally and can be picked up by the interpreter as needed (Eco, 1979:23). They serve to broaden the interpretive choices of the inhabitant, and to lessen the design effort of the designer.

In a poststructural context it is accepted that the reader of a text makes a positive creative contribution to the generation of meaning in any given text through the act of interpretation.<sup>284</sup> In this vein it is proposed that the interior designer must adopt a position of empathy and accept that the future inhabitants of an interior will contribute creatively to the meaning contained in the interior. When these future inhabitants or readers of the interior are fictionalised to serve as the target for a message they are collectively referred to as the 'model inhabitant'. The model inhabitant enters a reciprocal relationship of trust<sup>285</sup> with the interior designer. The model inhabitant must approach the interior with flexibility and superficiality and a willingness to suspend their disbelief and accept the interior.

The model inhabitant serves the same purpose as Eco's (1990:81-82) 'model reader' which acts as precedent. The 'model reader' is willing and able to contribute to the creative process through interpretation (after Mowitt, 1992:107). The model reader must be flexible and superficial and display good will (after Eco, 1990:81-82); this facilitates the model reader accepting the contrived narrative as 'true' or at least 'believable'.

*The foreseen interpretation is part of the generative process*  
 (Eco, 1979:3).

It is this anticipation of interpretation, or inhabitation in the case of interior design, that places the model inhabitant and its relationship with the interior designer at the core of this strategy. Since the model inhabitant itself is a fictionalised account of the expected eventual inhabitant it should be approached as a text.<sup>286</sup> It is proposed that the model inhabitant is

280.) See, 3.4.2.2, *In vivo* codes for methods, Archetype.

281.) See, 3.4.2.2, *In vivo* codes for methods, Typology.

282.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

283.) They are only virtually present as they might be contained in an external 'encyclopedia', see, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

284.) See, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

285.) Trust is a requirement since in fictional accounts many things must be taken for granted or accepted when they are not credible (Eco, 1990:75); the same applies for interior design.

286.) The interior designer must 'design' / 'construct' the model inhabitant; this construct must be based on research (EBD) at a point of departure. The model inhabitant can be approached as a 'target market' which is informed subtly and which avoids overreliance on generalisations and stereotypes. The question is asked: *what are the assumptions about the model inhabitant?*

considered as a text of the flexible type and that various interpretations are possible. *Id est* the model inhabitant itself is creatively generated and interpreted during the design process. The interior designer's approach to the model inhabitant requires a "peculiar strategy of communication based upon a flexible system of signification," (after Eco, 1979:3); this implies that the text cannot be considered as a communicative strategy without considering the creative and interpretive role of others at the time of generation. This requires flexibility in approach in which the interior designer realises that the model inhabitant is not the actual inhabitant. If they are allowed for, the interpreter determines how to activate textual levels (e.g. deep or surface) and which codes to apply; during the generation of the artefact; the interior designer can design for a specific future inhabitant and decide which codes to apply.

Eco (1979:8-10) describes two categories of model readers which allow for the creation of two hermeneutic levels:

- Model readers for closed texts: The closed text follows an inflexible narrative in which the reader is led along a predetermined path and interpretation is based on conventions and presuppositions. In this situation the author did not consider the instability of interpretation and assumed that the reader will interpret the text with consistent background codes. The closed text is constructed from a limited dictionary of semantic universals.
- Model readers for open texts: Open texts can be interpreted many times, and each reinterpretation is echoed by others. In these texts the author foresees an ideal reader who is able to master various codes and can deal with each text as a complex artefact with various connotations; however, open texts do not allow unlimited interpretations. The open text is constructed by connoting various encyclopedic interpretations.

It is assumed that model readers for closed texts will approach the text semantically and will follow the narrative on its own terms. While model readers for open texts allow some critical interpretation neither model reader approaches the text from a position in which they interpret the meaning carrying gestures themselves critically.<sup>287</sup> It is proposed here that interior design produces univocal messages on one level,<sup>288</sup> but expands its practice to magnify its semiotic possibility and to generate artistic texts with deeper possibility for interpretation (after Eco, 1990:45). Open texts can be interpreted superficially, but closed texts cannot be interpreted deeply.

If the identity of the model inhabitant is in correlation with the place-identity of the imaginal interior then the interior artefact can be used by the model inhabitant to project, construct, express, or inform their own identity. There is a connection between individual identity, and the identity of a place. In commercial interiors this constructed place identity must correlate with the individual identity of the person who chooses to consume an interior. The individual's identity 'meets' the place-identity of the interior artefact and may converge in a shared identity. If an affinity between the tangible identity of the place and the intangible identity of the user exists, it will establish connections in the mind between these

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287.) See, 4.2.2.1 Inclusion Criteria, 15. Semantic or Critical. For further discussion on the levels of interpretation I refer to my earlier discussion of Eco's 'model reader', see, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

288.) Superficial and univocal messages are required since fiction can only survive in a limited, contained and contrived context (after Eco, 1990:81-82), see, 2.2.3 Poststructuralism.

identities.<sup>289</sup> This facilitates the consumption of the imaginal interior as a meaningful and ontological device.<sup>290</sup>

The use of imaginal methods to construct meaning was systematically elaborated in Chapter 5. It is possible to consider the generative and interpretive characteristics of these methods and how they contribute to tangible and intangible features of meaning within the interior artefact.<sup>291</sup> When the interior artefact is considered as a sign Synthesis, Proximity, Timeliness, and Associations are concerned with the psychological and social aspects of meaning (the intangible connotation) while Technification addresses the technical function of the material object (the tangible denotation). As far as the connotation evokes an impression Synthesis, Proximity, Timeliness, and Associations are concerned with generating an image; in contrast, Technification delivers an object which is the denotation of the interior artefact.

To design an imaginal interior the interior designer can follow the proposed strategy<sup>292</sup> and overlay the appropriate interior design methods to construct meaning. The grounded theory catalogued the properties, actions, and effects that each method produces.<sup>293</sup>

At this stage I wish to reiterate that the generation and interpretation of texts are skilful acts which require training and experience and cannot merely be programmed and executed.<sup>294</sup> I will therefore not reach a conclusion where I present a programmable design method.

To conclude I wish to summarise the main points which must be remembered when approaching the design strategy:

- Interior design's methods to construct meaning are summarised in the imaginal interiors hypothesis: "Interior design produces culture through synthesis, proximity, associations, timeliness, and technification",<sup>295</sup>
- This hypothesis was synthetically integrated with existing semiotic theory and placed within the context of the cultural domain. Interior design exploits existing cultural effluent to generate new artefacts. Interior artefacts exist contextually as agents in the cultural domain and they must be considered as texts of the 'flexible type' of which many meanings can be legitimately realised,
- Interior design semiosis is dependent on three interrelated but temporally removed acts: the generation; dissemination; and interpretation of meaning,
- The embodied meaning contained in the interior artefact cannot be realised without the creative and innovative participation of three role-players: the interior designer; the inhabitant; and the context, and

289.) See, 5.5 Associations in Interior Design.

290.) See, 4.3.3.1 The theoretical field.

291.) In this strategy both the tangible : intangible; and the interpretive : generative dialectics can be overlaid to increase decision-making on the part of the interior designer.

292.) 1.) Determine the model inhabitant; 2) generate the utterance; 3.) generate content and saturate the utterance; 4.) synthesise the message; and 5.) express the message spatially.

293.) These may not be complete since they represent what could be determined in the corpus.

294.) See, 6.3.1 An open strategy.

295.) The development of this theory is demonstrated in Chapter 5 A Theory of Interior Design Methods to Construct Meaning.

- A reciprocal relationship of empathy and trust between the interior designer and the inhabitant, which is paradigmatically contextualised, is the core principle of this strategy.

#### **6.3.4 The Practical Contributions to Interior Design's Ontology**

The thesis contributed to the practical consideration of the role of meaning in interior design, and how this production of meaning can be facilitated in the generation of new interior artefacts. The practical underpinnings of understanding the role of meaning in the discipline contribute to answering the ontological question (*what is interior design?*).

The thesis made provision for the inclusion of imaginal aspects in the discipline's production by strategically expanding the interior design process. This contribution should be considered as one of the results of the grounded theory process that was followed and the synthesis of the theoretical contributions towards a practical outcome. This outcome can be considered as a consideration of interior design's imaginal and spatial aspects. As the object can be considered as the synthesis of form and content, so should the theoretical and practical contributions of the thesis.

The practical contributions can be summarised as a call for the inclusion of more knowledge-based, empirical research practice in the production of interior design;<sup>296</sup> and a design strategy which incorporates such practices. This design strategy is deliberately open and incomplete and cannot be programmed since I believe that interior design is a learned activity that requires experience and skill. This strategy will augment, but cannot replace, well-developed design intuition. This strategy is a novel contribution to interior design's production processes.

The practical contributions are determined by the substantive area, but have some formal application since it cuts across substantive areas within interior design.<sup>297</sup>

296.) The thesis itself serves as a precedent for this type of research.

297.) The differentiation between substantive and formal theory in the thesis was discussed fully above, see, 6.2.3 The theoretical contributions to interior design's ontology.

## 6.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter collated the information from previous chapters to reflect on the theoretical and practical contributions of the thesis. This facilitated the attainment of the main research aims: 1.) to speculate on the cultural role of the interior artefact (theoretical aim); and 2.) to propose a design strategy to improve the generation of meaning in the design of new interior artefacts (practical aim) (see Figure 6.4.1). The chapter is located in a relativist ontology and subjective epistemology and delivered an incomplete and contestable result. I argue that this result is sufficient since it addressed the importance of the study and is the result of rigorous data collection and analysis and since the result expresses parsimony with the data.

The chapter was presented as a collection of explanations which formulate a theory of interior design as a cultural process which is summarised in the imaginal interiors hypothesis: “interior design produces culture through synthesis, proximity, associations, timeliness, and technification”. This hypothesis and its location within the cultural discourse are this thesis’ major knowledge contributions to the discipline. This was the result of the grounded theory analysis of the 72 existing interiors which were captured in the corpus; this chapter extended that foundation to consider the role of the discipline in the generation of new interior artefacts.

The chapter reflected on, and summarised, the theoretical and practical contributions to the discipline’s ontology.<sup>298</sup>

**Figure 6.4.1** (overleaf): An imaginal strategy to generate meaning in new interior artefacts.

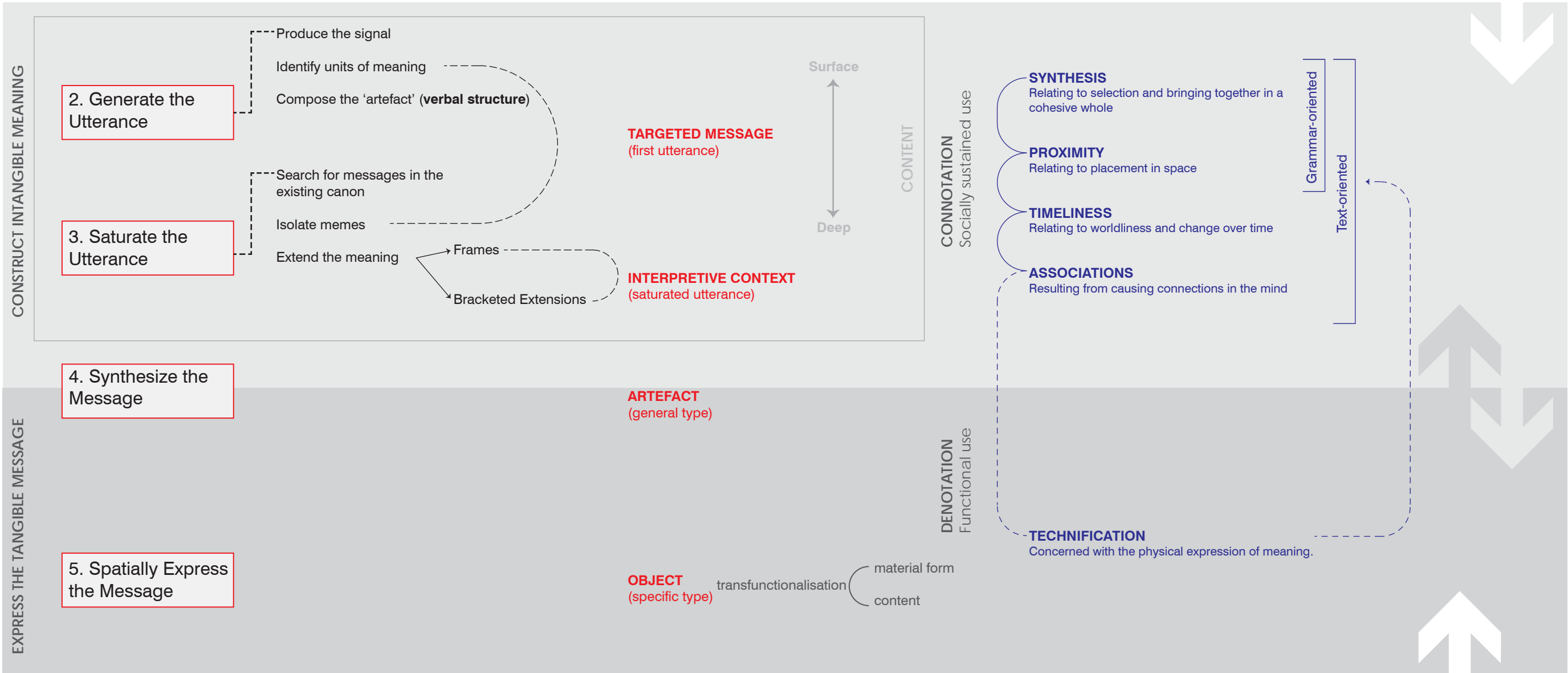
298.) Sections of this chapter was incorporated in two papers: ‘The Cultural Role of the Interior Artefact’ was delivered at the Malaysian Institute of Interior Design REKA Conference, *Create*, Kuala Lumpur, 1-5 May 2014; and ‘An interpretation of the role of meaning in interior design’ was delivered at the Productivity Center (CPC) Conference, *2014 Taipei Design Award Conference*, Taipei, 2-5 October 2014.



IMAGINAL STRATEGY

1. Determine the Model Inhabitant

TARGET



## CHAPTER 7 RECAPITULATION

## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

The main research problem contained in this study was to determine interior design's methods of cultural production. The main premise was that interior design holds methods of cultural production; that it is possible to identify, isolate, describe and interpret these; and that through their application it is possible to develop a strategy to construct meaning and encode identity in the interior artefact.

The findings and conclusions of the research were discussed in depth in the preceding two chapters; it is not necessary to repeat them here. This chapter serves to highlight the study's original and substantial knowledge contributions by summarising the findings; to list the contributions made; and to make recommendations and proposals for further research.

## 7.2 FINDINGS

The research makes the following original and substantial knowledge contributions:

- Firstly, the study identified, isolated, and described methods used in the commercial practice of interior design in the production, and commodification of meaning (and by extension culture in the broadest sense). During this process it removed the mystical overtones of creative expression to make tacit interior design methods explicit. These methods are summatively included in the imaginal interiors hypothesis:

*Interior design produces culture through synthesis, proximity, associations, timeliness, and technification.*

The properties, actions, and effects of these methods were described and supported with empirical evidence to provide a constructivist grounded theory as the result of parsimony and fidelity to the corpus. The imaginal interiors hypothesis represents the primary original contribution of this thesis to the knowledge of the discipline.

- Secondly, the study speculated on the role of the interior artefact (as the cultural effluent of the professional practice of interior design) in the larger cultural discourse. This is an original and novel contribution to interior design's ontology. The interior artefact is a conventional artefact within the cultural domain which contains idiosyncrasies particular to the discipline. The interior artefact is a meaningful artefact which exists as a technical object in the technological system (*techne*) and a meaningful object in the cultural system (*dogma*); it straddles the interdependence between the tangible and intangible aspects of culture. Its idiosyncrasies are located in interior design practice as a discipline which spatialises the image. For interior design to produce culture (construct meaning) it must generate a physical object which is the inhabitable spatial expression of the imaginal meaning in the mind of the designer. This speculation represents a secondary original contribution of this thesis to the knowledge of the discipline.
- Thirdly, the study synthesized these methods and this cultural role in a design strategy to improve the construction of meaning in new interior artefacts. The strategy incorporated the creative contribution of three semiotic role-players: the interior designer, the inhabitant, and the context in a strategy which considers methods to create meaning as an interrelated system of meaning. An open ended strategy is presented: 1.) determine the model inhabitant; 2) generate the utterance; 3.) saturate the utterance; 4.) synthesise the message; and 5.) express the message spatially. The outcome of each phase must be interpreted during the generation of the content of the proceeding phase; this incorporates the synthetic : analytic dialectic throughout the process. This strategy represents a secondary original contribution of this thesis to the knowledge of the discipline.

### 7.3 CONTRIBUTIONS

The study makes the following contributions:

- Firstly, the study contributes to the current international debate concerning interior design's practice and identity.
- Secondly, the study contributes to the IFI: DFIE project, and specifically the *IFI Interiors Declaration*, to consider the cultural role of the discipline in greater depth.
- Thirdly, the study makes contributions to shift research focus from the discipline's professional ontology to its theoretical underpinnings to support a broader community of informed interior designers who will lead change.
- Fourthly, the study makes a methodological contribution to Barthes' structural analysis of the production and meaning of designed objects. The study opposed the linguistic bias of structuralism by focusing on the iconic semiotic structure as primary data source.
- Fifthly, the study compiled a corpus of representations of contemporary interior artefacts that was rigorously compiled. This corpus is considered as a bequest to the interior design canon since it identified artefacts worthy of scholarly inquiry.
- Sixthly, the study makes a methodological contribution to the research practice of interior design by using a representative data sample in lieu of in depth precedent studies.
- Seventhly, the study makes a contribution to constructivist grounded theory by expanding its visual research methods.
- Eighthly, the study makes a contribution to the construction of theory of interior design. The thesis makes contributions to both substantive and formal theories of interior design.
- Ninthly, the study makes a contribution as it considers the generation of meaning in the interior artefact as a cultural practice.
- Tenthly, the study makes theoretical and practical contributions in its incorporation of interior design methods with the cultural role of the interior artefact.



## 7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study makes the following recommendations:

- Firstly, that the theoretical and practical contributions of this thesis be critically incorporated in interior design curricula and pedagogy.
- Secondly, that the theoretical and practical contribution of this thesis be implemented in interior design practice to facilitate the generation of meaningful interior artefacts. This is specifically aimed at exploiting interior design's iterative and traditive character to contribute to cultural production as a set of inherited meanings to counterpoint the prevailing custom of cultural recycling.
- Thirdly, that the research be expanded to develop a longitudinal, large scale research project to determine interior design's modes of cultural production and its critical application across time-frames, typologies, expressions, and cultural groups.

### 7.4.1 Recommendations for Further Research.

The study makes the following research recommendations:

- That the individual methods that were identified and expressed in the imaginal interiors hypothesis be studied in greater depth. This includes their application in other time-frames and paradigms.
- That the roles, responsibilities, and contributions that other occupations make towards the interpretation and generation of meaning within the context of the built-environment professions be investigated.
- That ways to facilitate design distribution and the production of meaning in related disciplines be developed.
- That the interior design discourses be studied individually and in depth.
- That new forms of evidence-based design be developed that will support the production of meaning in interior design empirically.
- That the strategic proposals made by this thesis be investigated through design experimentation.
- That the tacit interior design grammar that influences the meaningful interaction of design components be identified and described.
- That a greater understanding of interior design's idiosyncrasies and its divergence from the continuum principle be reached.
- That the manifestation and use of the temporal emotions in interior design be determined.
- That the application of transformation and similitude between a sign and its referent in interior design be investigated.

## **7.5 CONCLUSION**

The thesis was recapitulated by stating the research findings concisely and summatively. These findings reflected on interior design's methods of cultural production; the role of the interior artefact in the larger cultural discourse; and the application of these methods and this role as a design strategy. Finally the study's research contributions were listed, and recommendations were presented

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# ADDENDUM A

## CONTENT ANALYSIS

001 EEL Nakameguro



I include this project, as the first project selected, since it is a fairly conventional retail interior. It is therefore easy to include in the sample.

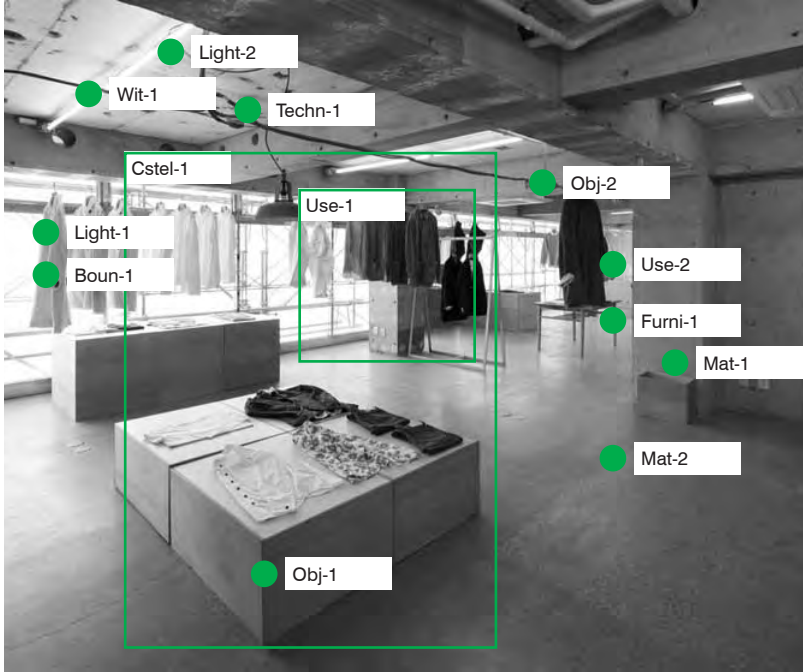
The presentation is stylised for an expert viewer (fellow designer), I also think that the clothing depicted was stylised or chosen to give the best appearance to the interior.

The interior seems 'empty, and stripped back to serve as container for the merchandise. Objects are placed loosely, with no objects achieving a tight fit with the existing structure.

Material and colour application is minimal with very little applied colour.

1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
8. Contrived/Fictional
9. Broad Reading
10. Iconic of Built
11. Cultural Context
12. Small Scale Production
13. Media
14. Expert
15. Layperson
16. Semantic
17. Critical
18. Installation
19. Insertion
20. Intervention
21. New
22. Dominant Centre
23. The South
24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**EEL Nakameguro;** Retail - Fashion (informal wear; gender not determined); Schemata Architecture Office: Jo Nagasaka; Higashiyama Meguro, Tokyo, Japan; February 2013  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2013/03/31/eel-nakameguro-by-schemata-architecture-office/>; Takumi Ota;  
[http://schemata.jp/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/EELN\\_129\\_DN19846\\_th.jpg](http://schemata.jp/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/EELN_129_DN19846_th.jpg); 31 March 2013



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Boun-1     Curtain wall; layered with merchandise
- Cstel-1     Pendant luminaire over display
- Furni-1     Table
- Light-1     Natural: daylight, curtain wall
- Light-2     Artificial: fluorescent; surface mounted
- Mat-1     Off-shutter concrete
- Mat-2     Concrete screed
  
- Obj-1     Timber display plinth
- Obj-2     Cable: display system
- Techn-1     Electrical cable
- Use-1     Merchandise display
- Use-2     Merchandise display
- Wit-1     Reference to electricity

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste

**CONNOTATION**

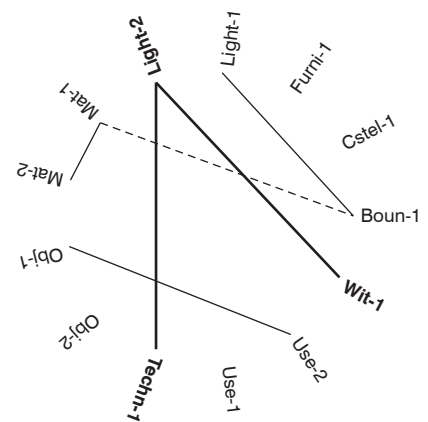
- Transparent boundary condition
- Boundary of light-cone: focus and containment
- 'Blank' materiality: industrial, thrift - diverts focus to objects contained in the space
- Selected items for special consideration

**SEMIOSIS**

The use of inappropriate technemes and styling places focus on the merchandise through contrast.

Technical and associative methods are used together.

Opaque and transparent boundaries are isolated from each other.



[http://www.nudura.com/Libraries/Alignment\\_System/Bracing\\_Example.sflb.ashx;](http://www.nudura.com/Libraries/Alignment_System/Bracing_Example.sflb.ashx;)



002 Foursquare



This is the new headquarters for the social network, 'Foursquare'. The project is designed in collaboration between the client (Foursquare) and interior designer (Designer Fluff).

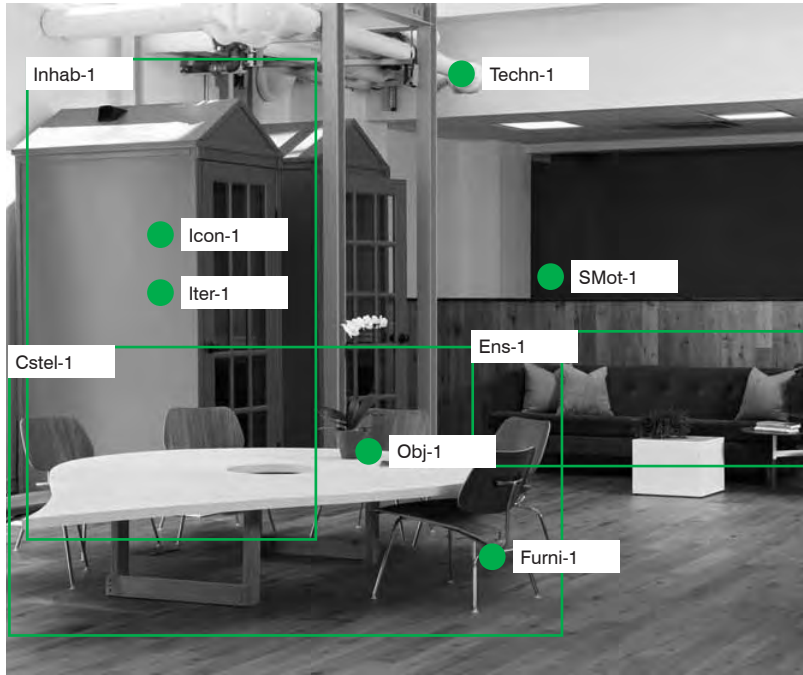
The interior is eclectic and refers to numerous artefacts, styles, patterns, materials. The interior appears stylised, or decorated, the use of ensembles and artefacts are numerous, with limited intervention in the host. It is therefore difficult to classify the production mode as insertion or installation.

It tries hard to appear non-conformist or non-conventional but clearly refers to earlier corporate offices of similar ideology (e.g. Googleplex) which tries to communicate the idea that 'work is fun'; although, this installation seems more serious and work oriented.

1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
8. Contrived/Fictional
9. Broad Reading
10. Iconic of Built
11. Cultural Context
12. Small Scale Production
13. Media
14. Expert
15. Layperson
16. Semantic
17. Critical
18. Installation
19. Insertion
20. Intervention
21. New
22. Dominant Centre
23. The South
24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical



**Foursquare Headquarters;** Commercial - Offices (Headquarters, social network); Foursquare: Dennis Crowley and Derek Stewart; Designer Fluff: Audra Canfield; SoHo, New York, USA; February 2012  
[http://www.dezeen.com/2013/03/26/foursquare-new-york-offices/;](http://www.dezeen.com/2013/03/26/foursquare-new-york-offices/)  
[http://www.dezeen.com/2013/03/26/foursquare-new-york-offices/;](http://www.dezeen.com/2013/03/26/foursquare-new-york-offices/) 26 March 2013;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Ens-1 Couch with scatter cushions
- Cstel-1 Coffee table and chairs
- Furni-1 Eames lounge chair (for Herman Miller)
- Icon-1 Telephone booth
- Inhab-1 Privacy: booth
- Iter-1 Interpretation of phone booth
- Obj-1 Potted orchid
- SMot-1 Edge: counter height wall
- Techn-1 Exposed services

**CONNOTATION**

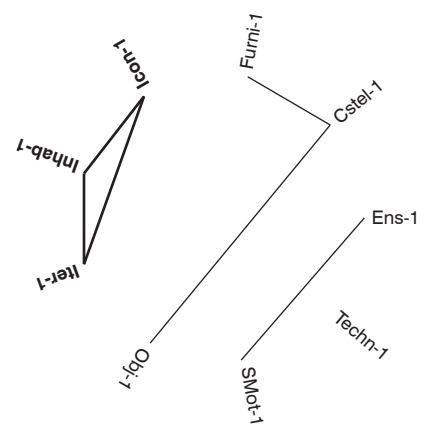
- Waiting area, comfort
- Cost and status: taste
- Small private space in a larger public space. Nostalgia. Irony - telephone booths for an internet company
- Temporality, expense
- Technological

**SEMIOSIS**

An associative method (irony) is used to provide social commentary - in this case: a nostalgic reference to telephone booths and its perceived privacy in the digital age.  
An association with a well known icon is used to comment on global change and inhabitation.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://farm7.staticflickr.com/6074/6077019538\\_557be0bf26\\_o.jpg](http://farm7.staticflickr.com/6074/6077019538_557be0bf26_o.jpg);

003 Tana Kmenta



Studio Muon originally intervened in 2008 to convert a bank (c.1920) to a fashion showroom; the hair salon was added in 2012.

The hair salon is an insertion which leaves some of the original detail visible and intact (e.g. columns and beams).

The project uses a simple colour and material palette. The objects are placed in a loose manner, and the merchandise is used as a design component.

Large scale fashion photography connotes the fashion industry as well as personal styling and the expression of identity.

The project is somewhat conformist.

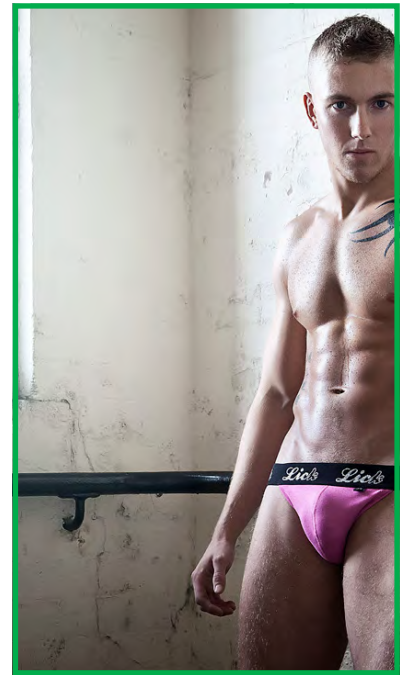
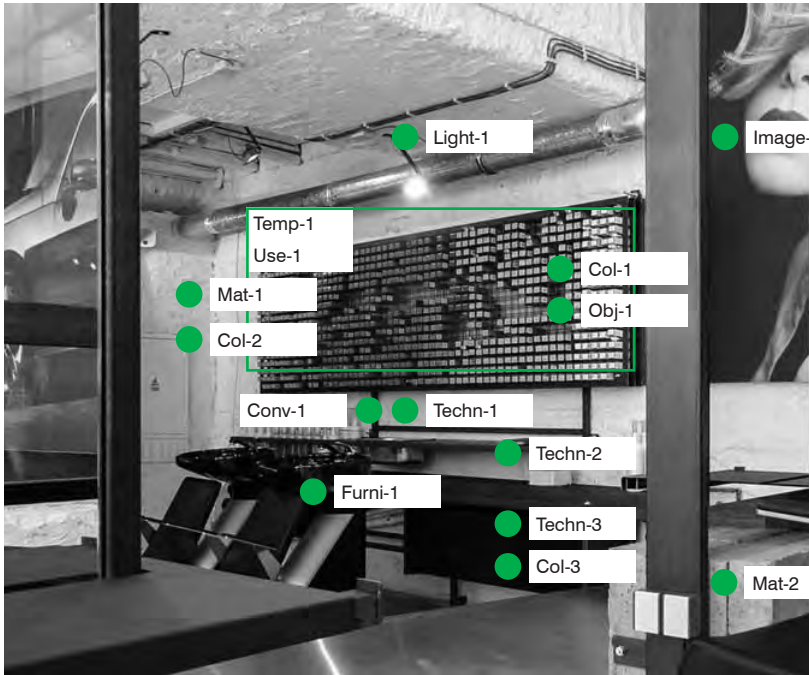
1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
8. Contrived/Fictional
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25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical



**Tāna Kmenta Hair Salon; Services - Hair Salon; Studio Muon: Jiří Zhoř; Brno, Czech Republic; 2012**

<http://www.dezeen.com/2013/03/10/tana-kmenta-hair-studio-by-studio-muon/>; Studio Muon;  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2013/03/10/tana-kmenta-hair-studio-by-studio-muon/>; 10 March 2013;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Col-1 Hair dyes: colour coded
- Col-2 White painted wall
- Col-3 Black painted steel
- Conv-1 Colour mixing station: sink etc.
- Furni-1 Hair wash chair
- Image-1 Photograph: hairstyle
- Light-1 Artificial: Spotlight on tubes
- Mat-1 Bagged bricks, painted white
- Mat-2 Concrete blocks
- Obj-1 Hair dyes: tubes
- Techn-1 Sink
- Techn-2 Shelf
- Techn-3 Drawer
- Temp-1 Change in appearance due to consumption
- Use-1 Storage; display

**Discourses**

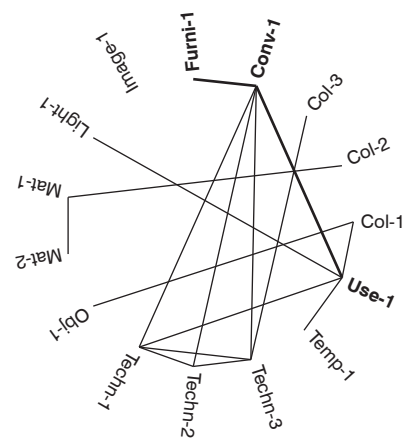
- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste

**CONNOTATION**

- Contrast, glamour, high-fashion
- Functional - the process to colour hair
- Nested set of technemes: existing ecosystemically
- Change over time, consumption

**SEMIOSIS**

Technemes exist as a nested set within a higher order function (convention).  
Function is indicated conventionally and technically.  
Decoration is used as a temporal method.



[http://www.paulreiffer.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/REIF\\_20110723\\_24457\\_web.jpg](http://www.paulreiffer.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/REIF_20110723_24457_web.jpg) ;

004 Eternal Archetype



This installation was exhibited in Montreal's underground spaces as part of the exhibit, Art Souterrain, in March 2013.

The artefact is complex and richly connoted. It is comprised of a number of found objects, each connoted and carrying meaning.

It is rich in decoration, vibrant in colour.

The installation is kitsch, humorous and ironic. It probably comments on a number of interior design discourses.

It is included in the study as a boundary object that exists on the margins of interior design as a practice.

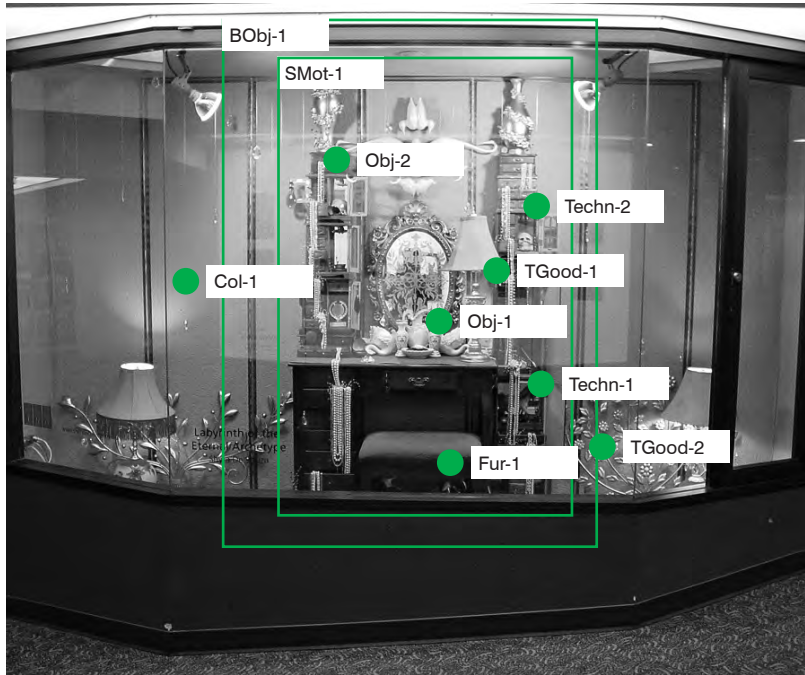
I associate it with overly decorated, fussy, spaces, with old women with too much make-up and jewellery.

- |     |                        |   |
|-----|------------------------|---|
| 1.  | Interior Design        | ■ |
| 2.  | Commercial             |   |
| 3.  | Public Access          | ■ |
| 4.  | Physical Context       |   |
| 5.  | Synchrony              |   |
| 6.  | Contemporary           |   |
| 7.  | 'New'                  |   |
| 8.  | Contrived/Fictional    |   |
| 9.  | Broad Reading          |   |
| 10. | Iconic of Built        |   |
| 11. | Cultural Context       |   |
| 12. | Small Scale Production |   |
| 13. | Media                  |   |
| 14. | Expert                 |   |
|     | Layperson              |   |
| 15. | Semantic               |   |
|     | Critical               | ■ |
| 16. | Installation           | ■ |
|     | Insertion              |   |
|     | Intervention           |   |
|     | New                    |   |
| 17. | Dominant Centre        | ■ |
|     | The South              |   |
|     | Alpha City             |   |
| 18. | New/Young Firms        |   |
| 19. | Value Judgement        |   |
| 20. | Utility                |   |
| 21. | Taste                  |   |
| 22. | Gender                 |   |
| 23. | Privacy/Interiority    |   |
| 24. | Non-Canonical          |   |

**Labarith of the Eternal Archetype; Artwork - Installation; Shyra De Souza; Montreal, Canada; 2011**

<http://shyradesouza.weebly.com/labyrinth-of-the-eternal-archetype-2011.html>;

<http://shyradesouza.weebly.com/labyrinth-of-the-eternal-archetype-2011.html>; 12 March 2013;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |                               |
|---------|-------------------------------|
| BObj-1  | Interior installation artwork |
| Col-1   | Powder blue                   |
| Fur-1   | Green velvet                  |
| Obj-1   | Gilded mirror                 |
| Obj-2   | Jewellery boxes: stacked      |
| SMot-1  | Den: Dressing table           |
| TGood-1 | Table lamp with textile shade |
| TGood-2 | Gilded flowers and leaves     |
| Techn-1 | Drawers: Small                |
| Techn-2 | Doors: Small                  |

## CONNOTATION

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| Domesticity exhibited in public |
| Opulence, old-fashioned, gaudy  |
| Privacy, interiority            |
| Conservatism, old-money         |

## SEMIOSIS

The symbolic motif (den) is transfunctionalised to provide social commentary. It removes a domestic motif (the dressing table) from its private realm to comment publicly.

Taste functions epistemically to construct identity.

## Discourses

Alteration

Episteme

Form

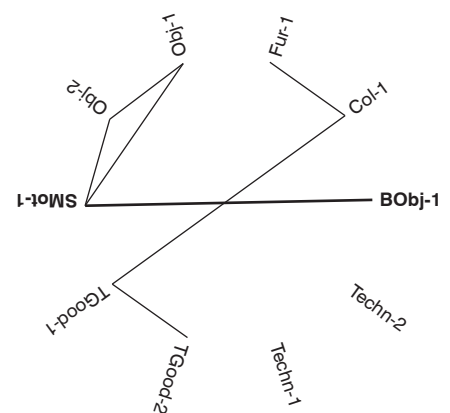
Gender / Sexuality

Identity / Ontology

Inhabitation and the Body

Interiority

Taste



<http://www.freewebs.com/dragonflydesignsbyalisa/blog/umbridge.jpg>



005 Timber Gym



I include this project as a fairly conventional example of the type. It generates free associations with indoor sports, mainly due to its functional expression and use of materials (which are functionally determined.)

The use of markings, symbols and equipment (objects) are of a functional nature. Pattern and motif is created through the structural system.

Most of the design effort is spent on the soffit, with some attention to the walls, while the floor functions as playing surface

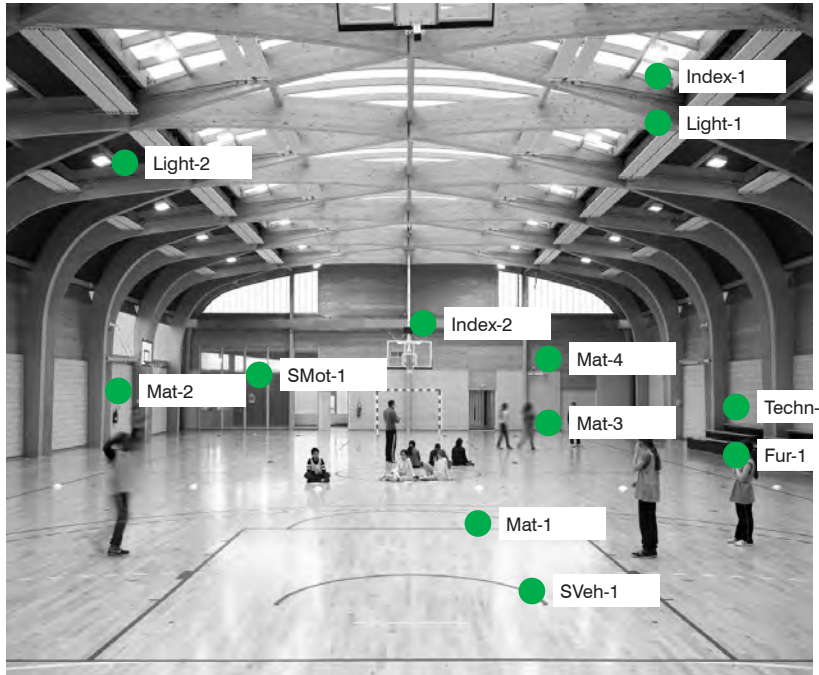
- |     |                        |   |
|-----|------------------------|---|
| 1.  | Interior Design        | ■ |
| 2.  | Commercial             |   |
| 3.  | Public Access          |   |
| 4.  | Physical Context       |   |
| 5.  | Synchrony              |   |
| 6.  | Contemporary           |   |
| 7.  | 'New'                  |   |
| 8.  | Contrived/Fictional    | ■ |
| 9.  | Broad Reading          |   |
| 10. | Iconic of Built        | ■ |
| 11. | Cultural Context       |   |
| 12. | Small Scale Production |   |
| 13. | Media                  | ■ |
| 14. | Expert                 |   |
|     | Layperson              | ■ |
| 15. | Semantic               |   |
|     | Critical               |   |
| 16. | Installation           |   |
|     | Insertion              |   |
|     | Intervention           |   |
|     | New                    | ■ |
| 17. | Dominant Centre        |   |
|     | The South              |   |
|     | Alpha City             | ■ |
| 18. | New/Young Firms        |   |
| 19. | Value Judgement        | ■ |
| 20. | Utility                |   |
| 21. | Taste                  | ■ |
| 22. | Gender                 |   |
| 23. | Privacy/Interiority    |   |
| 24. | Non-Canonical          | ■ |

**Regis Racine Gymnasium**; Public - Sports Facility; Atelier D'Architecture: Alexandre Dreysse; Drancy, Paris, France; 2011;

<http://cdn.architect.net/images/1200x/3f/3fhjtxogj5cvqrlw.jpg>; Guillaume Clement;

<http://cdn.architect.net/images/1200x/3f/3fhjtxogj5cvqrlw.jpg>; 10 December 2012

;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Fur-1 Unfurnished
- Index-1 Skylight: natural light
- Index-2 Basketball net: score
- Light-1 Natural: daylight; skylight
- Light-2 Artificial: floodlight (halogen or metal halide)
- Mat-1 Timber floor
- Mat-2 Timber structure
- Mat-3 Concrete blocks
- Mat-4 Timber cladding
- SMot-1 Threshold: door
- SVeh-1 Play area markings
- Techn-1 Bleachers

**CONNOTATION**

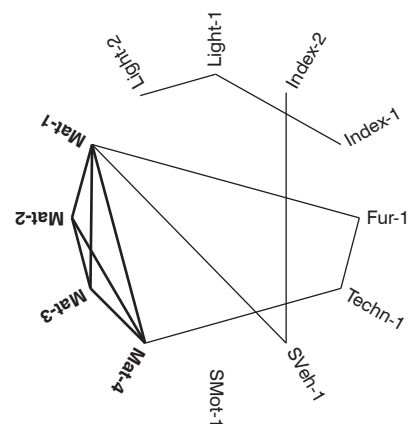
- Functionality
- Temporality
- Good colour rendering
- Technical, good colour rendering
- Aesthetics informed by functionality.
- This has associative value and connotes other interiors of the same type: gymnasiums, indoor sports, etc.

**SEMIOSIS**

Functional material choices inform intertextual references; the use of precedent and convention to determine contemporary material application. Function is indicated by form and material; thus form and material are associative methods.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://cdn.sweatband.com/spalding\\_nba\\_school\\_indoor\\_outdoor\\_basketball\\_spalding\\_nba\\_school\\_indoor\\_outdoor\\_basketball.jpg](http://cdn.sweatband.com/spalding_nba_school_indoor_outdoor_basketball_spalding_nba_school_indoor_outdoor_basketball.jpg)



The project associates the space with the brand mainly through the use of colour; otherwise there are few signifiers apart from signage.

Large amounts of objects, materials, finishes and colours are associated with generic office spaces, with important signifiers concentrated at key points (e.g. the canteen and reception).

Although the offices are located in the South (Guatemala City) and are for a global brand (based in Germany) neither national identity plays a significant role in the interior design.

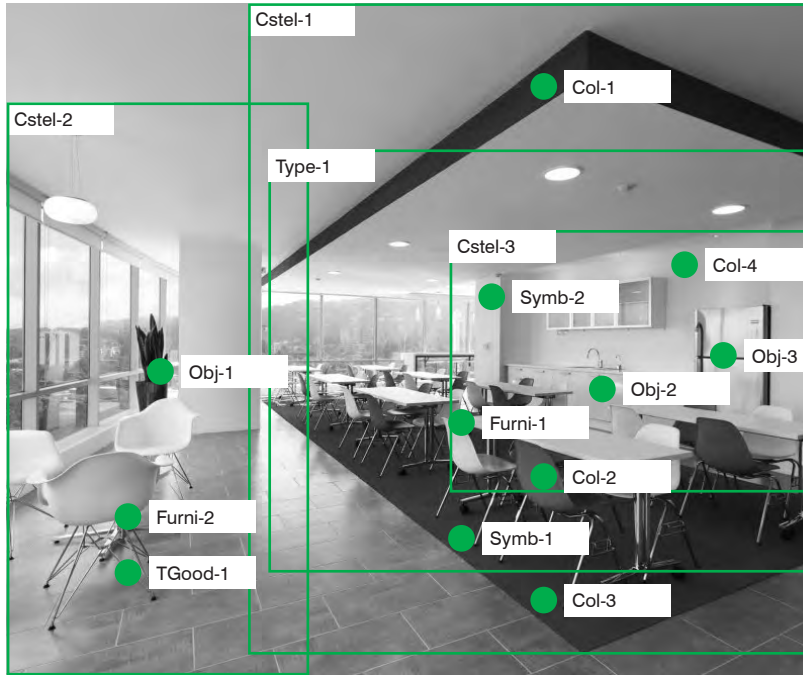
1. Interior Design
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29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical



**Puma Energy Offices;** Commercial - Offices Regional, Fashion (sports wear); Studio Domus; Pradera, Guatemala City, Guatemala; 2011;

<http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2012/04/09/oficinas-puma-energy-studio-domus/puma-16/>; Alejandro de León;

<http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2012/04/09/oficinas-puma-energy-studio-domus/puma-01/>; 09 April 2012;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| Col-1   | Red: bulkhead                   |
| Col-2   | Red: chair                      |
| Col-3   | Red: carpet                     |
| Col-4   | White: walls                    |
| Cstel-1 | Seating area with bulkhead      |
| Cstel-2 | Grouping of chairs with pendant |
| Cstel-3 | Kitchenette                     |
| Furni-1 | Robin Day chair                 |
| Furni-2 | Eames chairs (polypropylene)    |
| Obj-1   | Potted plant                    |
| Obj-2   | Sink                            |
| Obj-3   | Fridge                          |
| Symb-1  | Red                             |
| Symb-2  | White                           |
| TGood-1 | Furniture                       |
| Type-1  | Use: dining area                |

### Discourses

Alteration

Episteme

Form

Gender / Sexuality

Identity / Ontology

Inhabitation and the Body

Interiority

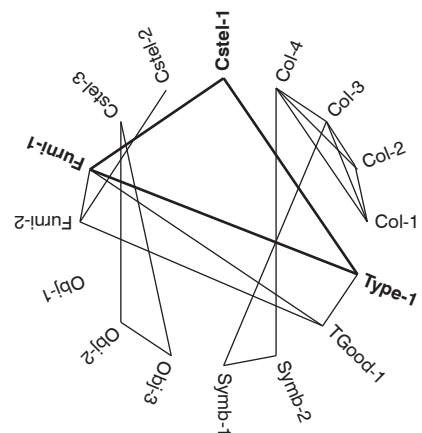
Taste

## CONNOTATION

|   |
|---|
| Colour is used for branding purposes  |
| Demarcates one area from another  |
| Demarcates one area from another  |
| Status and taste; the original version is manufactured in fibreglass by Modernica |
| Puma brand  |
| Puma brand  |
| Iconic; branded: status   |

## SEMIOSIS

Furniture is associated (by form) with a constellation and use typology. This indicates the importance of appropriate selection of use artefacts (which is a synthetic method).



<http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-gUhlkKtsK50/UMCMefkKD7I/AAAAAAAAAJLg/-Lt6EtqzVBw/s1600/Puma+Red+Blue+Star+Shadow+society-1.jpg>





The title of the exhibition immediately evokes images of film production, studios, sound stages, video, etc. This is due to the popular referral to a successful movie as a 'blockbuster' and the well known video rental chain.

The installation uses a number of freestanding cinemas, and a discussion space. The armature carrying lighting evokes images of equipment used in film production.

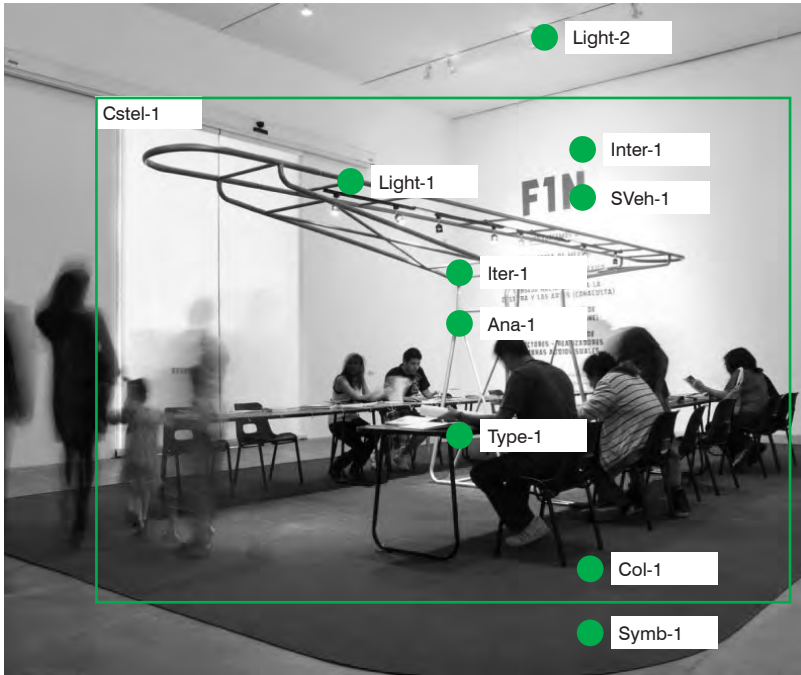
Colour is used minimally, red signifying the red carpet and signage on old theatres.

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29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical



**Blockbuster: Itinerant Film Exhibition;** Exhibition; Work!: Samuel Barrios; University Museum of Contemporary Art (MUAC), Mexico City, Mexico; 2012

[http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2011/11/30/blockbuster-cine-itinerante-para-exhibiciones-samael-barrios/blockbuster\\_mg\\_2880-3/](http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2011/11/30/blockbuster-cine-itinerante-para-exhibiciones-samael-barrios/blockbuster_mg_2880-3/); Victor Deschamps;  
[http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2011/11/30/blockbuster-cine-itinerante-para-exhibiciones-samael-barrios/blockbuster\\_mg\\_2810-3/](http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2011/11/30/blockbuster-cine-itinerante-para-exhibiciones-samael-barrios/blockbuster_mg_2810-3/); 30 November 2011;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Ana-1   | Camera dolly  |
| Col-1   | Red: carpet   |
| Cstel-1 | Discussion table                                    |
| Iter-1  | Armature: cinematographic equipment                 |
| Inter-1 | 'Fin' - references ending of movies                 |
| Light-1 | Artificial: spotlighting on armature                |
| Light-2 | Artificial: spotlighting, ceiling mounted, on track |
| SVeh-1  | Typography: signage, title                          |
| Symb-1  | Red carpet  |
| Type-1  | Morphology; Use: Council table                      |

### Discourses

Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste

## CONNOTATION

The analogy is vague and partial, synecdoche

Movie production processes

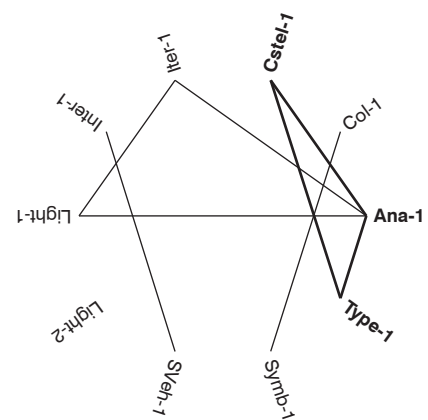
Arthouse / intellectual movies

Ceremonial; formal

## SEMIOSIS

Synecdoche can be used as a method of association to avoid superficial and direct symbolic application.

High-order functions provide reciprocal support.



[http://25.media.tumblr.com/1034549f82ad597bf262bc9111695e40/tumblr\\_mxqqa8nDiq1rwpse5o1\\_1280.jpg](http://25.media.tumblr.com/1034549f82ad597bf262bc9111695e40/tumblr_mxqqa8nDiq1rwpse5o1_1280.jpg)



008 La Favorita



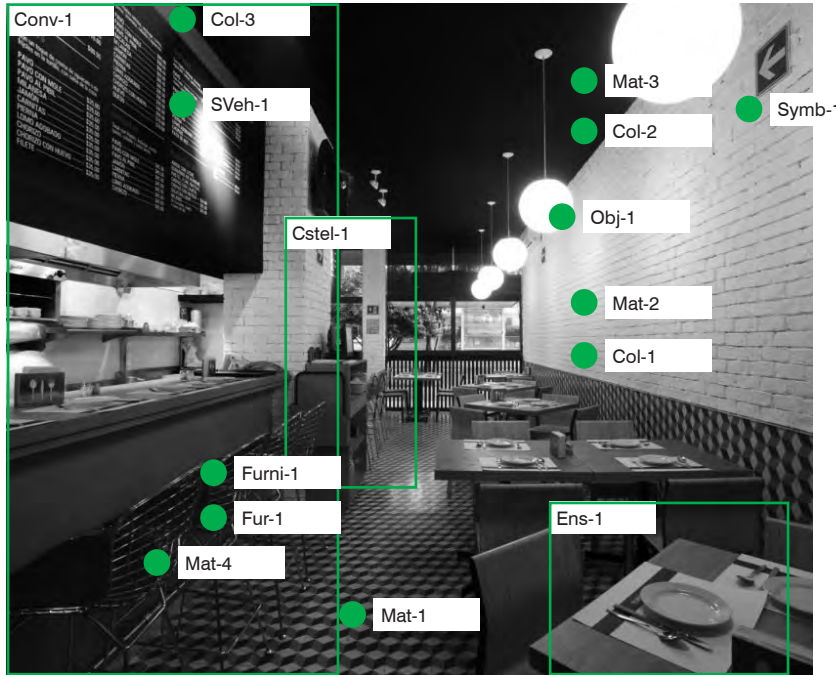
A diner in Mexico City that has a number of clear references to traditional American highway diners: bright metal; chequered tiles; white walls; menu in white and red above the server; globe pendants; etc.

The interior is typical of a number of contemporary eateries that utilises nostalgia as the main informant.

Meaning is created with the use of taste goods and other found artefacts arranged in proximity with each other.

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24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**La Favorita de Insurgentes; Eatery - Diner; ARCO Arquitectura Contemporánea; Mexico City, Mexico; 2012;**  
[http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/04/02/la-favorita-arco-arquitectura-contempor-nea/51547763b3fc4b17f20000a0\\_la-favorita-arco-arquitectura-contempor-nea\\_la\\_favorita\\_arco\\_f\\_-\\_jaimenavarro-jpg/](http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/04/02/la-favorita-arco-arquitectura-contempor-nea/51547763b3fc4b17f20000a0_la-favorita-arco-arquitectura-contempor-nea_la_favorita_arco_f_-_jaimenavarro-jpg/); Jaime Navarro;  
[http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/04/02/la-favorita-arco-arquitectura-contempor-nea/5154776eb3fc4b17f20000a1\\_la-favorita-arco-arquitectura-contempor-nea\\_la\\_favorita\\_arco\\_i\\_-\\_jaimenavarro-jpg/](http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/04/02/la-favorita-arco-arquitectura-contempor-nea/5154776eb3fc4b17f20000a1_la-favorita-arco-arquitectura-contempor-nea_la_favorita_arco_i_-_jaimenavarro-jpg/); 02 April 2013



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Col-1 White: walls
- Col-2 Black: soffit
- Col-3 Red: bulkead
- Cstel-1 Waiter's station
- Conv-1 Diner bar counter
- Ens-1 Place setting: plate; cutlery; placemat
- Fur-1 Seat pillow
- Furni-1 Bertoia wire chair
- Mat-1 Tiles: tessellated
- Mat-2 Bricks: bagged and painted
- Mat-3 Flush ceiling: painted
- Mat-4 Chrome: chairs
- Obj-1 Spherical pendant
- SVeh-1 Typography: menu, displayed on wall
- Symb-1 Wayfinding: direction of exit

**CONNOTATION**

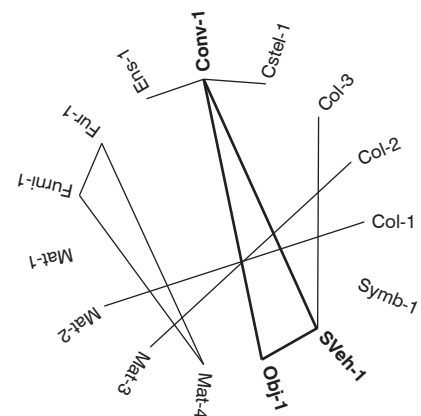
- Colour is used to indicate different planes: this has a formal function
- Functionality, service
- Tradition, iteration
- Serviced
- Modern; progressive
- MC Escher
- Material is used to indicate the morphological typology: diner
- Traditionally used in diners

**SEMIOSIS**

The morphological typology (diner) is indicated through conventions, objects and sign vehicles which have traditive associations.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://2.bp.blogspot.com/\\_p63GfoIPvTA/TCweGuZh3OI/AAAAAAAAAZg/cGeYS5QpnAQ/s1600/100\\_2624.JPG](http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_p63GfoIPvTA/TCweGuZh3OI/AAAAAAAAAZg/cGeYS5QpnAQ/s1600/100_2624.JPG);



This entrance lobby serves three service providers in a single building (AOL; TrustedID; and Cloud-On). Its identity can therefore not connote any specific corporate identity.

The interior is neutral and light, with the impression of good ventilation and fresh air. The provision of bicycle racks in the foyer connotes fitness, balance and youth culture. The bicycles were obviously selected as artefacts to serve the interior design (colour). This, the space itself (organisation and material) and the dress of the users indicates that the interior is informal, although corporate. (It is assumed that the image is stylised.)

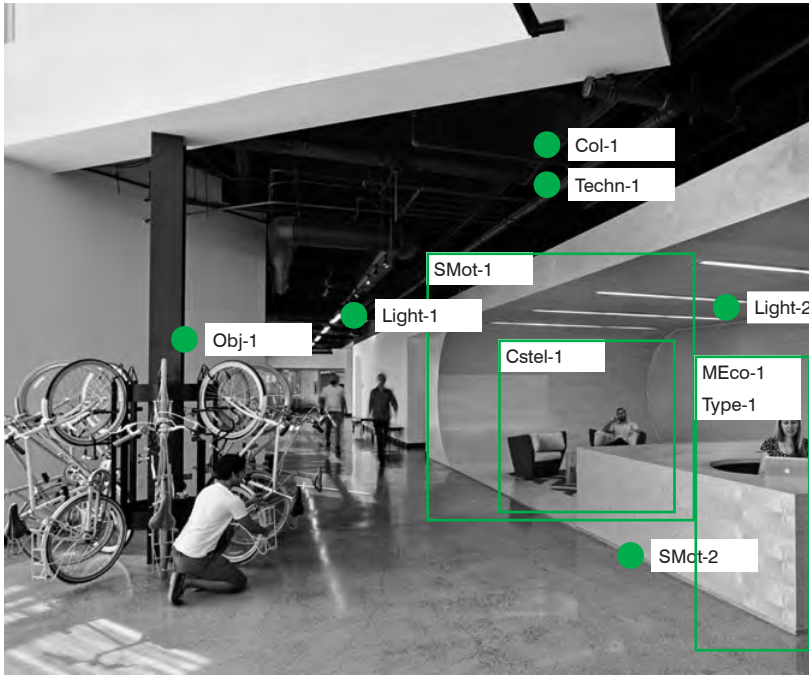
The interior promotes the chance encounter and other forms of casual collaboration.

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24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**395 Page Mill First Floor;** Commercial - Offices, Headquarters, Services (ITC), Foyer; Design Firm; Palo Alto, USA; 2011

[http://znosemwprojekcie.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/dezeen\\_395-page-mill-road-by-studio-oa\\_ss\\_1.jpg](http://znosemwprojekcie.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/dezeen_395-page-mill-road-by-studio-oa_ss_1.jpg); Jasper Sanidad;  
<http://www.o-plus-a.com/news/wp-content/uploads/139.jpg>; 11 August 2012;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Col-1 Black: soffit and services
- Cstel-1 Tub chairs, coffee table and carpet
- Light-1 Artificial: tracklighting with fluorescents and spots
- Light-2 Artificial: recessed fluorescents
- MEco-1 Receptionist
- Obj-1 Bicycle rack
  
- SMot-1 Den: waiting area
- SMot-2 Edge: boundary between walkway and reception area
- SMot-3 Journey: hallway
- Techn-1 HVAC duct: exposed
- Type-1 Use: reception counter

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste

**CONNOTATION**

Defines a small territory in a larger space

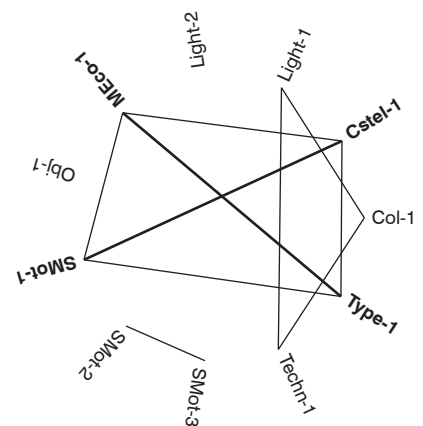
Sustainability; social responsibility; fitness

**SEMIOSIS**

Symbolic motifs are used to reinforce each other; they exist reciprocally.

Social function and status is indicated with use typology which is delimited micro-ecologically.

Constellations maintain symbolic motifs.



<http://edgeoftheframe.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/127-hours-top-ten.jpg> ;

010 As Good as New



This is a furniture pop-up store. The furniture is manufactured from found components, sourced from second hand stores, which is coated in gray paint. This lends uniformity to the store; the arrangement of the merchandise is the major design intervention.

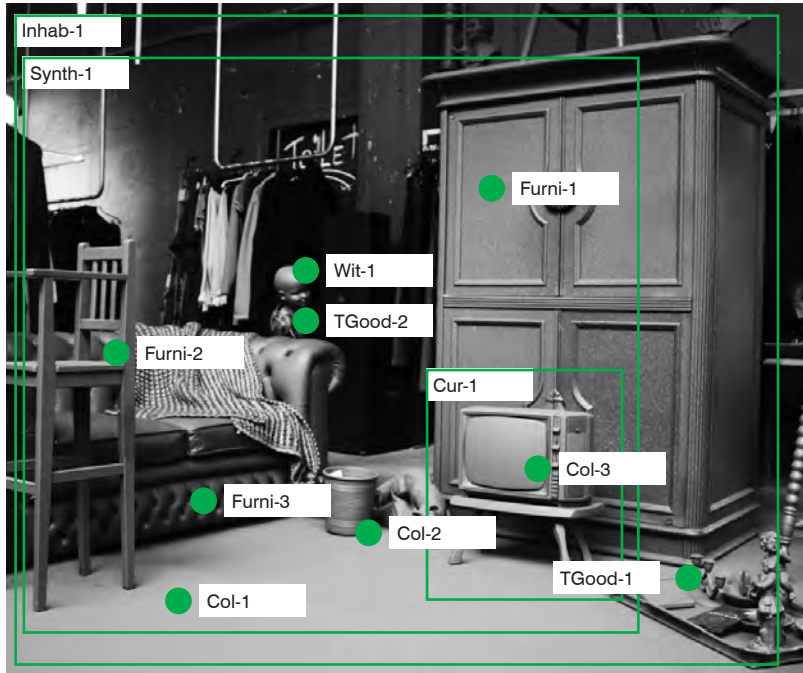
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**As Good As New pop-up shop at SPRMRKT; Retail - Goods (furniture), Pop-up Store; i29; Amsterdam, The Netherlands; c. 2012;**

[http://www.lisetteros.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/IMG\\_8693.jpg](http://www.lisetteros.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/IMG_8693.jpg); Lisette Ros;

[http://www.rockthathorse.com/wp-content/2012/11/rockthathorse\\_as\\_good\\_as\\_new-7.jpg](http://www.rockthathorse.com/wp-content/2012/11/rockthathorse_as_good_as_new-7.jpg); 26 September 2012

;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Col-1   | Gray: screed                                  |
| Col-2   | Gray: bucket                                  |
| Col-3   | Gray: television                              |
| Cur-1   | Television on stool                           |
| Furni-1 | Armoire                                       |
| Furni-2 | Baby dining chair                             |
| Furni-3 | Chesterfield sofa                             |
| Inhab-1 | Proximal arrangement of furniture             |
| Synth-1 | Pastiches and arrangements of household items |
| TGood-1 | Tray with items                               |
| TGood-2 | Bust  |
| Wit-1   | Bust wearing earphones                        |

## CONNOTATION

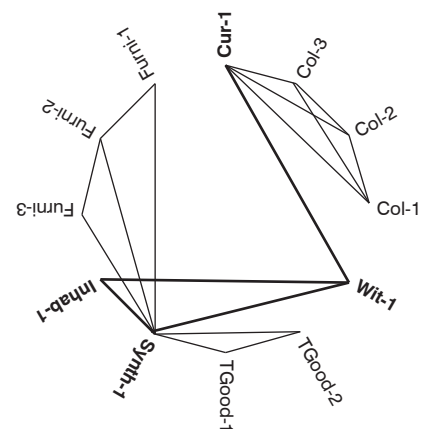
|  |
|--|
| Uniformity and objection to trends; fashion and taste  |
| An inappropriate combination of furniture and objects; these are selected (curated) and synthesised in a new combination |
| Domesticity  |
| Innapropriate association  |

## SEMIOSIS

Synthetic methods are dependent on the use of simple elements to create compound or complex artefacts. Uniformity in the synthesis is achieved through the use of a single colour.

## Discourses

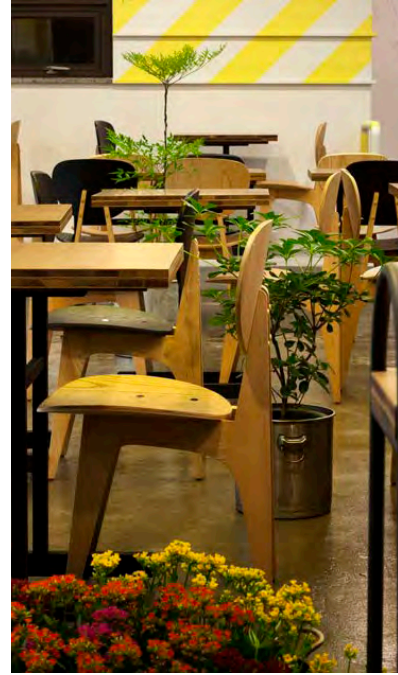
Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste



<http://www.canadien.biz/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Antique-Shop-with-a-lot-of-Antiques-Collections-See-How-Antique-Roadshow-have-a-big-audience1.jpg>



011 Play Pot



The design is informed by the vernacular and refers to street food stalls.

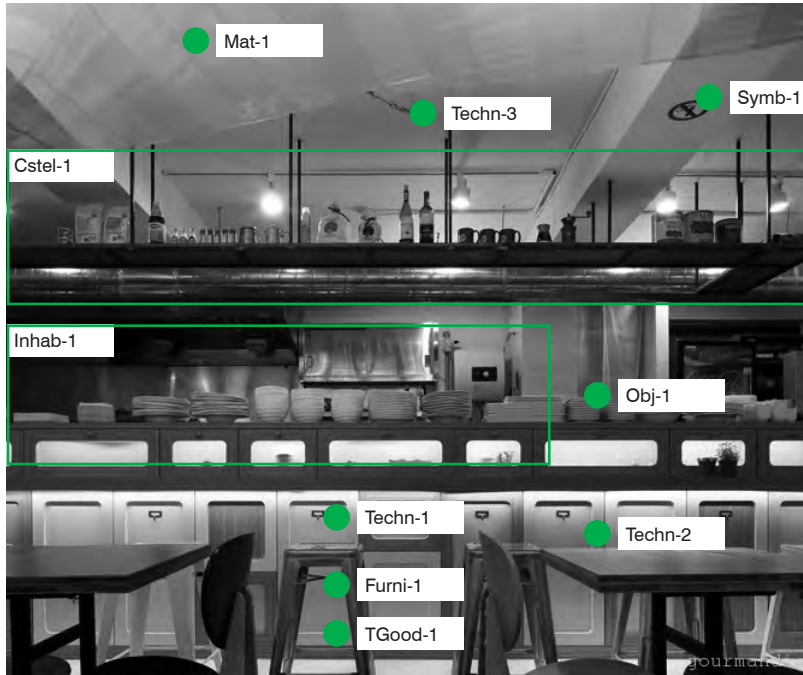
The yellow and white candy stripe tarpaulin, floor and signage is a unifying pattern.

The restaurant appears to be fun and informal with a relaxed atmosphere.

Stacks of plates, large amounts of cupboards, condiments on display provide an atmosphere of generosity and abundance.

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31. Non-Canonical

**Play Pot Restaurant; Eatery - Restaurant; Lim Tae Hee Design Studio; Seoul, Korea; 2012;**  
<http://www.gourmandisee.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Play-Pot-by-Lim-Tae-Hee-Design-Studio2.jpg>; Patric Young Chae;  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/08/23/play-pot-restaurant-by-lim-tae-hee-design-studio/>; 23 August 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Cstel-1 Shelf above bar
- Furni-1 Tolix stool (by Xavier Pauchard) at counter; non-functional
- Inhab-1 Clutter
- Mat-1 Candystripe canvas: yellow and white
- Obj-1 Stacks of crockery
- Symb-1 Signage: non-smoking; unusual position on beam
- Techn-1 Catalogue drawer label
- Techn-2 Panel door
- Techn-3 Turnbuckle
- TGood-1 Furniture

**CONNOTATION**

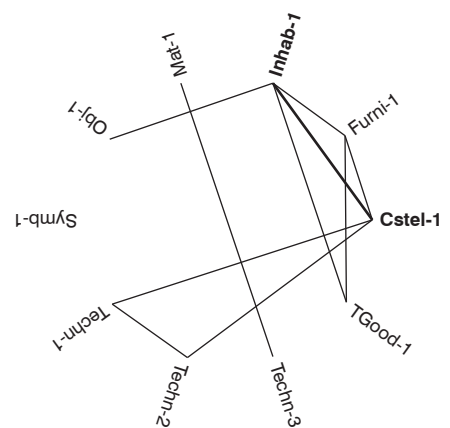
- Transfunctionalisation - iconic connection.
- French, pre-WWII, nostalgia
- Inhabitation through use
- Generosity, large scale entertainment
- Old-fashioned, nostalgia

**SEMIOSIS**

Inhabitation is indicated through use-objects which creates clutter.  
 Furniture can be used for iconic and associative purposes, even when it has no functional purpose.  
 Material choice may inform the selection of technemes.

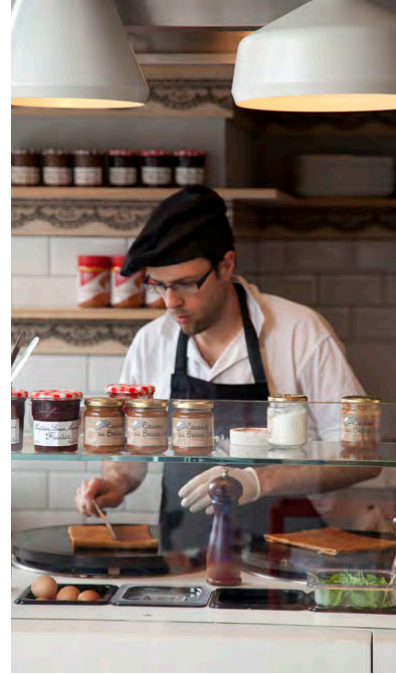
**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
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- Interiority
- Taste



[http://blog.jagaimo.com/images/ul/OnthestreetsNamdaemunmarketkettastinghoddeo\\_D6C/korea200706526.jpg](http://blog.jagaimo.com/images/ul/OnthestreetsNamdaemunmarketkettastinghoddeo_D6C/korea200706526.jpg);

012 La Petite Bretagne



A nostalgic crêperie in London; the interior contains a number of old fashioned references, e.g. glazed tiles; gingham check (printed in lieu of table cloth); painted chairs; pendants; lace; parquet floor; etc.

In addition there are various references to craft and home industry like bottled preserves and implements.

The gingham, lace and merchandise have strong associations with traditional, conservative femininity.

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24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**La Petite Bretagne Crêperie; Eatery - Pancake; Paul Crofts Studio; London, UK; c. 2012;**  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/08/16/la-petite-bretagne-by-paul-crofts-studio/>; Chris Tubbs;  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/08/16/la-petite-bretagne-by-paul-crofts-studio/>; 16 August 2012;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Dec-1 Oversized gingham: applied to table
- Dec-2 Lace pattern: on shelf drop-edge
- Mat-1 Bevelled edge glazed tiles
- MEco-1 Service counter: P.O.S; luminaires; menus; etc.
- Obj-1 Pendants, various shapes
- Obj-2 Bottled preserves
- SVeh-1 Singage: applied to counter
- SVeh-2 Typography: menu, displayed on wall

**CONNOTATION**

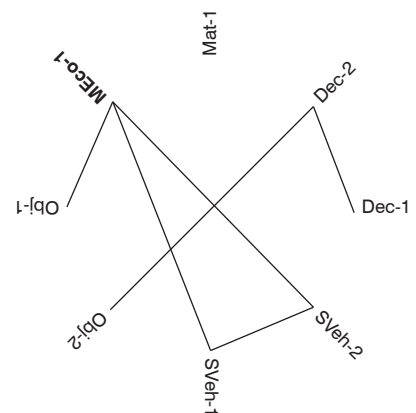
- Old fashioned femiinity, associated with grandmothers and maiden-aunts; homecooking and homemaking
- Service area, hierarchy. Differentiation between served and service (place) and between served and server (person)
- Informality,
- Home-industry
- Informality, morphological typology

**SEMIOSIS**

Gender is used to specifically target an audience. This discourse informs social ideas regarding originality, wholesomeness and nostalgia.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://img2.etsystatic.com/000/0/5976037/il\\_fullxfull.271558110.jpg](http://img2.etsystatic.com/000/0/5976037/il_fullxfull.271558110.jpg)

013 Van Alen



The project uses doors, painted yellow, stacked in piles and suspended to create a pavilion for reading. The yellow is repeated on the soffit and in detail (e.g. shelf names).

The project is tectonic with exposed connections and unfinished edges. The process of construction/making is clearly expressed in the final space.

The major spatial gesture serves little functional purpose.

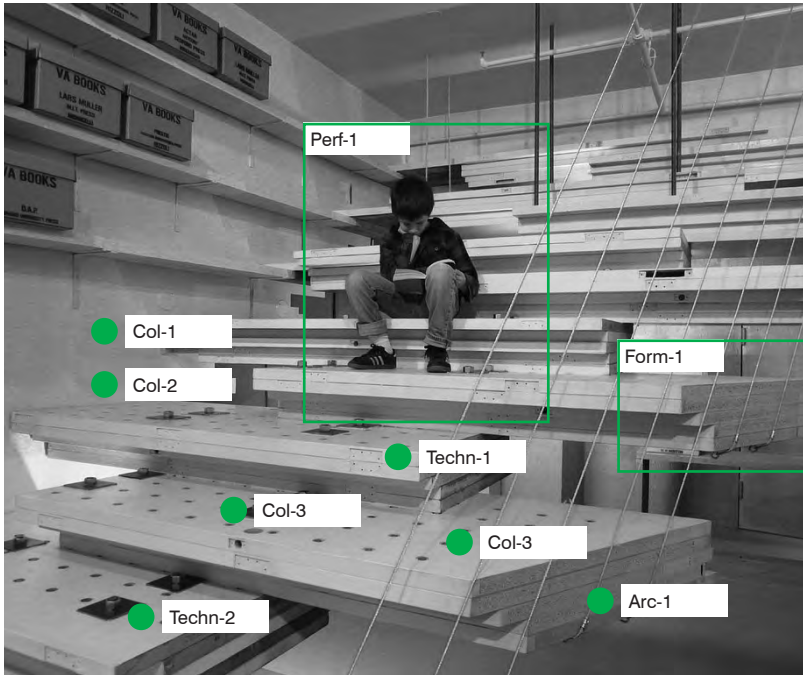
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31. Non-Canonical

**Van Alen Books;** Retail - Books; LOT-EK; New York, USA; 2011;

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/archidose/5641744803/>; John Hill;

<http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2011/05/30/libreria-van-alen-books-lot-ek-van-alen-bookstore-3/>; 30 May 2011;





## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |                               |
|---------|-------------------------------|
| Arc-1   | Showcase stair                |
| Col-1   | Yellow: painted wall          |
| Col-2   | Yellow: painted wall          |
| Col-3   | Yellow: painted staircase     |
| Form-1  | Overlapping stacks            |
| Perf-1  | User on display               |
| Techn-1 | Countersunk rebate for hinges |
| Techn-2 | Washers and nuts              |
| Techn-3 | Suspension cables             |

## CONNOTATION

Importance; focus point  
The white motif indicates the area below the stairs; it follows the line of the treads and risers

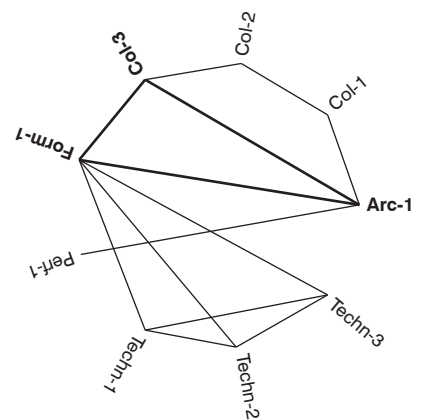
The staircase is constructed from recycled doors

## SEMIOSIS

Colour is used to emphasise form in support of the archetype.

## Discourses

Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste



<http://www.cepolina.com/photo/object/sign/road-sign/5/road-sign-yellow-road.jpg>;



This is the latest alteration in a historical building originally constructed in 1925 as a house. During its history it underwent a number of ad hoc changes. This, the latest intervention and the original material represents a palimpsest of the buildings history. The interior underwent entropic skid, which is celebrated.

The intervention comprises a number of objects, partial demolitions, material, with the impression that nothing is chosen 'to fit'. The interior is promiscuous, messy and even ugly.

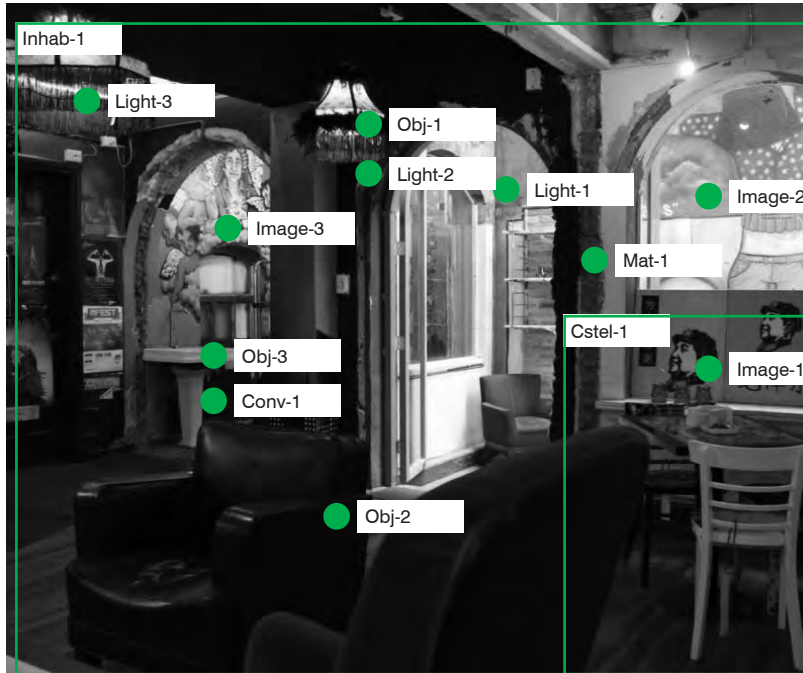
It contains a number of pastiches or reinterpretations which are used effectively.

It has clear references to Latin American Baroque.

Although cultural spaces are excluded from the corpus, this project is included for its utility to the thesis. It illustrates a number of interior design methods.

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**Espacio Cultural The Clinic: The Mall;** Cultural - Multifunctional (cafe, library, music room, boutique hotel, theatre, restaurant); Cristián Contreras; Santiago de Chile, Chile; 2012-2013;  
[http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/03/30/espacio-cultural-the-clinic-the-mall-cristi-n-contreras/515af6cfb3fc4b29d600008c\\_espacio-cultural-the-clinic-the-mall-cristi-n-contreras\\_1280px\\_06-jpg/](http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/03/30/espacio-cultural-the-clinic-the-mall-cristi-n-contreras/515af6cfb3fc4b29d600008c_espacio-cultural-the-clinic-the-mall-cristi-n-contreras_1280px_06-jpg/); Rodrigo Rojas;  
[http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/03/30/espacio-cultural-the-clinic-the-mall-cristi-n-contreras/515af6bcb3fc4b29d600008a\\_espacio-cultural-the-clinic-the-mall-cristi-n-contreras\\_1280px\\_04-jpg/](http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/03/30/espacio-cultural-the-clinic-the-mall-cristi-n-contreras/515af6bcb3fc4b29d600008a_espacio-cultural-the-clinic-the-mall-cristi-n-contreras_1280px_04-jpg/); 02 April 2013;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

- Cstel-1 Dining table with four chairs
- Conv-1 Basin: inappropriate position
- Image-1 Illustration, portrait
- Image-2 Mural, figurative
- Image-3 Mural, iconic - religious
- Inhab-1 Occupied by items and furniture
- Light-1 Natural: courtyard
- Light-2 Artificial: pendant
- Light-3 Artificial: neon, effect, atmospheric
- Mat-1 Demolished wall, masonry exposed
- Obj-1 Tasselled pendants
- Obj-2 Stuffed recliners, mismatched
- Obj-3 Wash hand basin

### Discourses

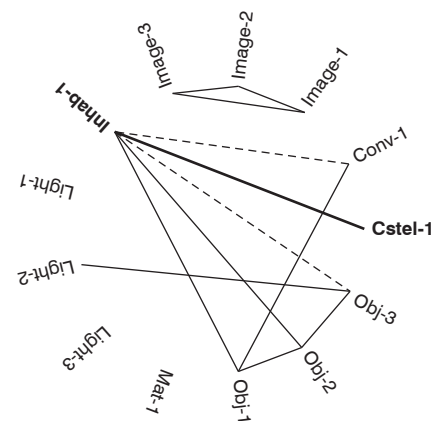
- Alteration
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- Interiority
- Taste

## CONNOTATION

- Interiority, questions privacy and inhabitation
- Alteration of space through objects
- Iterative alterations
- Inappropriate position

## SEMIOSIS

A disassociative relationship between a convention and inhabitation places a private ritual in a public space.  
Layers of objects and alterations creates a palimpsest.  
Inhabitation is signified through clutter and objects.



[http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-4HC5LH6YrEM/TuayvWapGhI/AAAAAAAAALvc/3wkRPZM-XuI/s1600/DSC\\_0355.JPG](http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-4HC5LH6YrEM/TuayvWapGhI/AAAAAAAAALvc/3wkRPZM-XuI/s1600/DSC_0355.JPG);



015 Vanilla and Chocolate



A simple interior with minimal use of decoration and a restricted material and colour palette.

Some materials are inappropriate for fashion (e.g. cement screeds and galvanised steel), but this is a current convention and interior fashion in a number of applications. The purpose may be to emphasise the merchandise and to depend on the merchandise to create identity.

The interior carries little identity in itself and is disconnected from the brand.

My first connotation is with the archetypal white box gallery.

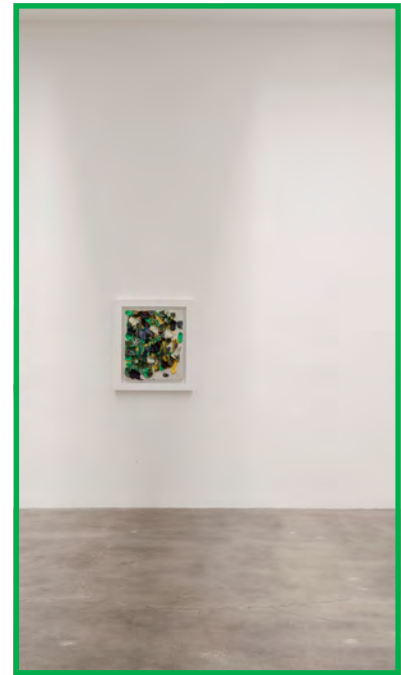
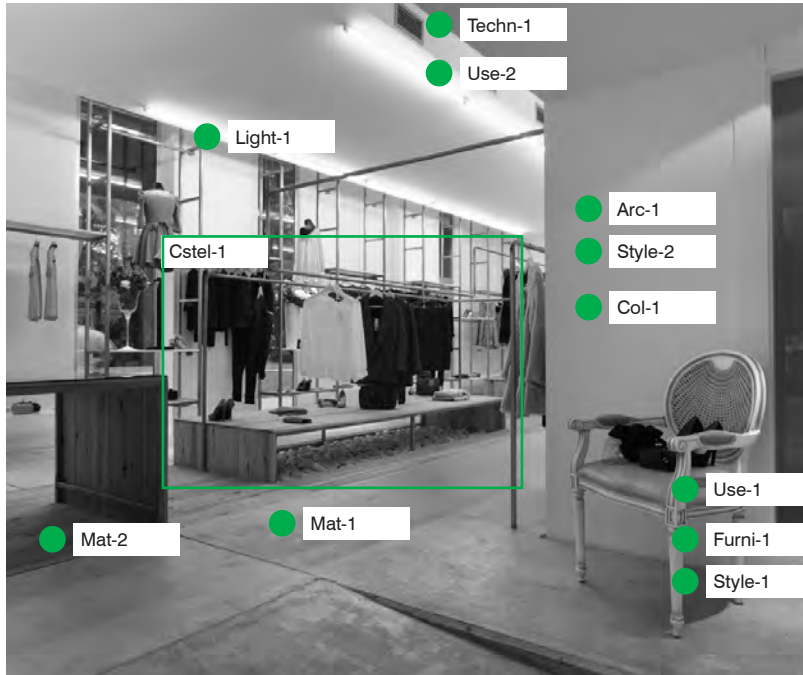
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31. Non-Canonical

**Acondicionamiento Vainilly & Chocolate; Retail - Fashion (informal wear; female); Salgado E Liñares Arquitectos; La Coruña, Spain; 2012;**

[http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/03/30/acondicionamiento-vainilla-chocolate-salgado-e-li-ares-s-l-p-\\_sl\\_vyc\\_05\\_51792-jpg/](http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/03/30/acondicionamiento-vainilla-chocolate-salgado-e-liñares-s-l-p/514a9625b3fc4b3f6c00002b_acondicionamiento-vainilla-chocolate-salgado-e-li-ares-s-l-p-_sl_vyc_05_51792-jpg/); Héctor Santos-Diez;

<http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/03/30/acondicionamiento-vainilla-chocolate-salgado-e-liñares-s-l-; 30 March 2013>

;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

- Arc-1 White box
- Col-1 White: painted walls
- Cstel-1 Clothes rail above plinth
- Furni-1 Upholstered neoclassical chair
- Light-1 Artificial: fluorescent, exposed, surface mounted
- Mat-1 Concrete screed
- Mat-2 Timber floor
- Style-1 Iconic styling: Neoclassicism
- Style-2 Iconic styling: Late modernism
- Techn-1 HVAC grills
- Use-1 Decorative; semiotic
- Use-2 Technical: interior environment

### Discourses

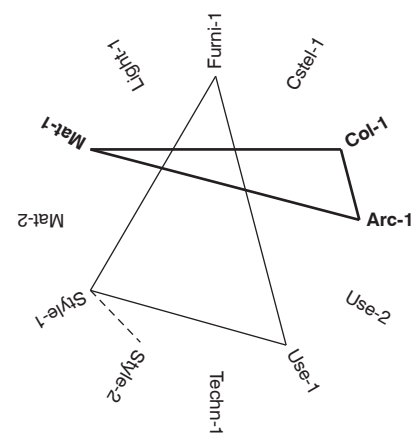
- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste

## CONNOTATION

- Emphasis on merchandise not space
- Taste connotations; expense.
- Utilitarian, technical
- Disparate styles: eclectic, postmodernism
- Used for semiotic and taste functions, not use

## SEMIOSIS

Material, colour and archetype is used in combination. This contributes to the iconic styling.  
Eclecticism is introduced through items of contrasting iconic style.



<http://www.blumandpoe.com/sites/default/files/exhibitions/Photo-%20Joshua%20White-2944.jpg>



016 Oporto Dental



The foyer for a dental practice is considered. The interior is stark with clinical connotations, but it avoids typical medical colour schemes.

Elsewhere in the interior, medical objects such as the dentist's chair is indicative of technological innovation.

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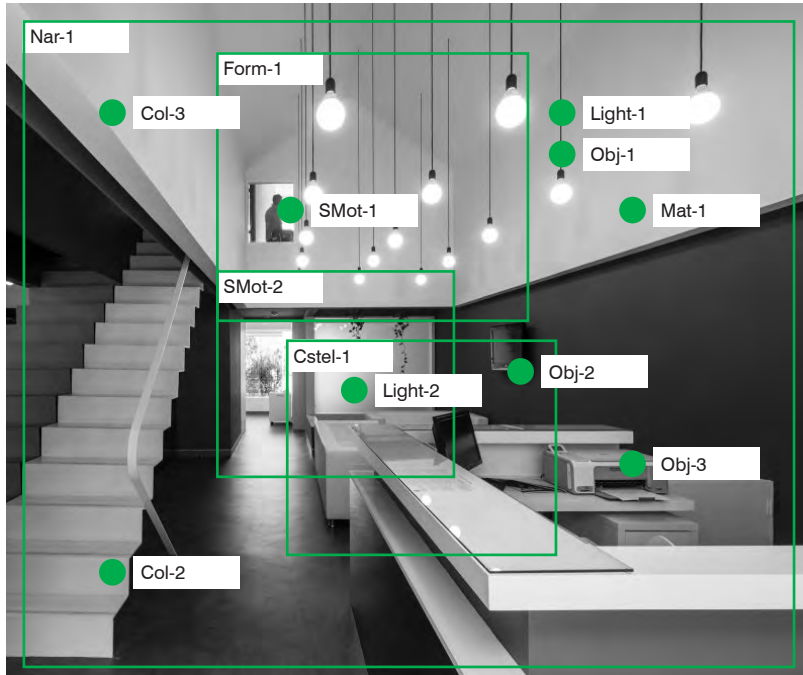


**Clínica Dental; Services - Medical (dental); Paulo Merlini; Oporto, Portugal; 2013;**

[http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/03/16/clinica-dental-en-oporto-paulo-merlini/512e1207b3fc4bd7f1000197\\_cl-nica-dental-en-oporto-paulo-merlini\\_jm\\_clinicadentaria\\_paulomerlini\\_008-jpg/](http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/03/16/clinica-dental-en-oporto-paulo-merlini/512e1207b3fc4bd7f1000197_cl-nica-dental-en-oporto-paulo-merlini_jm_clinicadentaria_paulomerlini_008-jpg/); Joao Morgado;

[http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/03/16/clinica-dental-en-oporto-paulo-merlini/512e1260b3fc4b006d0001a1\\_cl-nica-dental-en-oporto-paulo-merlini\\_jm\\_clinicadentaria\\_paulomerlini\\_047-jpg/](http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2013/03/16/clinica-dental-en-oporto-paulo-merlini/512e1260b3fc4b006d0001a1_cl-nica-dental-en-oporto-paulo-merlini_jm_clinicadentaria_paulomerlini_047-jpg/); 16 March 2013

;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Col-1 Charcoal: walls
- Col-2 White: staircase
- Col-3 White: second storey and soffit
- Cstel-1 Couches
- Form-1 Roof pitch
- Light-1 Artificial: pendant, exposed
- Light-2 Natural: filtered
- Mat-1 Plastered walls and bulkhead: painted white
- Nar-1 Service ritual: reception; wait; service
- Obj-1 Pendant luminaire: exposed lamp
- Obj-2 Television
- Obj-3 Computer and printer
- SMot-1 Journey: consultation room
- SMot-2 Edge: destination

**CONNOTATION**

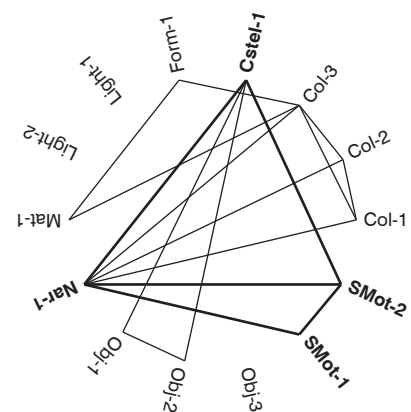
- Colour is used to modulate form
- Waiting area
- Material is used to modulate form
- Movement
- Boundary

**SEMIOSIS**

High-order functions are used in combination to provide the narrative to a common ritual: this instructs the user on the function of the space.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://corporate.zeiss.com/content/dam/Corporate/about\\_cz/downloads/images/did-you-know/did-you-know-113.jpg](http://corporate.zeiss.com/content/dam/Corporate/about_cz/downloads/images/did-you-know/did-you-know-113.jpg);

017 ikHa

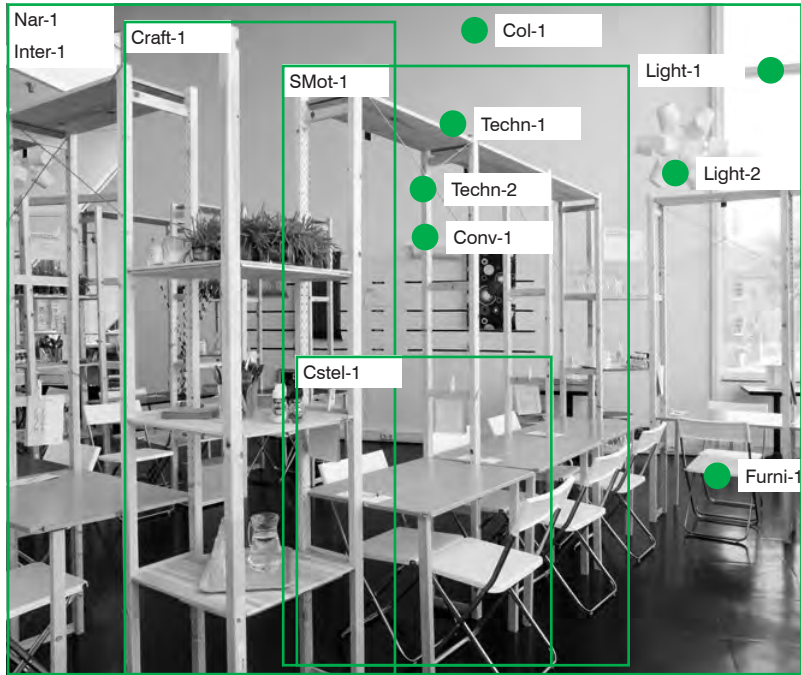


Although the interior is simple and sparsely furnished, and to some extent is archetypically white box, it is witty with a number of references: e.g. braced shelving, modular furniture etc. The entire project is assembled from Ikea furniture. (The project title means 'Ikea Hack'.)

The temporality of the installation is clear in its design. Its spatial organisation refers to the layout of Ikea stores.

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**ikHA Pop-up Restaurant; Eatery - Restaurant (temporary); Oatmeal Studio: Rosa Dalle Vedove, Annika Syrjämäki; Den Haag, The Netherlands; 12 May - 12 July 2012;**  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/07/17/ikha-by-oatmeal-studio/>; Nadine Stijns;  
[http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/5000729628ba0d4aac00000e\\_ikha-oatmeal-studio\\_ikha10.jpg](http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/5000729628ba0d4aac00000e_ikha-oatmeal-studio_ikha10.jpg); 17 July 2012;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Col-1   | White: painted walls                          |
| Cstel-1 | Dining table with two chairs                  |
| Conv-1  | Shelving unit, place as organisational device |
| Craft-1 | Flat-pack shelving                            |
| Furni-1 | Foldable café chair                           |
| Inter-1 | Ikea store layout                             |
| Light-1 | Natural: window                               |
| Light-2 | Artificial: pendant                           |
| Nar-1   | Controlled movement: linear                   |
| SMot-1  | Edge: shelving unit                           |
| Techn-1 | Shelf   |
| Techn-2 | Brace   |
| Temp-1  | Temporary installation: restaurant            |

### Discourses

Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste

## CONNOTATION

Various constellations are in close proximity - indicates informality and casual encounters

Industrialised, low level of traditional craftsmanship

Iteration

It is unconventional to create a dining area across an edge

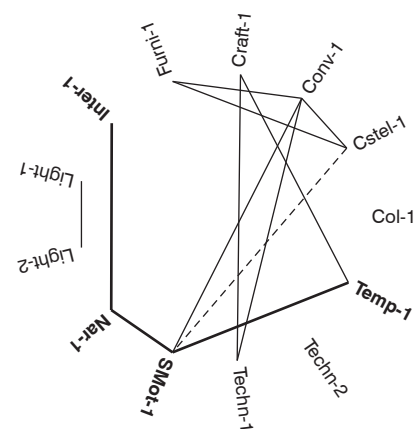
Transfunctionalisation: bulkhead, demarcation and boundary

## SEMIOSIS

Temporality is indicated through flat-pack furniture; demountable additive assemblies.

Intertextual references are present in the organisation of the space and the choice of goods.

Social commentary is present in the unconventional use of symbolic motifs.





018 Tendinha



A bright pink night club; it follows a typical night club method of painting the entire interior in a single colour (usually black). Here this convention is deviated on by cladding the interior in timber, which is then painted.

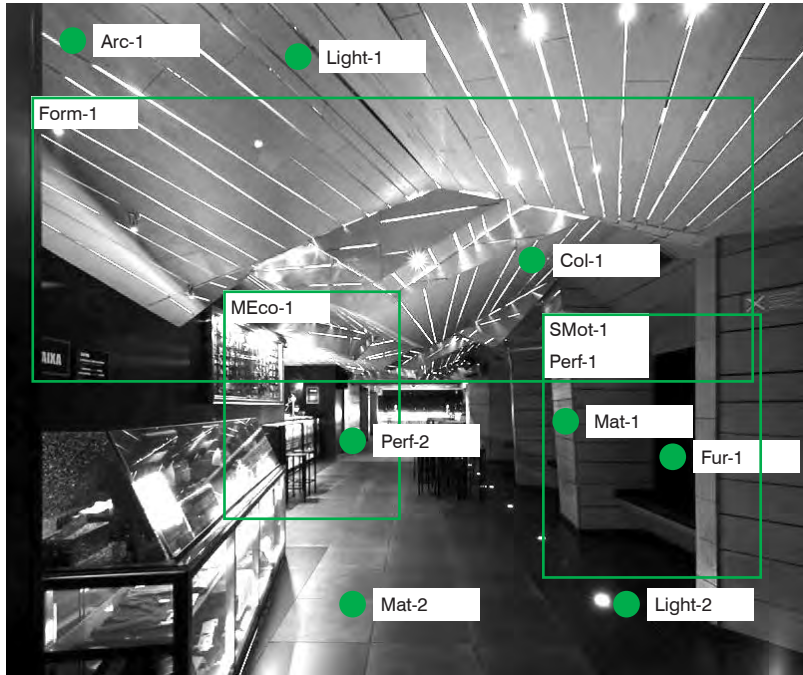
Since the music and sound quality is of paramount importance in night clubs, capital investment should focus on the equipment, with little money spent on interior finishes.

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**Tendinha dos Clérigos; Social - Club (dance, restaurant, bar);** Atelier Veloso Arquitectos; Oporto, Portugal; c. 2013;

<http://www.frameweb.com/news/tendinha-dos-clerigos-bar-by-ava-architects>; José Campos;  
<http://arqa.com/wordpress/wp-content/files/2011/12/JFFD095776.jpg>; 01 April 2013;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 Dressed ceiling
- Col-1 Pink: painted soffit and walls
- Form-1 Ceiling: faceted
- Fur-1 Banquet seating: dark upholstery
- Light-1 Artificial: low ambient level
- Light-2 Artificial: ground lights
- Mat-1 Timber cladding
- Mat-2 Tiled floor
- MEco-1 Service: counter
- Perf-1 Banquet: display against wall
- Perf-2 Dance floor
- SMot-1 Den: retreat against wall

**CONNOTATION**

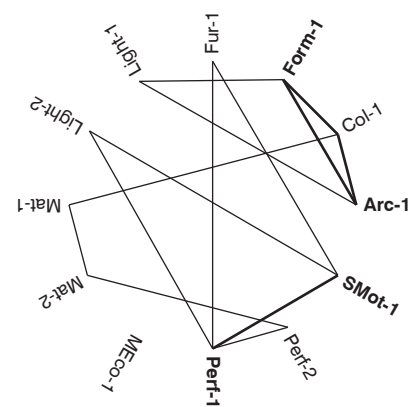
- Privacy; recede into background
- Social hierarchies are important in securing services in a busy place. Physical and social positioning is important
- 'Wallflowers' or sexual availability

**SEMIOSIS**

The symbolic motif (den) provides the place where a performance can take place. This allows to user to construct and project their self-identity outwards. Form, colour and archetype provide reciprocal support. Social hierarchy (server and served) is set up micro-ecologically.

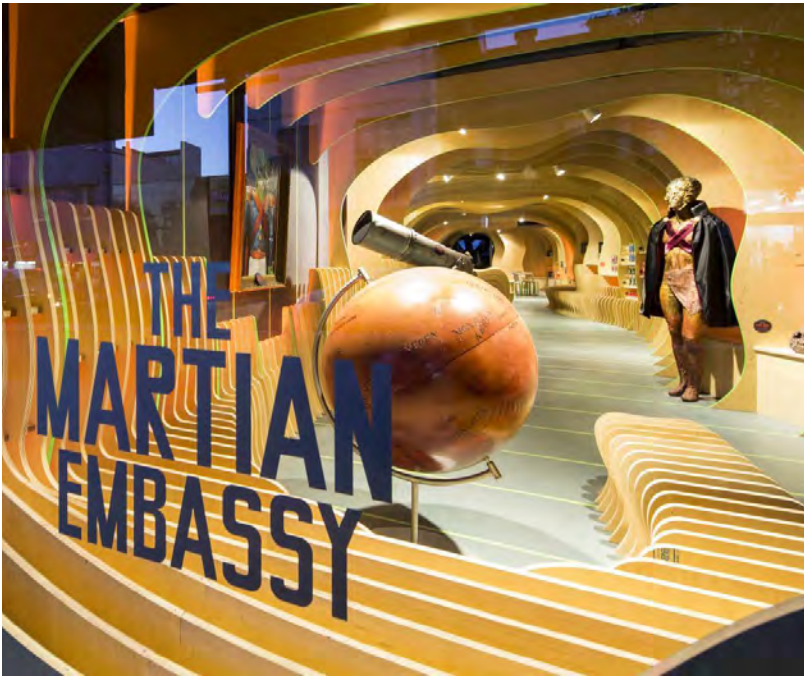
**Discourses**

- Alteration
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[http://4.bp.blogspot.com/\\_CxV-GQEUmLQ/S8x7GWz8Ccl/AAAAAAACLQ/kzc6qXnBTys/s1600/Scraft\\_MinistryOfSound.jpg](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_CxV-GQEUmLQ/S8x7GWz8Ccl/AAAAAAACLQ/kzc6qXnBTys/s1600/Scraft_MinistryOfSound.jpg)

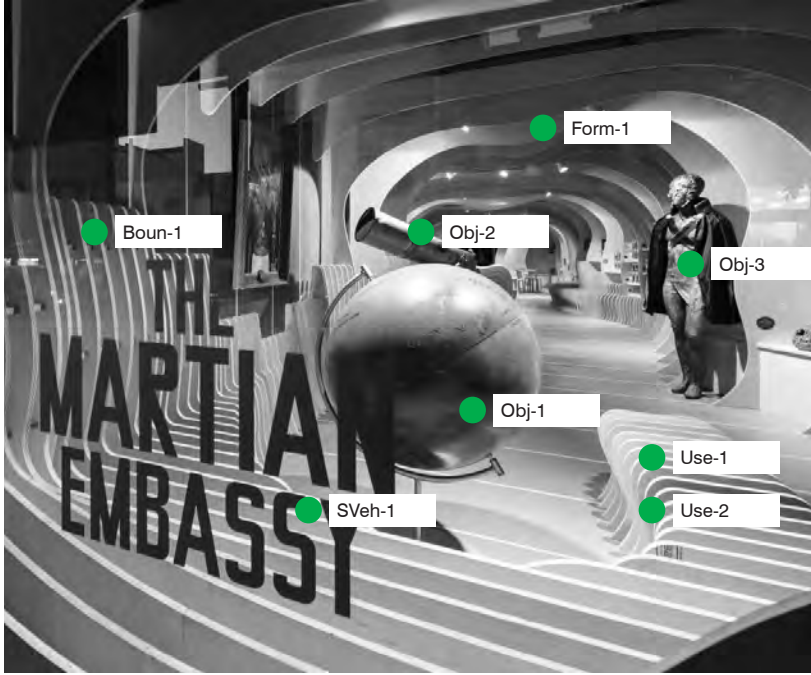
019 Martian Embassy



This is a workshop for a children's creative writing charity.  
 Seating, counters and shelves are constructed from a series of plywood ribs.  
 This is an example of the process of making informing the design production.  
 Colour use is limited, and mainly applied to the plywood edges.  
 The project uses artefacts like a telescope and globe of Mars to strengthen the association with the planet.

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23. The South
24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**The Martian Embassy**; Social - Writing Workshop; LAVA, Laboratory for Visionary Architecture, Will O'Rourke and The Glue Society; Sydney, Australia; 2012;  
[http://karmatrendz.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/the\\_martian\\_embassy\\_03.jpg](http://karmatrendz.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/the_martian_embassy_03.jpg); Brett Boardman, Peter Murphy;  
[http://c1038.r38.cf3.rackcdn.com/group5/building44147/media/jwvj\\_martian\\_embassy\\_lava\\_petermurphy11.jpg](http://c1038.r38.cf3.rackcdn.com/group5/building44147/media/jwvj_martian_embassy_lava_petermurphy11.jpg); 24 July 2012



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Boun-1 Shelving system defines soffit and edge
- Form-1 Organic form of soffit and walls
- Obj-1 Globe of Mars
- Obj-2 Telescope
- Obj-3 Mannikin in 'martian' attire
- SVeh-1 Typography: signage applied to shopfront
- Use-1 Technical: seating
- Use-2 Semiotic: boundary

**CONNOTATION**

The objects indicates fantasy fiction and imagination; escape from reality

Words establishes thematic connection ('Mars')

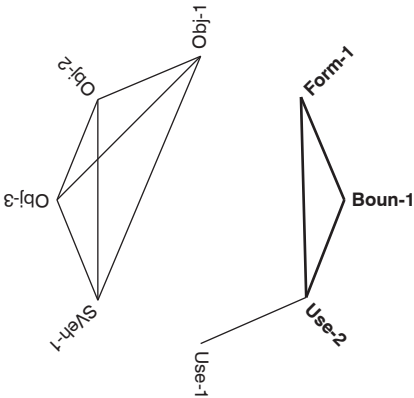
**SEMIOSIS**

Form maintain both technical and semiotic uses: it carries meaning and utility.

Direct associative connections are established through words and objects.

**Discourses**

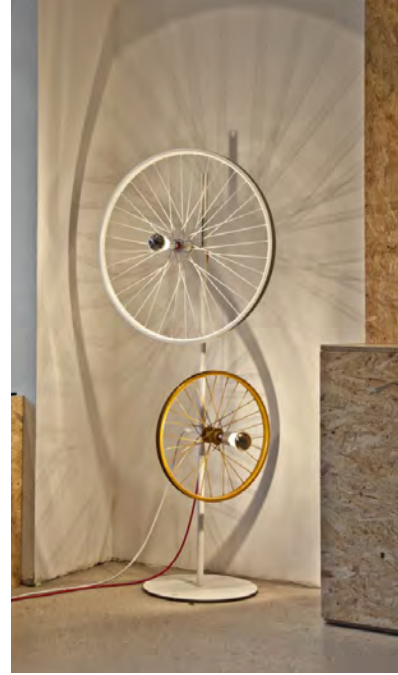
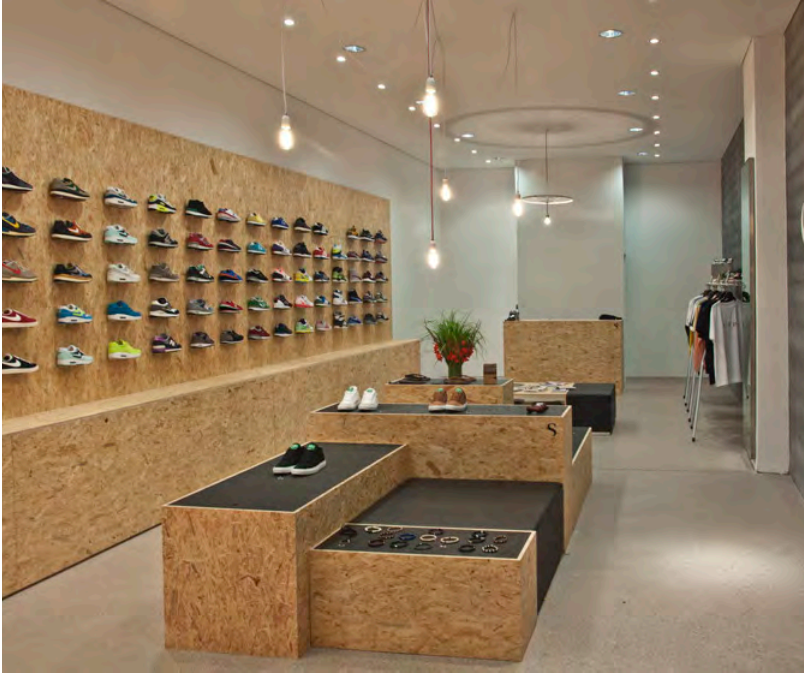
- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://4.bp.blogspot.com/\\_ivo3G24OgEU/TJscEqAcBSI/AAAAAAAAAUM/Dm1d5L9zFH4/s1600/Mars+1+copy.jpg](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_ivo3G24OgEU/TJscEqAcBSI/AAAAAAAAAUM/Dm1d5L9zFH4/s1600/Mars+1+copy.jpg);



020 SUPPA



The shop is presented as a boutique. The message is conveyed with a selected range of merchandise with the implication that the shop has a high level of service and that most of the merchandise are kept back of house.

This is in contrast with the informality of the merchandise. The informality is informed by the material use (oriented strand board); colour use and artefacts (e.g. bare lamps). Wit is applied through the use of found objects (e.g. bicycle wheel lamps and pendants).

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31. Non-Canonical

**SUPPA Sneaker Boutique;** Retail - Shoes (sneakers); DLF Product Design: Daniele Luciano Ferrazzano; Stuttgart, Germany; c. 2012;  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/08/11/suppa-sneaker-boutique-by-daniele-luciano-ferrazzano/>; Daniele Luciano Ferrazzano;  
<http://dlf-design.com/?p=925>; 11 August 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 Specimen
- Cstel-1 Sneakers on display: grid pattern
- Cstel-2 Display area in centre of shop
- Fur-1 Upholstered seat
- Light-1 Artificial: non functional pendant
- Light-2 Artificial: general illumination, technical
- Mat-1 OSB: merchandise display
- Mat-2 Walls and soffit: plastered painted white
- Obj-1 Display rail with t-shirts
- Obj-2 Pendant with bicycle wheel
- Obj-3 Pendant: exposed lamp
- Use-1 Display plinth: pair of sneakers
- Wit-1 Bicycle wheel

**CONNOTATION**

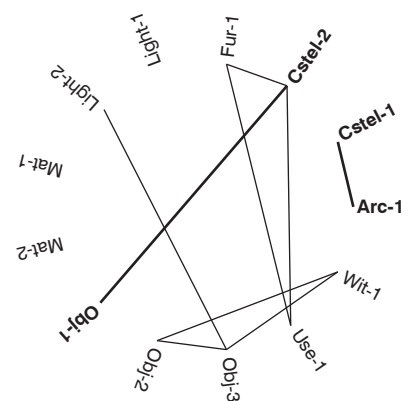
- Single item per type - individuality, high service level
- Special focus; primary function (fitting shoes)
- Decorative
- Material used to indicate loose-fit insertion in existing shell
- Selected, special emphasis

**SEMIOSIS**

The primary function is connoted with a constellation; this is substituted with an object supporting a secondary function. High-order functions (archetype and constellation) support each other.

**Discourses**

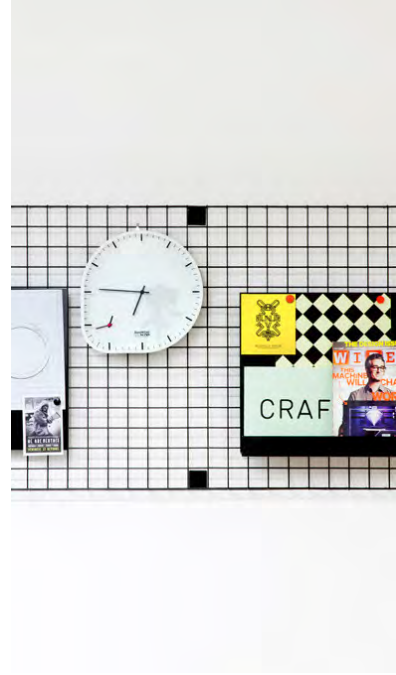
- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://tips.rnns.ru/uploads/posts/2010-08/1281266320\\_3640403.jpg](http://tips.rnns.ru/uploads/posts/2010-08/1281266320_3640403.jpg)



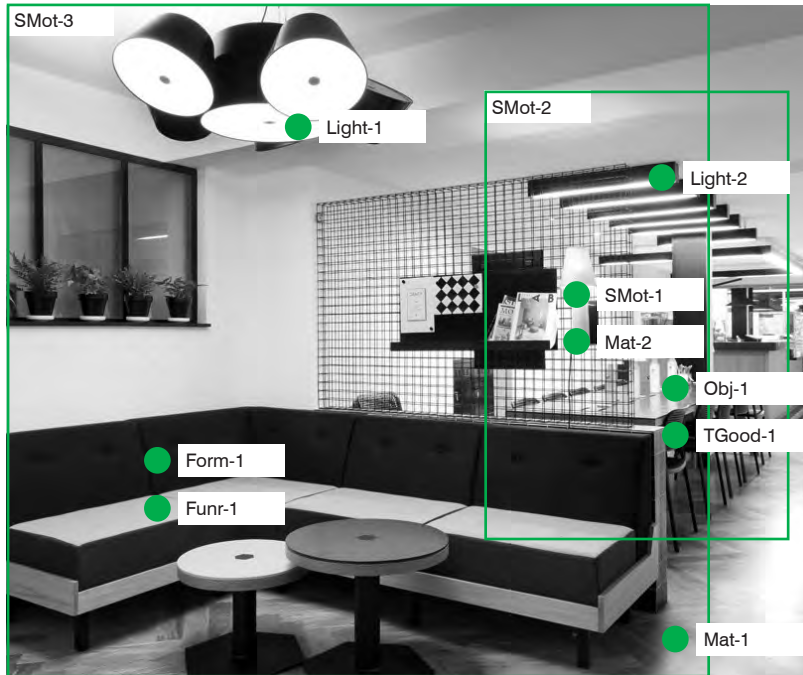
021 Cafe Craft



The cafe uses a range of symbols and materials associated with other typologies (e.g parquet; chequered tiles and terrazzo connoting home; cafe and library). This is enforced with the use of artefacts (reading lamps; pendants; couch; coffee tables; etc.)

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**Cafe Craft; Eatery - Restaurant; POOL; Paris, France; c. 2012;**  
<http://work.poolhouse.eu/#Craft>; Samuel Kirszenbaum;  
<http://work.poolhouse.eu/#Craft>; 09 October 2012;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Form-1  | L-shaped sofa                           |
| Fur-1   | Upholstery: various shades              |
| Inhab-1 | Domestic symbolic motifs                |
| Light-1 | Artificial: pendant                     |
| Light-2 | Artificial: fluorescent surface mounted |
| Mat-1   | Parquet floor                           |
| Mat-2   | Steel mesh: black                       |
| Obj-1   | Reading lamps: table mounted            |
| SMot-1  | Edge: boundary, see-through             |
| SMot-2  | Den: study area                         |
| SMot-3  | Den: living area                        |
| TGood-1 | Library reference                       |

## CONNOTATION

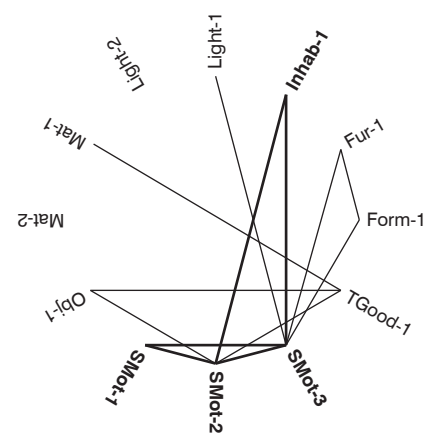
|  |
|--|
| Comfort, informality, relaxation   |
| Den  |
| Inhabitation, demarcates an area   |
| Library, reading room  |
| Easy movement between public and private sphere (although here the spheres as fictional) |
| Privilege  |
| Domesticity  |
| Privilege; education   |

## SEMIOSIS

The ubiquity of domestic meaning is synthesised with public cultural meaning to create new associations.

## Discourses

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://en.academic.ru/pictures/enwiki/71/Graz\\_University-Library\\_reading-room.jpg](http://en.academic.ru/pictures/enwiki/71/Graz_University-Library_reading-room.jpg);

022 Granny.F

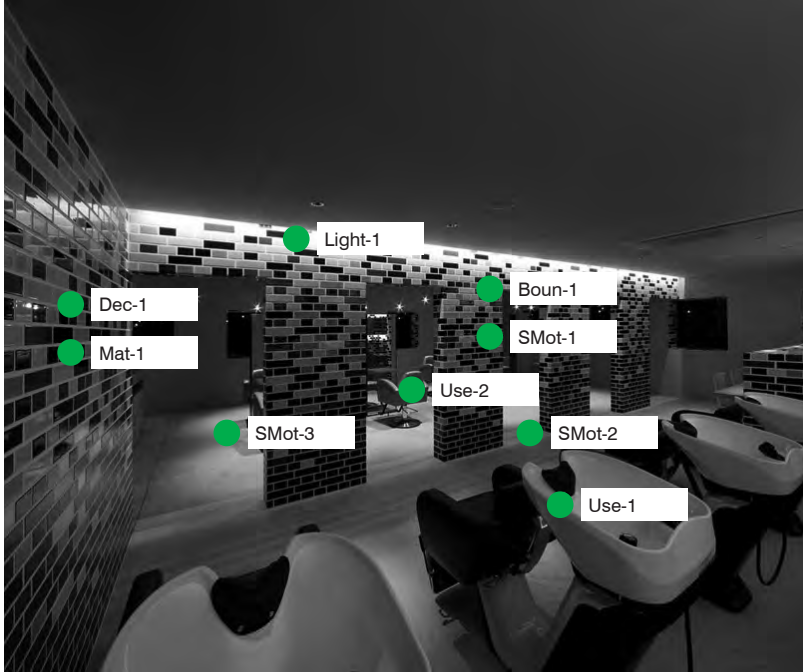


The glazed brick (repeated on the interior and exterior) is associated with brick cultures (e.g Dutch, English). This is an example of cultural capital from one geographic area used in another place.

Furniture use is typical for salons.

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**Granny.F Salon; Services - Hair Salon; Hiroyuki Miyake; Toyokawa, Japan, c. 2012;**  
<http://thelayer.me/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Granny-f-salon-by-Hiroyuki-Miyake-3.jpg>; Rikoh Adachi;  
[http://static.dezeen.com/uploads/2012/09/dezeen\\_Granny.F-by-Hiroyuki-Miyake\\_10.jpg](http://static.dezeen.com/uploads/2012/09/dezeen_Granny.F-by-Hiroyuki-Miyake_10.jpg); 01 October 2012;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |                                   |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| Boun-1  | Boundary between functions        |
| Dec-1   | Pattern: bricks                   |
| Light-1 | Artificial: alcove lighting       |
| Mat-1   | Glazed bricks                     |
| SMot-1  | Edge: boundary between functions  |
| SMot-2  | Journey: between functional stops |
| SMot-3  | Threshold: square arches          |
| Use-1   | Washing station                   |
| Use-2   | Cutting station                   |

## CONNOTATION

A range of symbolic motifs (edge; journey; and threshold) work in conjunction to control movement through space. This also controls the narrative of the space

## SEMIOSIS

A range of methods may be used in conjunction with each other to strengthen cultural functions.

## Discourses

Alteration

Episteme

### Form

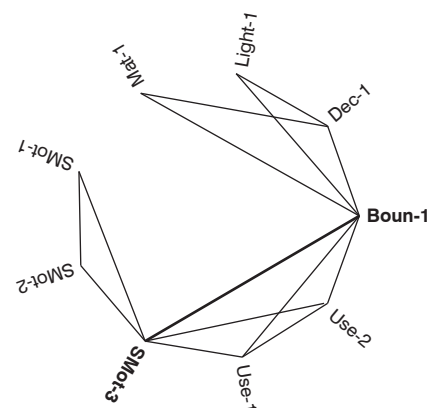
Gender / Sexuality

Identity / Ontology

Inhabitation and the Body

### Interiority

Taste



[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9c/Salt\\_glazed\\_brick\\_Castle\\_House\\_Sheffield.jpg/768px-Salt\\_glazed\\_brick\\_Castle\\_House\\_Sheffield.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9c/Salt_glazed_brick_Castle_House_Sheffield.jpg/768px-Salt_glazed_brick_Castle_House_Sheffield.jpg);



023 Freedom Cafe



The restaurant is the outdoor eatery for an hotel and is made as a large assembly of found objects (including a shipping container) existing buildings and new construction. The project contains a large amount of materials, objects, colours and references.

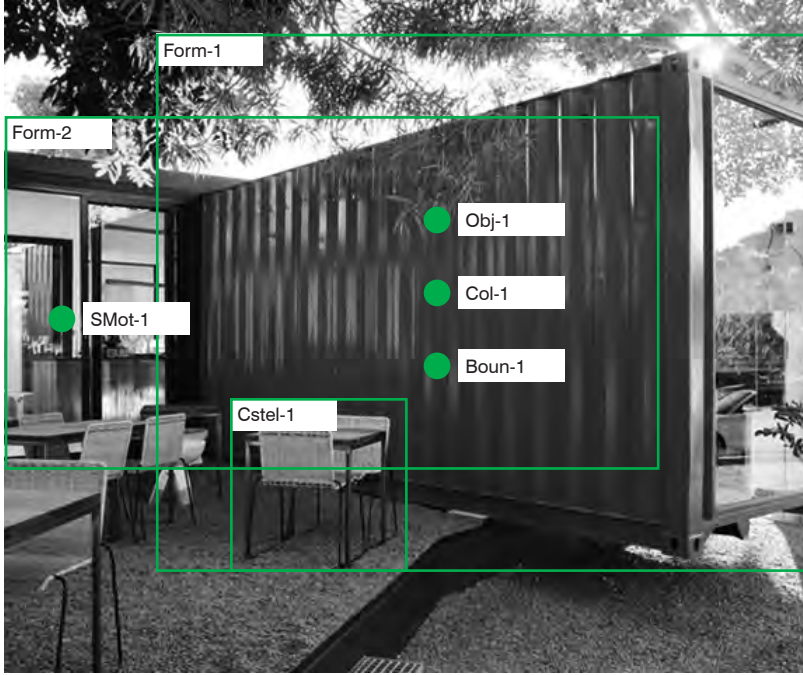
The project creates a vibrant, lively and informal atmosphere.

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**Freedom Cafe; Eatery - Restaurant; Egg Designs; Durban, South Africa; c. 2012;**  
[http://www.tastefreedom.co.za/images/peek\\_inside\\_3.jpg](http://www.tastefreedom.co.za/images/peek_inside_3.jpg);  
<http://www.hyltonwarburton.co.za/70502/143306/work/freedom-cafe-signage>; 20 September 2012;





## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Boun-1  | Steel wall  |
| Col-1   | Red: painted steel                                  |
| Cstel-1 | Dining table with two chairs                        |
| Form-1  | Platonic solid: cube (elongated)                    |
| Form-2  | Boolean function between two solids: intersection   |
| Obj-1   | Shipping container: re-used                         |
| SMot-1  | Threshold: transition between interior and exterior |

## CONNOTATION

Strong sense of containment

New more complex form is generated; separate areas of containment; interiority

## SEMIOSIS

A found object is re-used for a new function.

Interiority is maintained through the use of a bright colour and strong boundary.

## Discourses

Alteration

Episteme

Form

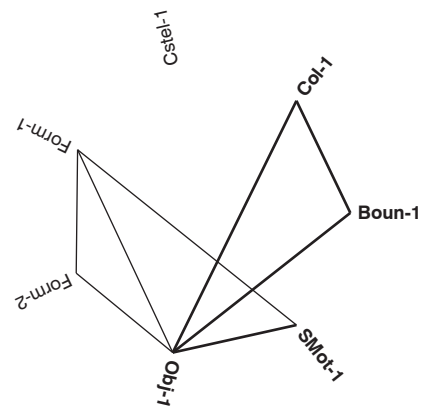
Gender / Sexuality

Identity / Ontology

Inhabitation and the Body

Interiority

Taste



[http://www.shu.ac.uk/mediacentre/sites/c3ri/files/Shonibare\\_web.jpg](http://www.shu.ac.uk/mediacentre/sites/c3ri/files/Shonibare_web.jpg)



The exact date of publication is not determined; I include the project since I feel it is useful for the study.

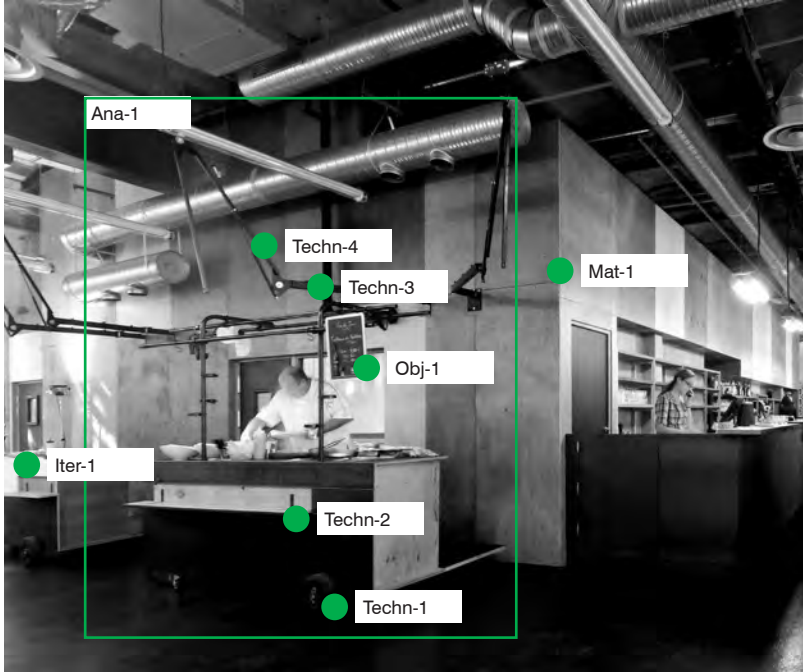
The interior is a loose-fit assembly of bespoke objects which refer older models (e.g. dining chairs) and cultural references (e.g. market stall). The material use is sombre and atmospheric, with a limited and muted colour palette.

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**Les Grandes Table du 104; Eatery - Restaurant; Ciguë; Paris, France; 2010;**

<http://www.cigüe.net/fic/pdf/press-book.pdf>;

<http://www.cigüe.net/fic/pdf/press-book.pdf>; c. 2011;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Ana-1 Market stall
- Iter-1 Repetition of stalls; with variation
- Mat-1 Timber board panels: cladding
- Obj-1 Black board
- Techn-1 Castor
- Techn-2 Flap: drop-down
- Techn-3 Armature
- Techn-4 Hinge in armature

**CONNOTATION**

- Adds complexity and variation to the project
- Temporality, change: freshness of produce; limited availability
- The armature is a holonym of its hinge
- An example of one techneme being a meronym of another

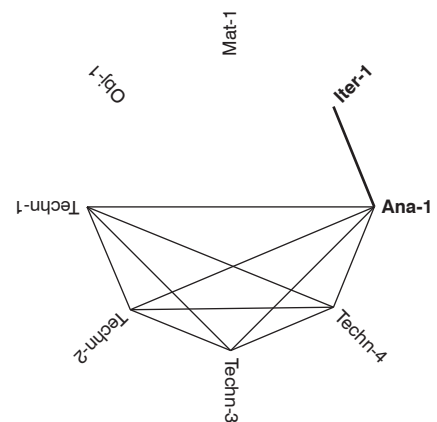
**SEMIOSIS**

It is necessary to determine the morphological relationship between meaning carrying elements. As example the morphological relationship between nesting technemes. Technemes are used in proximity to constitute larger artefacts.

Traditive methods (iteration) and associative methods (analogy) support each other.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<https://lh6.googleusercontent.com/-91hhALir3Jw/UJY52zJI1FI/AAAAAAAAEWA/8g3Y4vEHZ4k/s0/Delicious%2520pies%2520and%2520quiches%2520at%2520Broadway%2520Market.jpg>

025 Unknown Union



An insertion in an 18th century building; apart from the windows and doors no original features are intact in the interior, it is assumed the spiral staircase in an addition.

Storage and display units are painted the entire colour spectrum. Lighting is provided with an arrangement of exposed fluorescent luminaires.

Although it is a male boutique, the interior does not imply a specifically masculine atmosphere.

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**Unknown Union;** Retail - Fashion (informal wear; male); Architecture at Large: Rafael de Cárdenas; Cape Town, South Africa; c. 2011;

[http://jonwilson.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/IMG\\_0507\\_Unknown\\_Union.jpg](http://jonwilson.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/IMG_0507_Unknown_Union.jpg); Jon R Wilson;  
<http://www.dontparty.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/UU-Shop-for-Dont-Party-21.jpg>; 15 May 2011

;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Boun-1 Facade: historic on street
- Col-1 Various: painted display cases
- Dec-1 Pattern: placement of luminaires
- Light-1 Artificial: fluorescent, surface mounted
- Obj-1 Staircase: existing structure, alteration
- Obj-2 Column: painted
- Obj-3 Display cases

**CONNOTATION**

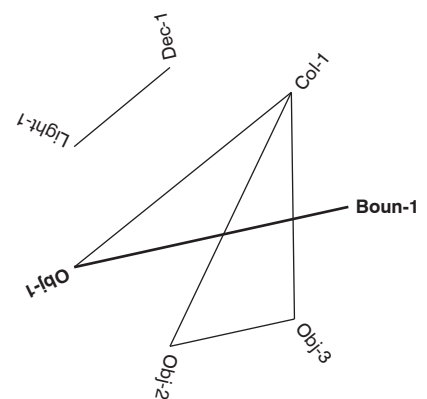
- Creates a strong sense of enclosure, and enables the interior to develop its own distinct identity
- Transfunctionalisation: functions as organising device

**SEMIOSIS**

Existing elements that were altered obtain new cultural meanings.

**Discourses**

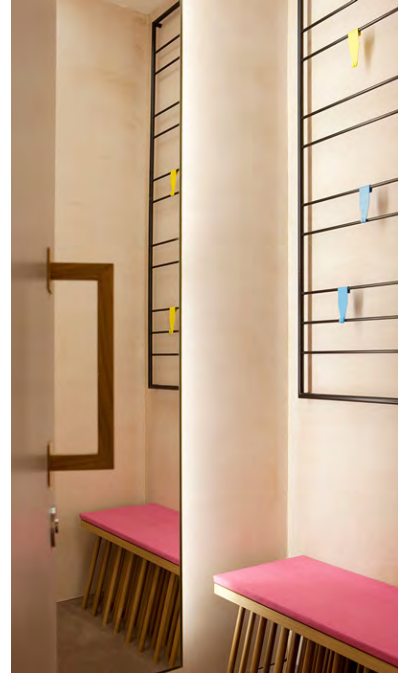
- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
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- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
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<http://images4.fanpop.com/image/photos/21400000/Madonna-s-Confessions-madonna-21428805-1024-1500.jpg>;



026 Adidas Stella



This is the first stand alone retail outlet for the collaborative project between Stella McCartney and Adidas.

McCartney is an iconic British designer and brand, and is associated with the design of the official Team GB sportswear for the London Olympics.

The interior is minimally furnished and the palette is restrained. Colour application is mainly through the use of merchandise.

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**Adidas by Stella McCartney; Retail - Fashion (informal wear; female); APA London; Fulham Road, London, UK; 2012;**

<http://www.think19.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/stella-3.jpg>; Ed Reeve;

<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/06/03/adidas-by-stella-mccartney-store-by-apa/>; 03 June 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Cstel-1 Merchandise and plinth in centre of store
- Furni-1 Coffee table; no apparent function
- Furni-2 Mirror: wall mounted
- Image-1 Print: mounted
- Light-1 Natural: from door, filtered (translucent glass)
- Light-2 Artificial: spot lights, track mounted
- Obj-1 Mannikin: with merchandise
- Use-1 Use not determined

**CONNOTATION**

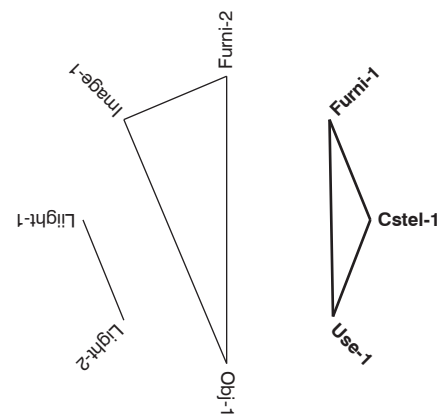
- Focus area; important merchandise
- Non-functional; stylistic; taste
- Identity formation: self-appraisal
- Non-functional; stylistic; taste

**SEMIOSIS**

The focussed merchandise display is supported with a piece of furniture of indeterminable use; this supports taste as a discourse.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
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- Taste



[http://www.phoenixmag.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/TEAM\\_GB.jpg](http://www.phoenixmag.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/TEAM_GB.jpg);



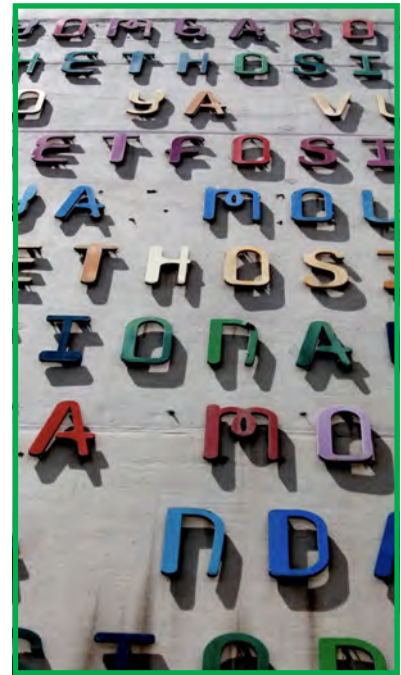
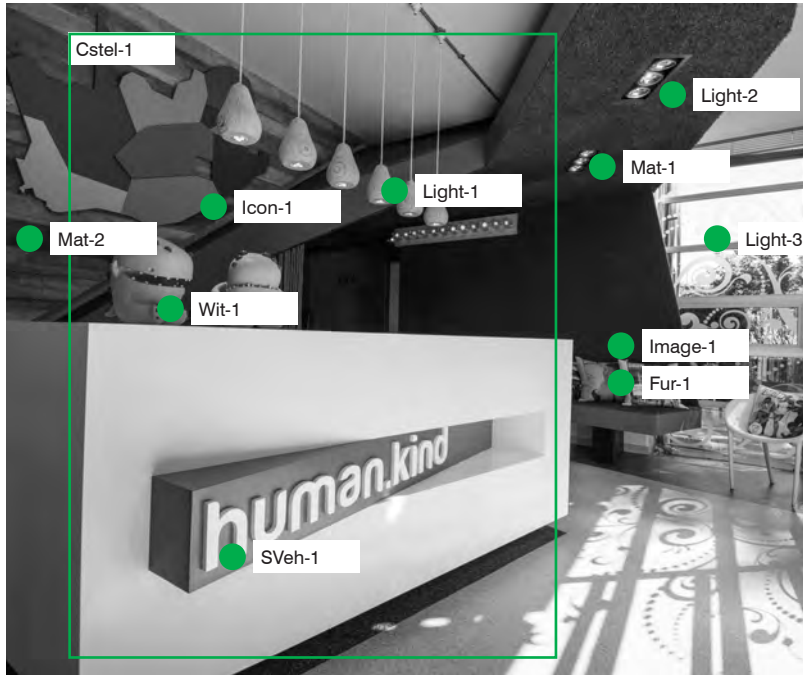
Reception counters are often the first physical point of contact between a service provider and a client; they are therefore an important node to establish or convey the identity of the place.

The interior is richly textured with a number of symbolic and iconic references. The interiors should provide a professional / corporate environment but is clear that a sense of fun and informality was aimed for.

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**Human.Kind Advertising; Commercial - Offices (services); PPS Architects; Johannesburg, South Africa; 2013;**

[http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/51360059b3fc4ba1c700003a\\_human-kind-advertising-pps-architects\\_1.jpg](http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/51360059b3fc4ba1c700003a_human-kind-advertising-pps-architects_1.jpg); Lizl Sheridan;  
[http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/513600aab3fc4b44c000003f\\_human-kind-advertising-pps-architects\\_9.jpg](http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/513600aab3fc4b44c000003f_human-kind-advertising-pps-architects_9.jpg); 05 March 2013;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

- Cstel-1 Reception counter with row of pendants
- Fur-1 Printed scatter cushions
- Icon-1 Map: South Africa, provinces
- Image-1 Printed: Drum Magazine cover
- Light-1 Artificial: pendant
- Light-2 Artificial: adjustable, recessed
- Light-3 Natural: window
- Mat-1 Astro turf bulkhead
- Mat-2 Reclaimed timber cladding
- SVeh-1 Typography: three dimensional signage
- Wit-1 Crocodiles / Dinosaurs

## CONNOTATION

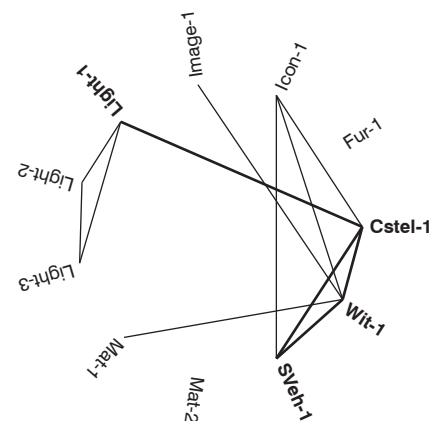
- Nationalism
- National and ethnic connotations; wit
- Cost; craftsmanship; importance
- Pop-culture; sub-culture

## SEMIOSIS

Methods to produce meaning exist ecosystemically. Subtlety in meaning is achieved through the interaction between memetic devices.

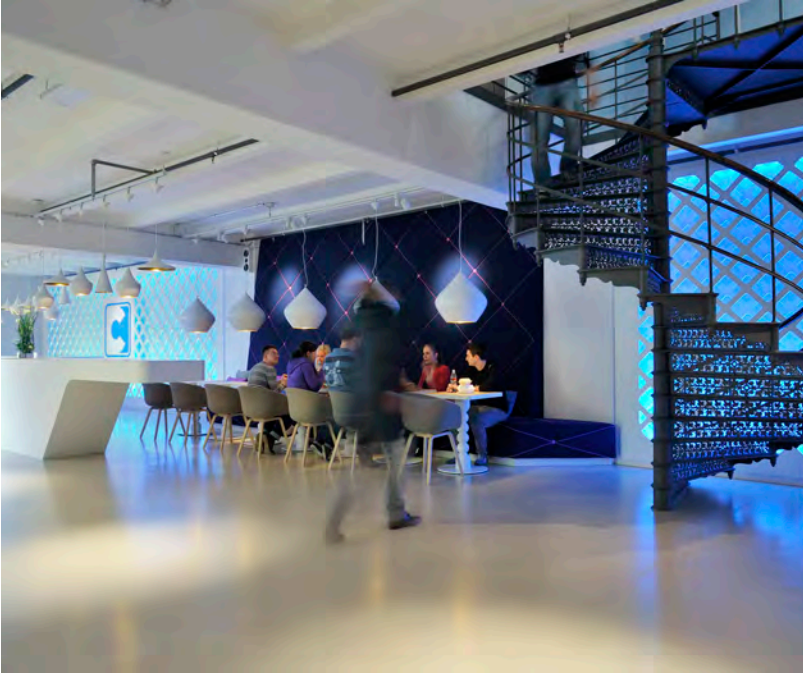
## Discourses

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-16RBORiK0ls/T2B0fQIJRiI/AAAAAAAAAPw/8BSri6iEjaA/s1600/\\_MG\\_7973.jpg](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-16RBORiK0ls/T2B0fQIJRiI/AAAAAAAAAPw/8BSri6iEjaA/s1600/_MG_7973.jpg)





These are corporate offices for an internet agency.

The interiors are open and uncluttered. Objects are chosen with care and used minimally. These include existing objects (e.g. the spiral staircase) and new (e.g. luminaires and furniture).

The atmosphere is serious and sophisticated, with the understated assumption that the company is innovative.

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24. Alpha City
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28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**Covus Central GmbH**; Commercial - Offices (services; ITC); sbp: Seel Bobsin Partner; Berlin, Germany; 2012;  
[http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/514235d6b3fc4bd202000037\\_covus-sbp\\_\\_dsc2652.jpg](http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/514235d6b3fc4bd202000037_covus-sbp__dsc2652.jpg); Karsten Knocke;  
[http://www.archdaily.com/344326/covus-sbp/5142360eb3fc4bd202000039\\_covus-sbp\\_\\_dsc2715-jpg/](http://www.archdaily.com/344326/covus-sbp/5142360eb3fc4bd202000039_covus-sbp__dsc2715-jpg/); 15 March 2013;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 Showcase stair
- Craft-1 Wood turning
- Craft-2 Cast iron
- Cstel-1 Banquette with tables and chairs; large pendants. Arranged in a row
- Ens-1 Arrangement of pendant luminaires
- Fur-1 Upholstery: wall cladding, diamond pattern, with buttons
- Icon-1 Company logo
- Inter-1 Reference to Jaime Hayon table legs
- Obj-1 Spiral staircase, from existing structure; alteration
- Obj-2 Various Tom Dixon luminaires
- Techn-1 Buttons
- Techn-2 Seam

**Discourses**

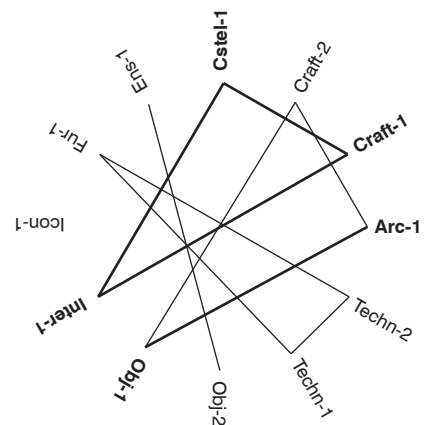
- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste

**CONNOTATION**

- Traditional craftsmanship
- Functional containment: eating area
- Contemporary iterations of traditional references
- Good taste, discretion, expense

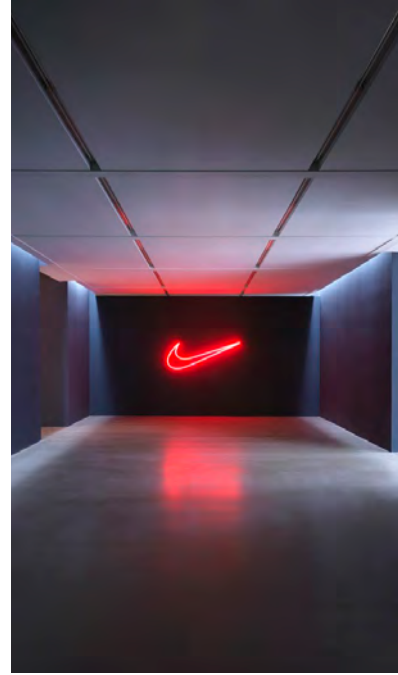
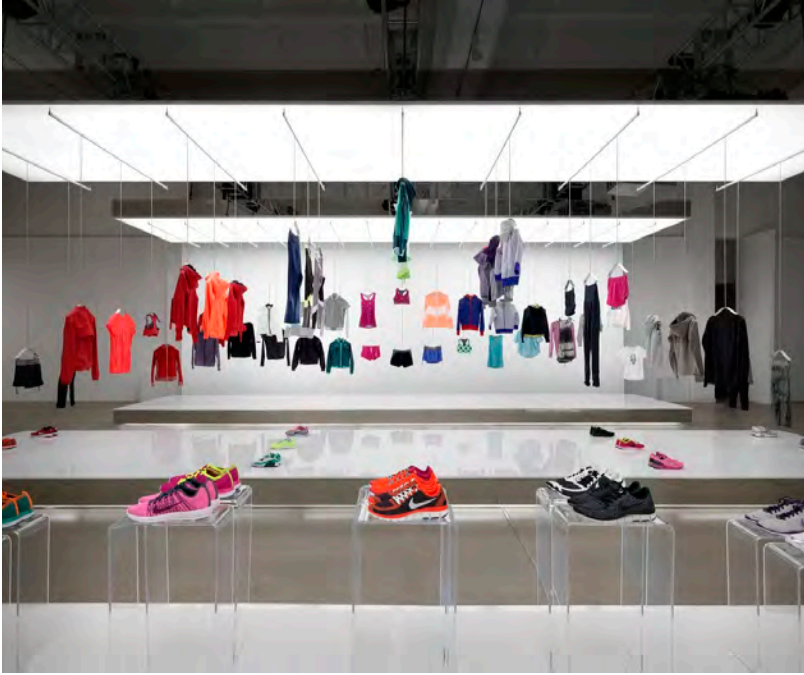
**SEMIOSIS**

Intertextual references and designer objects installs cultural capital. This is supported by traditional craftsmanship. Craft can be considered as an traditive and iterative method. This indicates the association between tradition and iteration.



<http://andberlin.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/hotel-adlon-pariser-platz.jpg>;

029 Nike Pop-Up



This project is included as an example of a main stream global brand. Design innovation is present in the temporality of the installation. In addition the project is presented as a museum exhibit; with objects on display in an anthropological sense.

The installation has the feeling of being heavily curated with interior design acting as facilitator.

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**Nike Pop-Up Showroom; Retail - Fashion (sportswear; unisex); Maggie Peng and Albert Tien; Beijing; China; 2012;**

[http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/50c79c29b3fc4b2b1000005d\\_nike-pop-up-showroom-maggie-peng-albert-tien\\_08\\_2012-11-29\\_beijing\\_nike\\_womens\\_collection\\_0060\\_hi-res.jpg](http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/50c79c29b3fc4b2b1000005d_nike-pop-up-showroom-maggie-peng-albert-tien_08_2012-11-29_beijing_nike_womens_collection_0060_hi-res.jpg); Jonathan Leijonhufvud;

[http://www.archdaily.com/305979/nike-pop-up-showroom-maggie-peng-albert-tien/50c79c0cb3fc4b2b10000056\\_nike-pop-up-showroom-maggie-peng-albert-tien\\_01\\_2012-11-29\\_beijing\\_nike\\_womens\\_collection\\_0018\\_hi-res-jpg/](http://www.archdaily.com/305979/nike-pop-up-showroom-maggie-peng-albert-tien/50c79c0cb3fc4b2b10000056_nike-pop-up-showroom-maggie-peng-albert-tien_01_2012-11-29_beijing_nike_womens_collection_0018_hi-res-jpg/); 13 December 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 White box
- Col-1 Various: through objects on display
- Form-1 Bulkead and plinth: void between solids
- Obj-1 Various clothing items on display
- Techn-1 Suspension system
- Techn-2 Clothing hanger
- Type-1 Morphological: containers
- Type-2 Use: gallery
- Use-1 Display

**CONNOTATION**

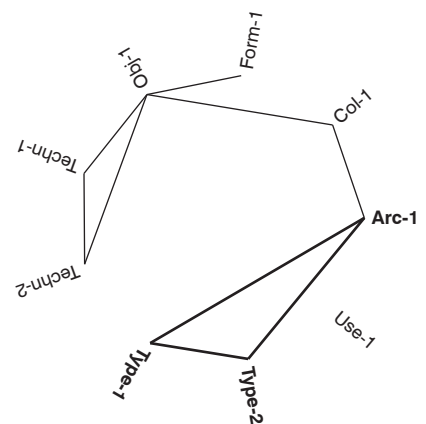
- Importance, focus
- Containment
- Transfunctionalisation: dumb valet

**SEMIOSIS**

Typological concerns are addressed through the use of archetype; this indicates a clear association between type and archetype.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-ZiMbynglCF0/TdaLH2bsMAI/AAAAAAAAABnI/vw4c6jiAcD8/s1600/Yohji%2BYamamoto%2BExhibition%2B2%2B%2528c%2529%2BV%2526A.jpg>



The set design for this documentary is included because I feel that it is useful to the study.

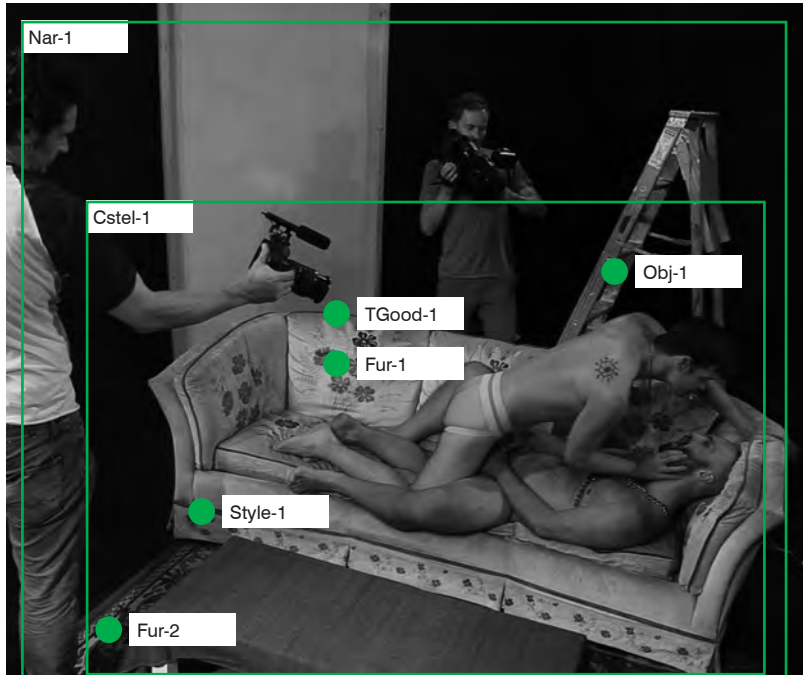
The set for this sex scene is interesting for the choice of artefacts. Although the film is set against S&M subculture, the furniture choices for this scene are very conservative and conventional; like a typical living room: couch, rug, coffee table, side table and lamp. The scene makes comments on interiority, where a domestic interior is located 'inside' the fictitious interior of the documentary film. The artefacts act symbolically to connote domesticity.

The interior comments on notions of privacy and publicity, gender and sexual identity and taste.

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**Set Design and Decoration for "Interior. Leather Bar.;"**; Set - Film (documentary); Set Design: Liz Phillips,  
 Director of Photography: Keith Williams; c.2012, Released: January 2013;  
<http://www.interiorleatherbar.com/press-notes/>;  
[http://news.teddyaward.tv/downloads/images/Filmstills/InteriorLeather\\_2.jpg](http://news.teddyaward.tv/downloads/images/Filmstills/InteriorLeather_2.jpg); 19 January 2013;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Cstel-1 Sofa with coffee table and carpet
- Fur-1 Upholstery: satin with embroidery
- Fur-2 Oriental carpet
- Nar-1 Set design: double narrative
- Obj-1 Ladder
- Style-1 Iconic styling
- TGood-1 Vintage sofa

**CONNOTATION**

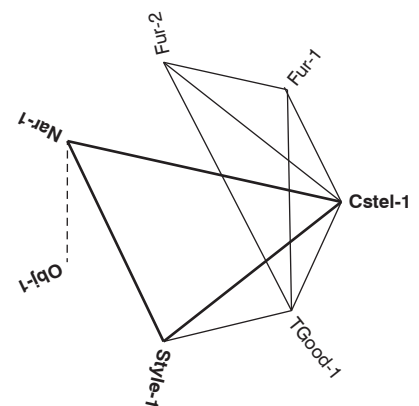
- Domesticity
- Shabbyness, re-used, thrift
- Imitation - shabbyness
- Two scenes: film and documentary
- Destroys the narrative - off-screen elements
- Thrift

**SEMIOSIS**

The narrative is supported stylistically and through the use of constellation.  
An inappropriate object indicates the artificiality of the narrative.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://fritzfrayer.co.uk/c/products/lg/Antique\\_brass\\_and\\_copper\\_standard\\_lamp.jpg](http://fritzfrayer.co.uk/c/products/lg/Antique_brass_and_copper_standard_lamp.jpg);





The wine tasting room is located in a converted auto garage in Walla Walla, Washington. The location and brand subverts the expected conservatism of wine making; although nostalgic references are present.

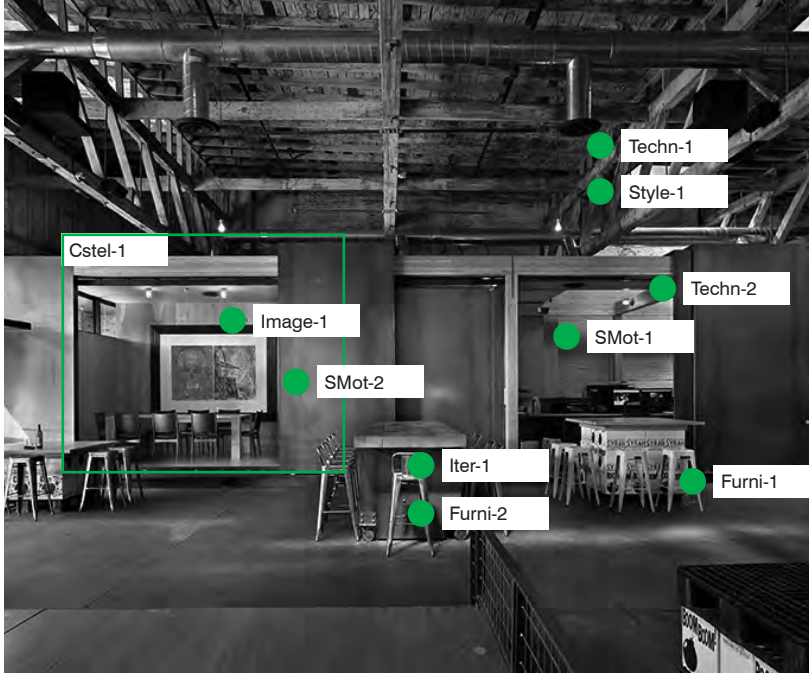
The intervention in the industrial interior is minimal, with partitions and furniture allowing multiple events and uses.

The interior (and brand) portrays a high degree of informality and as such comments on the elitism and snobbery traditionally associated with vintners.

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**Charles Smith Wines Tasting Room and Headquarters;** Hospitality - Wine Tasting; Olson Kundig Architects; Walla Walla, USA; 2011;

[http://blog.archpaper.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/wine\\_tasting\\_02.jpg](http://blog.archpaper.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/wine_tasting_02.jpg); Benjamin Benschneider; [http://ei.isnooth.com/multimedia/1/b/7/image\\_2176514\\_full.jpeg](http://ei.isnooth.com/multimedia/1/b/7/image_2176514_full.jpeg); 20 June 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Cstel-1 Dining room: large dining table
- Furni-1 Tolix Marais bar stool: without backrest
- Furni-2 Tolix Marais bar stool: with backrest
- Image-1 Artwork: framed
- Iter-1 Variation of furniture
- SMot-1 Threshold: to semi-private area
- SMot-2 Edge: barrier between public and semi-private area
- Style-1 Skeumorphic styling: truss manufacture
- Techn-1 Timber truss
- Techn-2 Timber frame

**CONNOTATION**

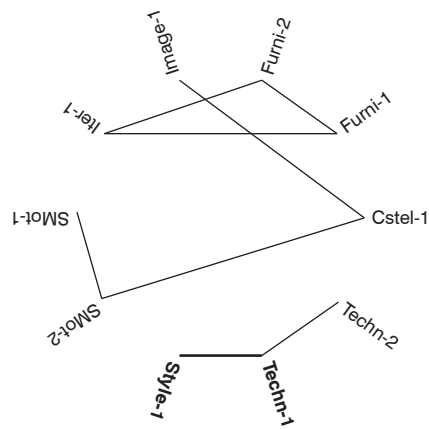
Fashionable items, functionality,

**SEMIOSIS**

Apart from their technical function, technemes may be transfunctionalised to carry stylistic meaning.

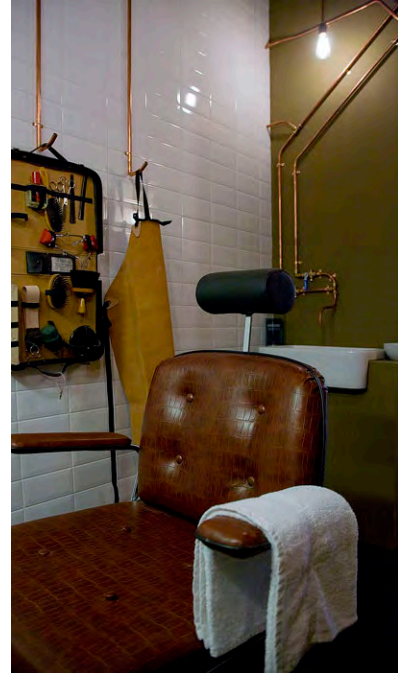
**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://stc.obolog.net/photos/5039/50391e4b9a290s40250\\_b.jpg](http://stc.obolog.net/photos/5039/50391e4b9a290s40250_b.jpg)

032 Barber Amsterdam



Electrical services and water are distributed in surface mounted copper pipes. The exposed services are used for other utilitarian functions, such as towel hooks. This is an obvious example of transfunctionalisation.

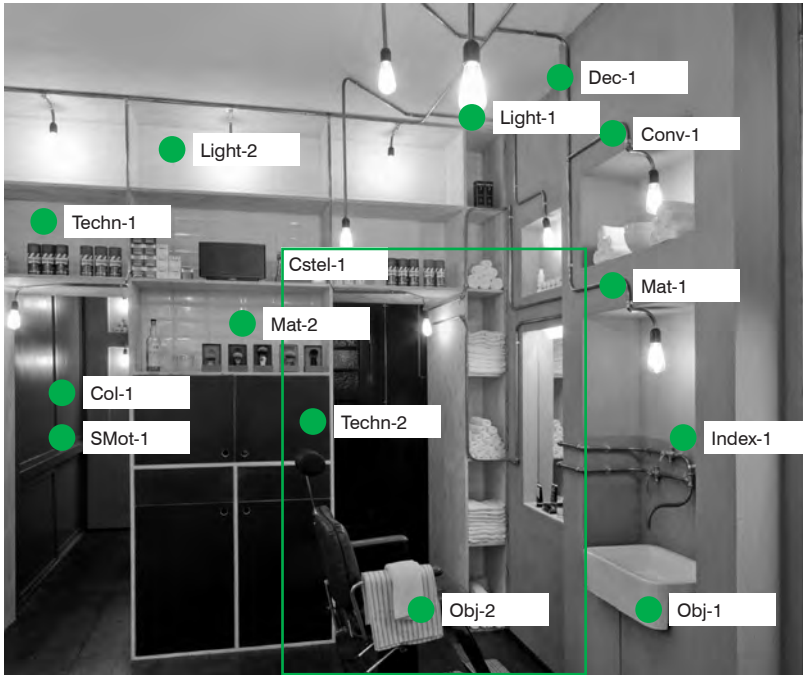
A number of expected materials are included, e.g. leather upholstery and glazed ceramic tiles.

The interior is easily identifiable as a barber, with some elements of nostalgia. It is clearly masculine.

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**Barber Amsterdam; Services - Hair Salon; Ard Hoksbergen; Amsterdam, The Netherlands; c. 2012;**  
[http://www.debaard.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Barber-7\\_photo-Wouter-van-den-Brink.jpg](http://www.debaard.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Barber-7_photo-Wouter-van-den-Brink.jpg); Wouter van den Brink;  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/09/07/barber-amsterdam-by-ard-hoksbergen/>; 07 September 2012;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Col-1 Green: painted walls
- Cstel-1 Barber chair and mirror
- Conv-1 Unconventional: electrical wiring in copper conduit
- Dec-1 Pattern: created from conduits
- Index-1 Faucet
- Light-1 Artificial: general illumination; exposed lamp
- Light-2 Artificial: alcove lighting
- Mat-1 Copper: exposed pipes
- Mat-2 Bevelled glazed tiles
- Obj-1 Laboratory sink: semi-recessed
- Obj-2 Towels
- SMot-1 Mystery: service area
- Techn-1 Open shelves
- Techn-2 Closed cupboard

**Discourses**

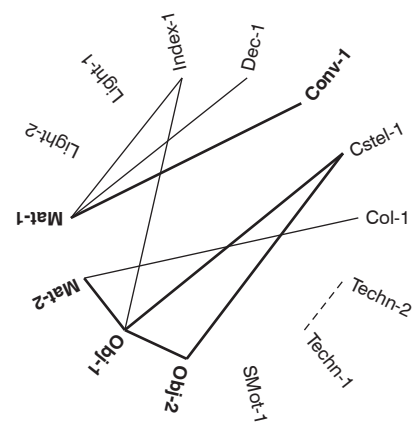
- Alteration
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- Form
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- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste

**CONNOTATION**

- Function, use
- Copper pipes indicates water
- Used as conduit for electrical wiring: technically inappropriate
- Iteration: contemporary interpretation of techne; iconic styling

**SEMIOSIS**

Objects, material and a constellation is used in combination to indicate a function.  
A convention is broken through inappropriate material use - this has decorative purposes.



[http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-5atHVNdnRyE/TZo5s7gP2FI/AAAAAAAAAG8E/z8LH-IFmKfA/s1600/bmw\\_r51-3\\_copper-and-leather\\_bobber\\_controls\\_luie-leather.jpg](http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-5atHVNdnRyE/TZo5s7gP2FI/AAAAAAAAAG8E/z8LH-IFmKfA/s1600/bmw_r51-3_copper-and-leather_bobber_controls_luie-leather.jpg)

033 Clae Pop-Up



Although the shop is temporary and constructed from recycled shipping crates (used for Kontenerart 2012) it portrays an identity consistent with the merchandise and brand.

The display and organisation of merchandise, lighting and packaging is used to portray a sophistication that exceeds the construction material.

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**Clae Pop-Up Shop; Retail - Footwear (male); mode:lina architekci; Poznań, Poland; December 2012;**  
<http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/1357185588-modelina-clae-1.jpg>; mode:lina architekci;  
<http://modelina-architekci.com/pivotx/?e=370>; 04 January 2013;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 Specimen
- Light-1 Artificial: Spotlights on track; temporary
- Light-2 Artificial: Recessed, general illumination; permanent
- Mat-1 Packing pallettes: recycled
- Mat-2 Timber planks
- Obj-1 Shoe boxes
- Obj-2 Ladder; non-functional
- SVeh-1 Typography: branding
- SVeh-2 Signature: designers' brand
- Techn-1 Shadowline
- Techn-2 Pegboard

**CONNOTATION**

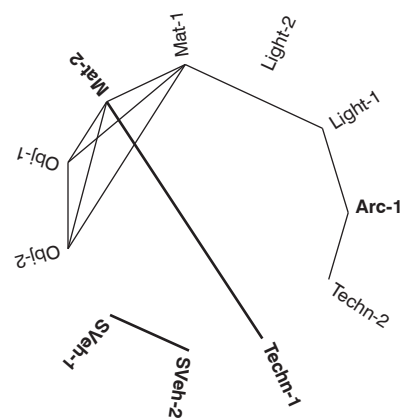
- Thrift; temporality
- Timber construction - barn
- Associative - construction; storage; barn
- Unusual for designer's to sign the work
- Flexibility

**SEMIOSIS**

The use of sign vehicles is a direct and obviously noticeable method to directly add and communicate meaning. The association between material and techneme indicates that both are technical methods.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://clae.com/lookbook?color=8&>

034 Yandex



Unusual objects are employed to create an interior that is semantically disconnected from the IT-corporation it houses. Although it is a large corporate office the interior has the feeling of an industrial laboratory or warehouse.

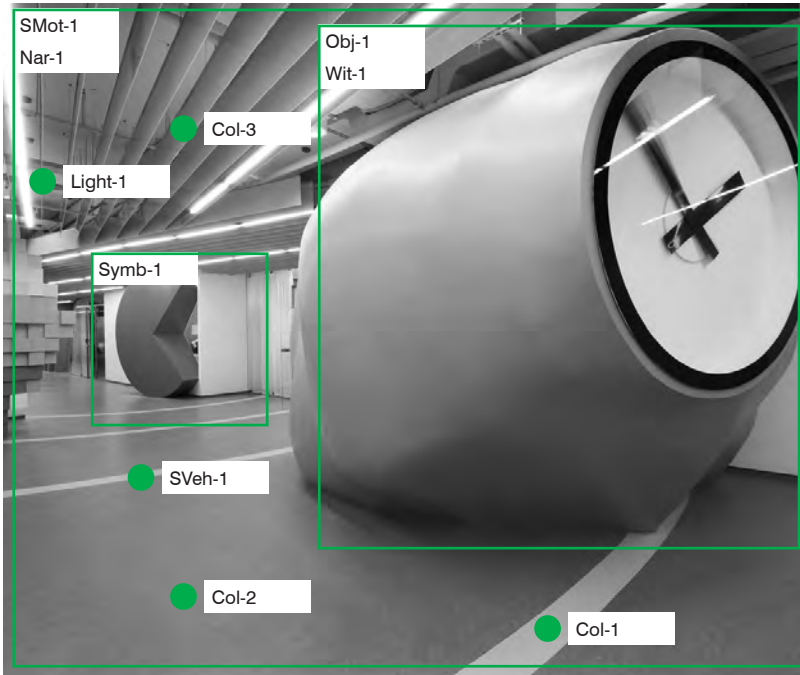
The interior is further informed with symbolic and iconic references to Yandex's services (e.g. password input boxes, search buttons etc.).

The offices are organised along a 200 metre central spine (hallway); along which a number of 'images' are presented. This indicates the separation in interior design between architectural elements and those based on the image (although three dimensional in this case).

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**Yandex St Petersburg Office;** Commercial - Regional Office (ITC); za bor architects; St. Petersburg, Russia; c. 2012;

[http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/5045669728ba0d7ecb0001cd\\_yandex-saint-petersburg-office-ii-za-bor-architects\\_img\\_0892.jpg](http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/5045669728ba0d7ecb0001cd_yandex-saint-petersburg-office-ii-za-bor-architects_img_0892.jpg); Peter Zaytsev; [http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/504566ca28ba0d7ecb0001d9\\_yandex-saint-petersburg-office-ii-za-bor-architects\\_img\\_0965.jpg](http://ad009cdnb.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/504566ca28ba0d7ecb0001d9_yandex-saint-petersburg-office-ii-za-bor-architects_img_0965.jpg); 10 September 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Col-1 Yellow: industrial flooring
- Col-2 Gray: industrial flooring
- Col-3 Yellow: louvres
- Light-1 Artifial: fluorescent; recessed between louvres
- Nar-1 Linear movement: various objects presented
- SMot-1 Journey: hallway
- Obj-1 Clock: oversized
- SVeh-1 Markings on floor
- Symb-1 3-D pie chart
- Wit-1 Oversized and unusual object

**CONNOTATION**

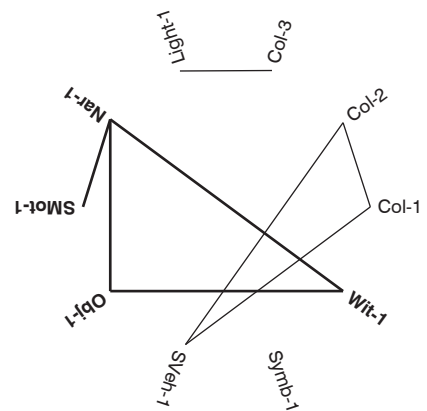
Industrial

**SEMIOSIS**

A short description of the semiotic process in this project. Keep the comments brief and aim at abstraction.  
Refer to the diagram of relationships of methods.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://us.123rf.com/400wm/400/400/johanswan/johanswan1201/johanswan120100002/12022075-internet-a-sign--concu-avec-le-code-binaire-pixellise--rendu-3d.jpg>

035 Altimetro

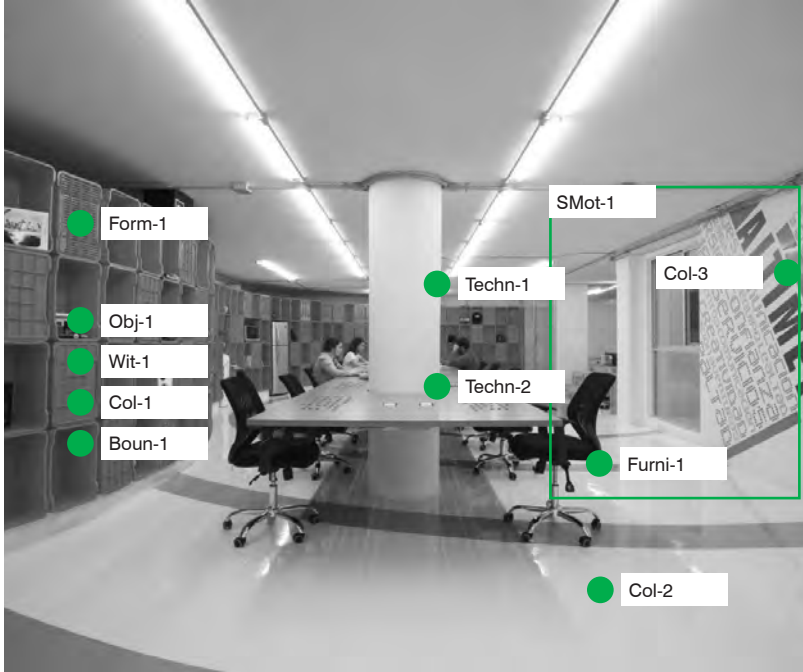


Colour is used minimally, with the palette consisting of gray and white with a bright orange curved storage wall and orange in the signage. The furniture (chairs and desk) is conventional for offices; apart from the scale of the table.

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**Altimetro**; Commercial - Offices (Tourism; extreme sports); Darkitectura; Colonia Roma, Mexico; 2012;  
[http://www.archdaily.com/287674/altimetro-darkitectura/508f438e28ba0d295600008c\\_alt-metro-darkitectura\\_28-jpg/](http://www.archdaily.com/287674/altimetro-darkitectura/508f438e28ba0d295600008c_alt-metro-darkitectura_28-jpg/); Yoshihiro Koitani;  
[http://www.archdaily.com/287674/altimetro-darkitectura/508f438228ba0d295900009f\\_alt-metro-darkitectura\\_23-jpg/](http://www.archdaily.com/287674/altimetro-darkitectura/508f438228ba0d295900009f_alt-metro-darkitectura_23-jpg/); 31 October 2012;





## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |                              |
|---------|------------------------------|
| Boun-1  | Boundary of open plan office |
| Col-1   | Orange: spine                |
| Col-2   | Gray and white: epoxy floor  |
| Col-3   | Orange: signage              |
| Form-1  | Datum: spine                 |
| Furni-1 | Generic office chair         |
| Obj-1   | Packing crate: re-used       |
| SMot-1  | Edge: boundary of office     |
| Techn-1 | Column                       |
| Techn-2 | Opening                      |
| Wit-1   | Inappropriate use            |

## CONNOTATION

Transfuntionalisation

Tenon - insertion  
Mortice - insertion

## SEMIOSIS

A short description of the semiotic process in this project. Keep the comments brief and aim at abstraction.

Refer to the diagram of relationships of methods.

## Discourses

Alteration

Episteme

Form

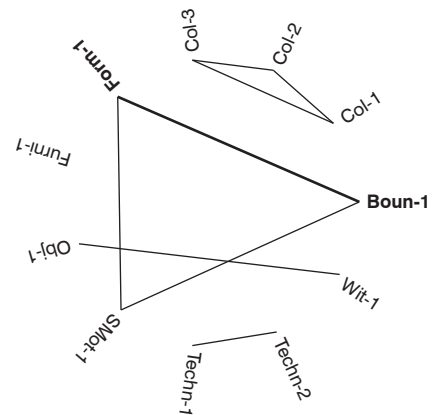
Gender / Sexuality

Identity / Ontology

Inhabitation and the Body

Interiority

Taste



<http://media.salewa.com/product-images/64031.png>



036 Yusuvara

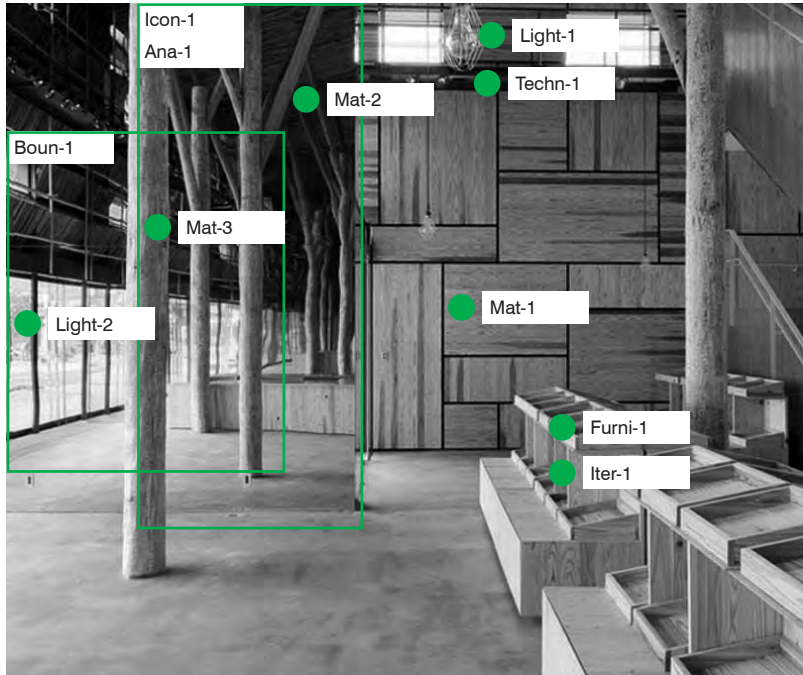


The market is devoid of visual clutter. This is obviously since the photographs were taken of an unoccupied building. In this case the decision to publish the photographs of the space in an uninhabited condition is important: market stalls represent a lack of visual control.

Columns represent trees and are iconic to that extend. Further symbolic references are made through the use of materials (e.g. straw bales and timber).

1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
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9. Broad Reading
10. Iconic of Built
11. Cultural Context
12. Small Scale Production
13. Media
14. Expert
15. Layperson
16. Semantic
17. Critical
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19. Insertion
20. Intervention
21. New
22. Dominant Centre
23. The South
24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**Community Market Yusuvara; Commercial - Market; Kengo Kuma and Associates; Yusuvara, Japan; 2010;**  
<http://www.ideaigo.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Fruit-Market-1-1.jpg>;  
<http://www.ideaigo.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Fruit-Market-1-2.jpg>; 11 September 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Ana-1 Reference to tree
- Boun-1 Facade: transparent
- Furni-1 Bespoke produce display
- Icon-1 Column: tree
- Iter-1 Reference to earlier market stalls
- Light-1 Artificial: Pendant; high-bay
- Light-2 Natural: from facade
- Mat-1 Timber panels: wall cladding
- Mat-2 Timber slat ceiling
- Mat-3 Timber column
- Techn-1 Wire cage

**CONNOTATION**

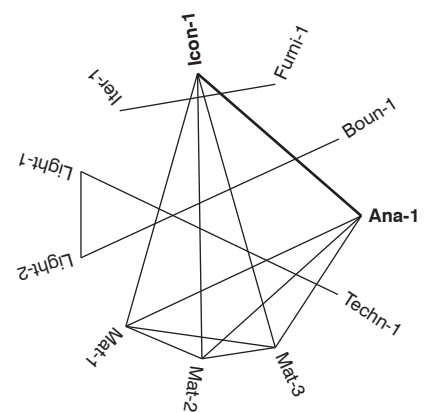
- Interiority questioned
- Unity if material use provide uniform backdrop for market (which will be filled with clutter)
- Protection; anti-vandalism (public space)

**SEMIOSIS**

Analogy and iconic connection as methods are related.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d7/Sagano\\_Bamboo\\_forest\\_Arashiyama\\_Kyoto.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d7/Sagano_Bamboo_forest_Arashiyama_Kyoto.jpg);

037 Flight Simulation



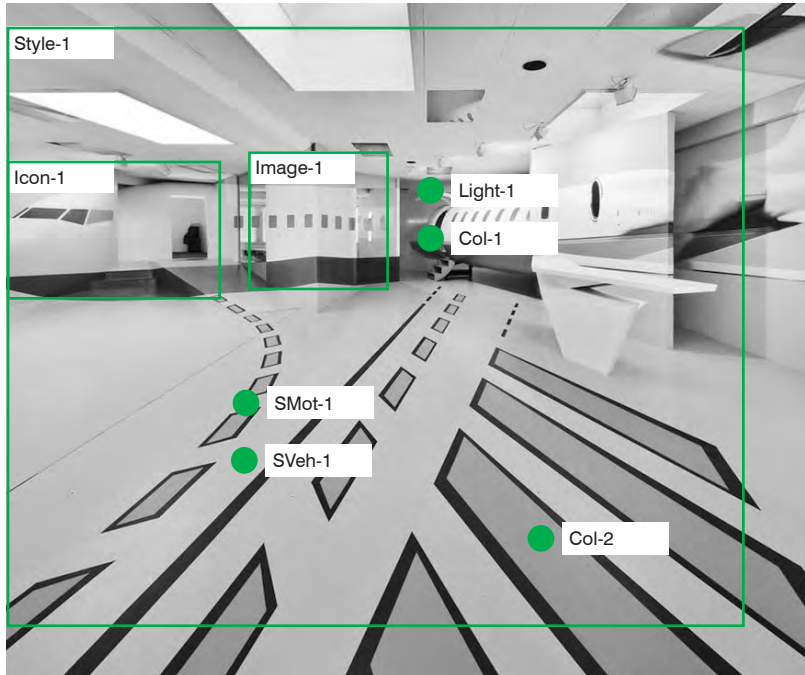
This project is included since I consider it useful to the study, although it does not strictly comply with the selection criteria.

The uses of blatant indexical and iconic connections are convenient examples. These include direct references to the form of the Boeing 737, runway and taxi markings and equipment is included.

1. Interior Design
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31. Non-Canonical

**simINN Flight Simulation Centre;** Commercial - Training (flight simulation); Boris Banozic Architecture / Scenography; Stuttgart, Germany; 2011;  
<http://www.banozic.com/index.php?/projects/siminn/>;  
<http://www.banozic.com/index.php?/projects/siminn/>; 20 December 2011





## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Ana-1   | Aircraft fuselage  |
| Col-1   | Blue: lighting   |
| Col-2   | Orange: markings on floor  |
| Icon-1  | Aircraft   |
| Image-1 | Aircraft windows: applied to wall  |
| Light-1 | Artificial: ambient; coloured  |
| SMot-1  | Journey: indicated with floor markings   |
| SVeh-1  | Markings   |
| Style-1 | Iconic styling: markings and artefacts are deliberately employed to refer to air traffic |

## CONNOTATION

## SEMIOSIS

A short description of the semiotic process in this project. Keep the comments brief and aim at abstraction.

Refer to the diagram of relationships of methods.

## Discourses

Alteration

Episteme

Form

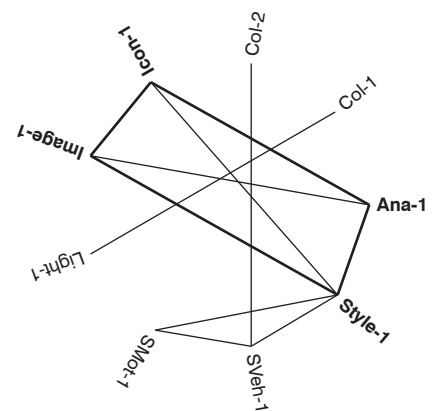
Gender / Sexuality

Identity / Ontology

Inhabitation and the Body

Interiority

Taste



<http://flyawaysimulation.com/media/images1/images/thomas-cook-boeing-737-800.jpg>

;

038 Disco



This is a renovation after twelve years of the club's existence. The entrance tunnel was emblematic since the club's inception, but was altered in the latest intervention. (The club was originally designed by Isay Weinfeld in 2000, and remodelled by him in 2006.)

The intervention is an iteration of the original design, and similar semiotic vehicles are employed.

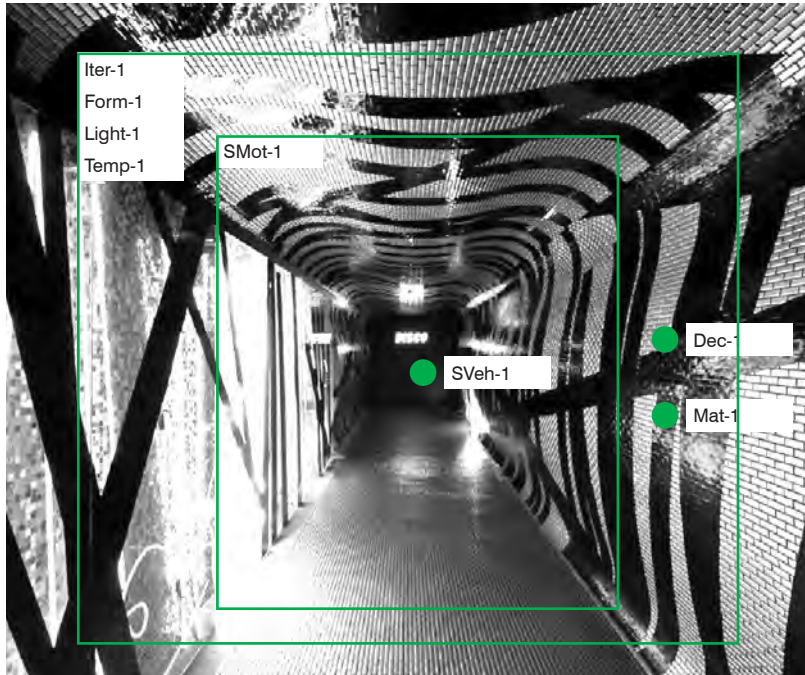
The display of the neon 'Disco' sign is notable.

Specific associations are difficult to define, since nightclubs, in general, connote glamour and sex.

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27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**Clube Disco**; Social - Club (dance, bar); Estudio Guto Requena;; Itaim Bibi, Sao Paulo, Brasil; 2012;  
[http://www.archdaily.com.br/77960/disco-club-estudio-guto-requena-mauricio-arruda-arquitetos-designers/mauricio\\_arruda\\_guto\\_requena/](http://www.archdaily.com.br/77960/disco-club-estudio-guto-requena-mauricio-arruda-arquitetos-designers/mauricio_arruda_guto_requena/); Fran Parente;  
[http://www.archdaily.com.br/77960/disco-club-estudio-guto-requena-mauricio-arruda-arquitetos-designers/mauricio\\_arruda\\_guto\\_requena-5/](http://www.archdaily.com.br/77960/disco-club-estudio-guto-requena-mauricio-arruda-arquitetos-designers/mauricio_arruda_guto_requena-5/); 29 October 2012;





## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Dec-1   | Pattern: applied with tiles                      |
| Form-1  | Platonic: elongated cube                         |
| Iter-1  | Third intervention                               |
| Light-1 | Artificial: ambient; colour flood                |
| Mat-1   | Glazed tiles                                     |
| SMot-1  | Journey: entrance passage; destination indicated |
| SVeh-1  | Typography: backlit signage                      |
| Temp-1  | Exclusion of outside temporal indicators         |

## CONNOTATION

The form is not changed during three interventions - it indicates that form is more permanent

Destination

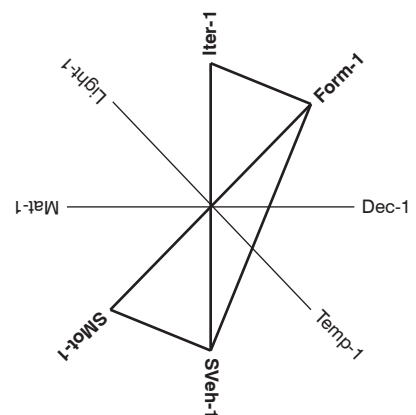
## SEMIOSIS

A short description of the semiotic process in this project. Keep the comments brief and aim at abstraction.

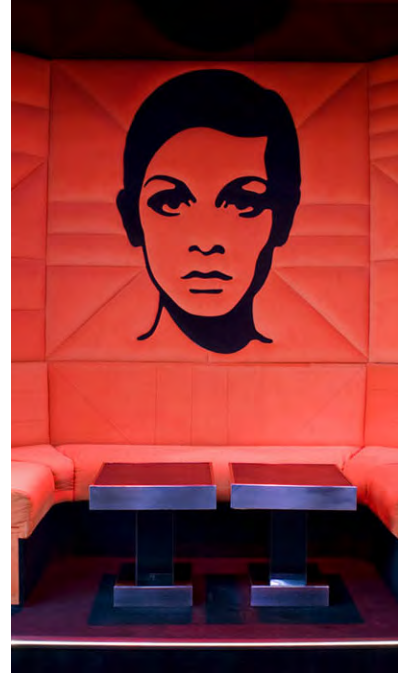
Refer to the diagram of relationships of methods.

## Discourses

Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste



<http://www.stepbystep.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/club6.jpg>



Pink neon seems to be a universal signifier in night clubs.

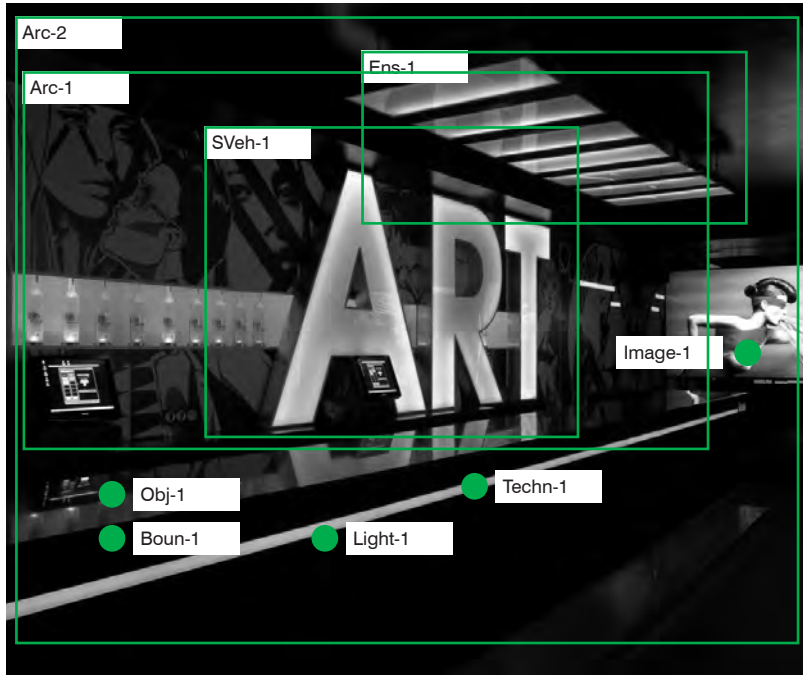
This club is differentiated from others since it also serves as an art gallery. Iconic images (e.g. a drawing of the model Twiggy) are used to generate associations and emphasise the patrons.

Furnishing is used to question the social roles of patron in the club; e.g. emphasis on individual seating against walls questions the notion of the 'wall flower'. This indicates that proximity and position of patrons in a venue carries cultural meaning.

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30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical



**Club MUSÉE;** Social - Club (dance, bar, art gallery); Parolio & Euphoria Lab; Suburb, Madrid, Spain; 2011;  
<http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-GVPMtWKsop0/Tas7jpMwqFI/AAAAAAAAAVw/q9QhYr7e44o/s1600/barra.jpg>;  
<http://www.thecoolhunter.net/article/detail/1914/club-musee--madrid>; 21 March 2011;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Arc-1   | Billboard                              |
| Arc-2   | Black out                              |
| Boun-1  | Edge between service and served areas  |
| Ens-1   | Soffit-mounted luminaires: linear      |
| Image-1 | Artwork: lit                           |
| Light-1 | Artificial: effect; recessed, coloured |
| Obj-1   | Counter                                |
| SVeh-1  | Typography: signage - conceptual       |
| Techn-1 | Light trough                           |

## CONNOTATION

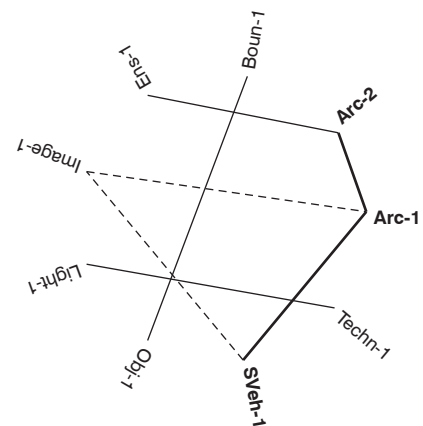
## SEMIOSIS

A short description of the semiotic process in this project. Keep the comments brief and aim at abstraction.

Refer to the diagram of relationships of methods.

## Discourses

Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste



<http://pleasurephoto.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/twiggy-1967-photo-by-richard-avedon-b.jpg>;

040 Farma Kreation



This Greek restaurant creates a nostalgic and traditional atmosphere without losing a sense of contemporaneity.

- The use of traditional artefacts, displayed on large shelving, is notable.
- The colour scheme is simple with high levels of contrast.

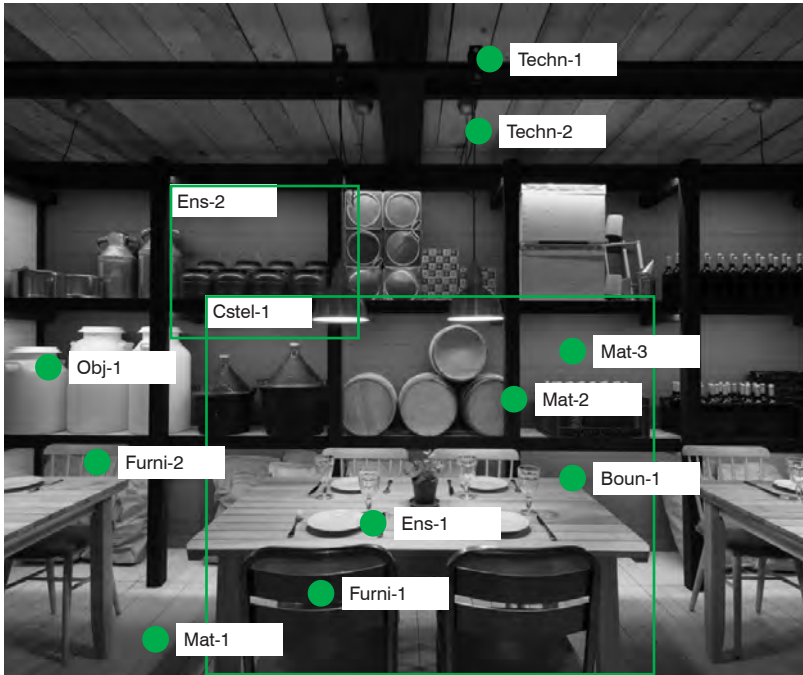
1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
8. Contrived/Fictional
9. Broad Reading
10. Iconic of Built
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30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**Restaurant Farma Kreation;** Eatery - Restaurant; Minas Kosmidis (Architecture in Concept); Komotini, Greece; 2012;

[http://karmatrendz.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/farma\\_kreation\\_07.jpg](http://karmatrendz.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/farma_kreation_07.jpg);

<http://www.modernarchitectureconcept.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/major-view-design-by-Minas-Kosmidis.jpg>; 07 June 2012;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Boun-1 Light cone
- Cstel-1 Dining table with four chairs
- Ens-1 Place setting
- Ens-2 Arrangement of terracotta olive vats
- Furni-1 Café chair: steel
- Furni-2 Contemporary Shaker  
Windsor chair: timber
- Mat-1 Timber floor: whitewashed
- Mat-2 Timber support: painted black
- Mat-3 Timber wall cladding: painted green
- Obj-1 Various vernacular vessels
- Techn-1 Bracket and hook for pendant
- Techn-2 Ceiling rose for pendant

**CONNOTATION**

Uniformity in material with different colour finishes.

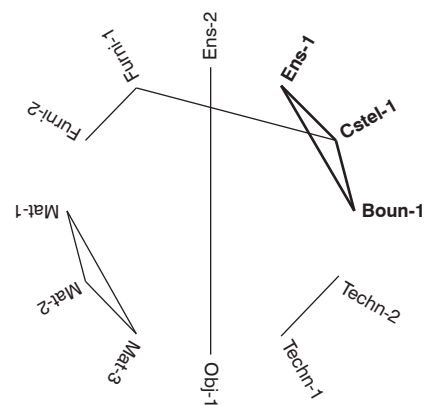
The light cone is not directly under the ceiling rose

**SEMIOSIS**

Ensembles can nest within constellations.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-30lvJaTKpCY/TuT6l6dOhII/AAAAAAAAAIGA/quKEl5rCyc/s1600/IMG\\_4159.JPG](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-30lvJaTKpCY/TuT6l6dOhII/AAAAAAAAAIGA/quKEl5rCyc/s1600/IMG_4159.JPG);



041 Muriel Grateau



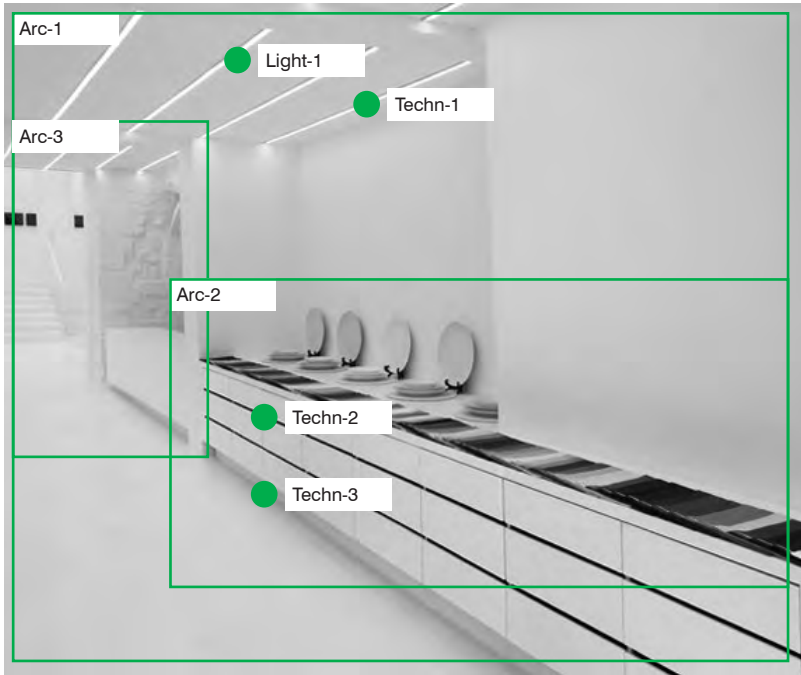
The gallery for the display of Muriel Grateau's tableware (linen and dinnerware) is an archetypical white box gallery. Colour is only applied through the objects on display.

Interior design intervention is limited, with visual merchandising playing the largest role in the generation of meaning.

1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
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10. Iconic of Built
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30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical



**Muriel Grateau Gallery; Retail - Gallery (Tableware); Muriel Grateau; Paris, France, 2012;**  
<http://retaildesignblog.net/2012/10/18/muriel-grateau-gallery-paris/>; Oleg Covian;  
<http://www.interiorator.com/#Muriel-Grateau>; 22 September 2012;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Arc-1   | White box  |
| Arc-2   | Colour spectrum  |
| Arc-3   | White out  |
| Light-1 | Artificial: fluorescent, general illumination; concealed |
| Techn-1 | Strip lighting   |
| Techn-2 | Finger-grip  |
| Techn-3 | Shadowline   |

## CONNOTATION

Range of merchandise. The colour spectrum unifies a series.

Construction details are hidden, Modernist, undecorated.

## SEMIOSIS

Visual merchandising may be the major design tool, which is not always available to the interior designer, this must be considered during the design process.

Design distribution must be considered.

## Discourses

Alteration

Episteme

Form

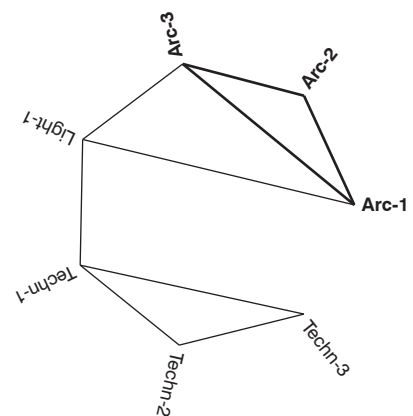
Gender / Sexuality

Identity / Ontology

Inhabitation and the Body

Interiority

Taste



<http://chriscarterart.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/oil-paint-swatches-with-white-chris-carter-artist-092811-web.jpeg>

042 Concrete Blonde



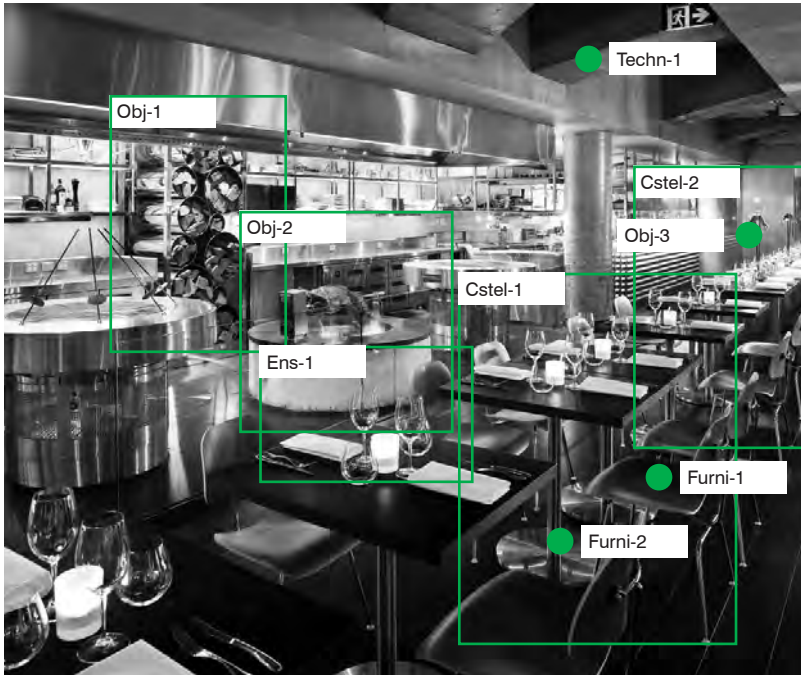
An eclectic interior with the impression of fullness; the colour and material palette is rich and warm.

The warmth (cosiness) is offset with simple planning; specifically concerning the placement of furniture.

I include this interior as an example of 'good taste' and its use as cultural device.

1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
8. Contrived/Fictional
9. Broad Reading
10. Iconic of Built
11. Cultural Context
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31. Non-Canonical

**Concrete Blonde Restaurant; Eatery - Restaurant; Dreamtime Australia Design; Sydney, Australia; 2011;**  
<http://arhitekturaplus.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/9a68e1614aea7785f1de3a5a3833e3b8.jpg>;  
[http://arhitekturaplus.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/concrete-blond\\_arhitektura-4.jpg](http://arhitekturaplus.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/concrete-blond_arhitektura-4.jpg); 25 April 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Cstel-1 Dining table and two chairs
- Cstel-2 Barcounter with stools
- Ens-1 Place-setting: asymmetrical
- Furni-1 Eames Plywood dining chair
- Furni-2 Pedestal table: chrome and dark timber
- Obj-1 Firewood
- Obj-2 Hearth with spitroast
- Obj-3 Table lamp
- Techn-1 Concrete beam

**CONNOTATION**

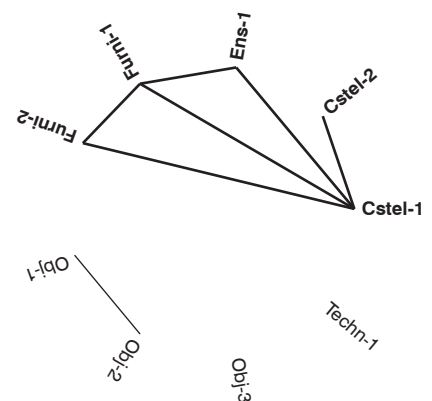
- In close proximity with other constellations
- Library: formality

**SEMIOSIS**

Consider the use of high-order methods in proximity to each other; further consider low-order methods (e.g. furniture) and high-order methods (e.g. ensemble) nesting in another method (e.g constellation).

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-u7iH0F1eztU/UNupMp5bDOI/AAAAAAAAAC00/KidSc9jle-c/s1600/Concrete+Blonde.jpg>



043 Cool House



This project is included as an example of styling or decoration. The project was conceived by an interior stylist, and all objects on display are for sale. This creates the situation where the commercial use of interior merchandise conveys cultural meaning to the domestic interior (which is the target application).

The space is bright and colourful with an eclectic range of objects and artefacts. As a project by the taste arbiter blog, ([www.thecoolhunter.net](http://www.thecoolhunter.net)) this serves as another example of taste as cultural medium.

The installation is housed in a penthouse with a view of Bondi Beach, with clear associations with an outdoor beach lifestyle with connotations of fun and informality.

1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
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9. Broad Reading
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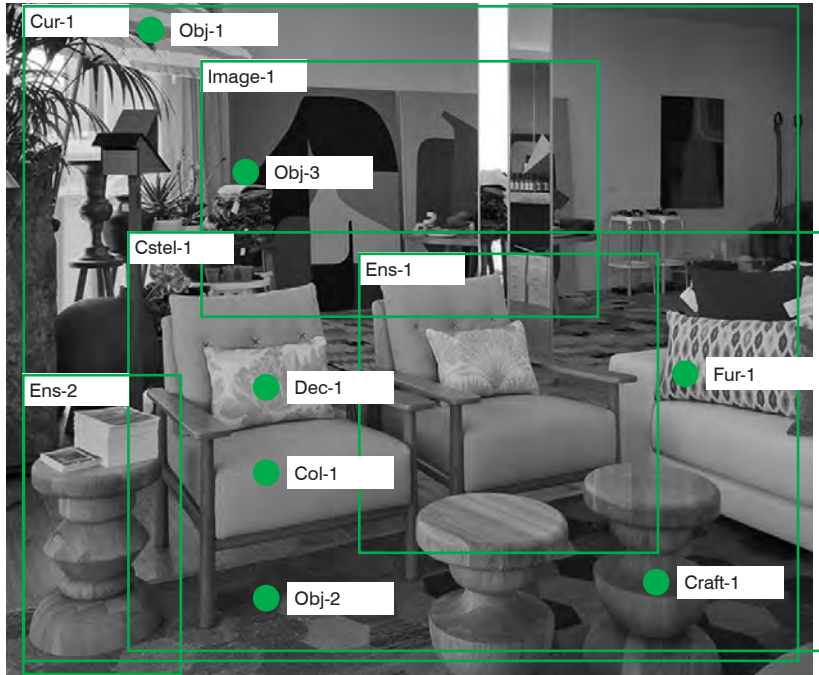
**The Cool House;** Retail - Homeware; Steve Cordony; Bondi Beach, Sydney, Australia; 2012;

[http://stevecordony.com/SC\\_Assets/assets/images/portfolio/thumbnails/Steve\\_Cordony\\_Events\\_The%20Cool%20House1354964256\\_960x1300.jpg](http://stevecordony.com/SC_Assets/assets/images/portfolio/thumbnails/Steve_Cordony_Events_The%20Cool%20House1354964256_960x1300.jpg);

<http://www.thecoolhunter.net/article/detail/2142/the-cool-house-opens-today--sydney>; 06 December 2012

;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Col-1 Yellow: upholstery
- Craft-1 Wood-turning
- Cstel-1 Sofa and recliners
- Cur-1 Selection of furniture and objects
- Dec-1 Motif on cushion: yellow floral
- Ens-1 Recliner with scatter cushions
- Ens-2 Side table with magazines
- Fur-1 Scatter cushions: various textiles
- Image-1 Mural: non-figurative
- Obj-1 Beach umbrella
- Obj-2 Woven carpet
- Obj-3 Arrangement of potted plants

**CONNOTATION**

- Interiority; inhabitation; social interaction
- Matches colour of upholstery
- Unity through use (seating; comfort) and colour (yellow)
- Interiority; demarcates space; unifies the constellation

**SEMIOSIS**

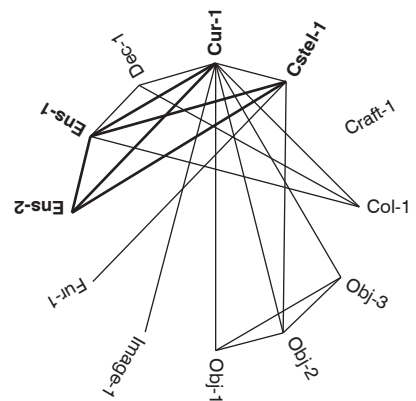
Curation, as a method, is dependent on the selection and arrangement of objects, material, colour, etc. Further it requires the selection of appropriate methods.

A constellation is comprised of the proximal assembly of various ensembles.

Ensembles are curated; this indicates the association of these two methods.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://bondilife.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/ivan-scannell-bondi-beach-miro-house.jpg>;

044 Freipost



A nondescript warehouse was converted to house these offices. Partitions are made from a curved wall of exposed stud framing. Artefacts (e.g. furniture and luminaires) are coloured red to reflect the company's corporate image. This is reinforced by painting the facade in a matching red.

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17. Critical
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19. Insertion
20. Intervention
21. New
22. Dominant Centre
23. The South
24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**Freipost Headquarters;** Commercial - Offices (Headquarters; courier services); ITN Architects; Richmond, Australia; 2012;

[http://www.designboom.com/wp-content/dbsub/333835/2013-04-08/img\\_3\\_1365380198\\_df1045e9f172ed6a28b1396d6ed05c7b.jpg](http://www.designboom.com/wp-content/dbsub/333835/2013-04-08/img_3_1365380198_df1045e9f172ed6a28b1396d6ed05c7b.jpg);

<http://www.designboom.com/architecture/freipost-headquarters/>; 08 April 2013;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Col-1 Red: pendant luminaire
- Col-2 Red: bench upholstery
- Dec-1 Tectonics
- SMot-1 Journey: hall way
- Techn-1 Nut and bolt
- Techn-2 Timber stud
- Techn-3 Timber panel
- Techn-4 Steel truss: painted

**CONNOTATION**

The (limited) use of red in the interior connotes the brand identity

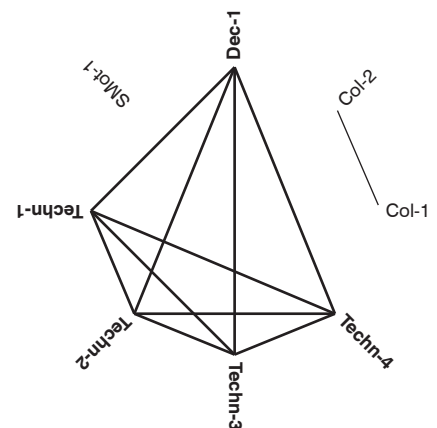
The tectonics of a partition is exposed in the public area - serves a decorative purpose

**SEMIOSIS**

Technemes in proximity can have technical and decorative functions.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://www.logicons.com/images/products/casual.jpg>;



045 Truth Coffee



This is a cafe located in a coffee roastery.

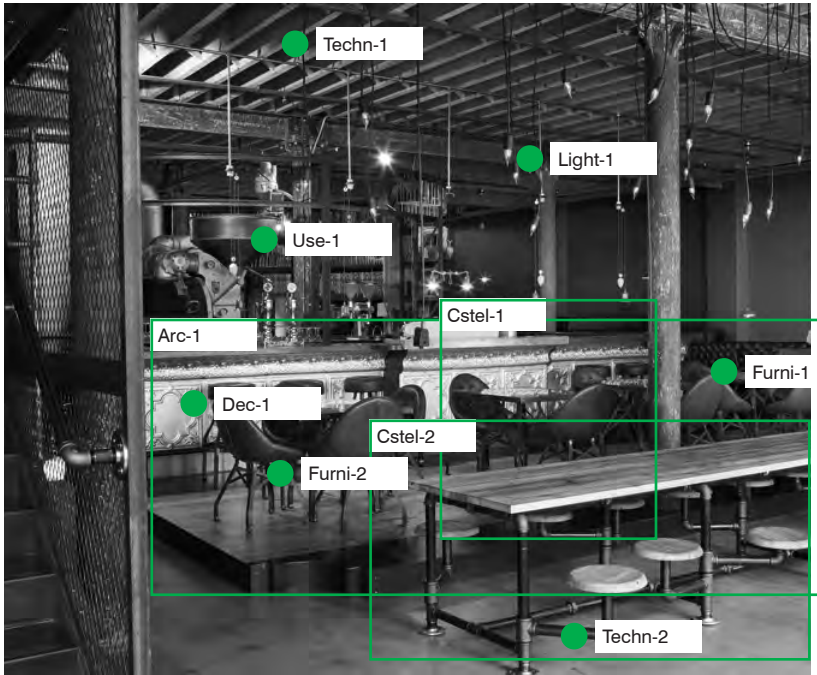
The furniture is from the designer's own furniture range. The interior is decorated with pressed ceiling panels (on the counter); exposed services; and exposed lamps.

Materials and artefacts are used in unexpected applications (e.g. stools manufactured from MS pipes).

Industrial equipment is used as identity carrying artefacts.

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**Truth Coffee; Eatery - Cafe and Coffee Roastery; Haldane Martin; Cape Town, South Africa; 2011-2012;**  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2013/02/26/truth-coffee-shop-haldane-martin-cape-town/>; Micky Hoyle;  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2013/02/26/truth-coffee-shop-haldane-martin-cape-town/>; 26 February 2013;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 Plinth
- Cstel-1 Dining table and two chairs
- Cstel-2 Cafeteria table with many chairs
- Dec-1 Pattern: embossed; press steel panels
- Furni-1 Upholstered leather sofa, chesterfield, brown
- Furni-2 Haldane Martin, upholstered leather chair, green
- Light-1 Artificial: Exposed lamps
- Techn-1 Joists and braces
- Techn-2 Armature
- Use-1 Industrial: grinder / roaster

**CONNOTATION**

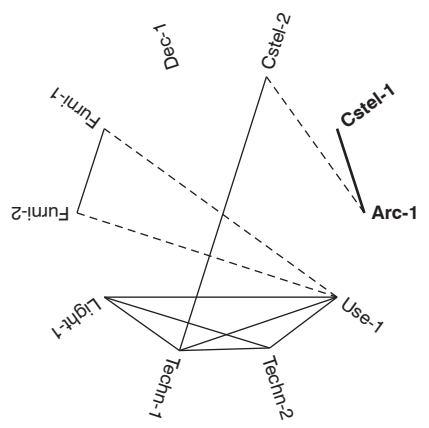
- Boundary: containment; display
- Traditional leather tanner (colour)
- Industrial: used in furniture
- Industry; production

**SEMIOSIS**

A constellation and archetype are associated and supportive; while a second constellation is disassociated. An industrial use is combined with a luxurious use of furniture with traditional connotations.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2b/Steampunk-falksen.jpg>;





Aesop interiors are included as examples of iteration between projects for the same corporate identity, although designed by different design firms.

The interiors are rich in traditional references (e.g. mouldings) which are reinterpreted to ensure that it is contemporary. Traditional objects (e.g. porcelain wash troughs) are re-used in an unexpected context which is considered as a response to convention and example of innovation in interior design.

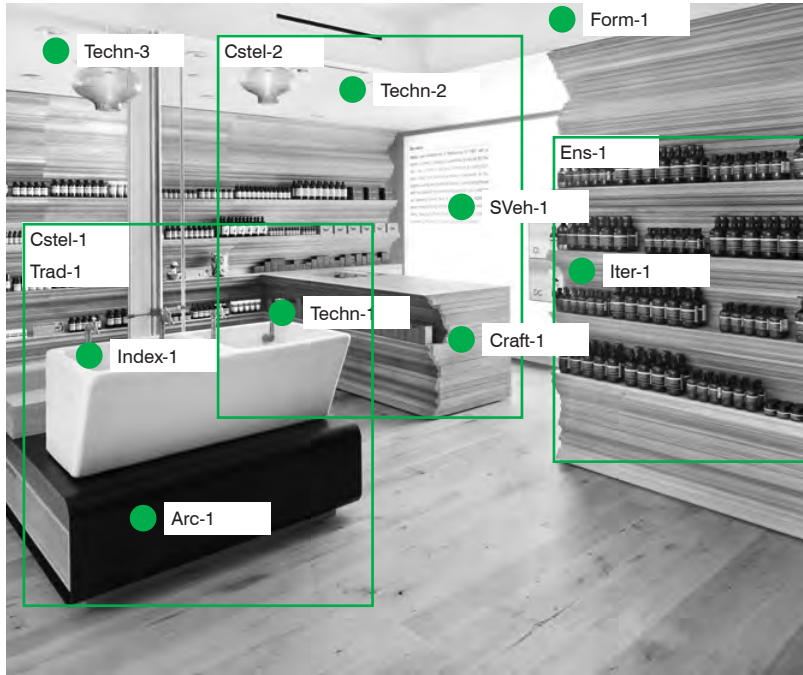
The interior is rich in references to other typologies which informs its identity (e.g. residential; pharmacy; laboratory; etc.).

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**Aesop Newbury Street; Retail - Cosmetics; William O'Brien Jr.; Boston, USA; c. 2012;**

<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/11/12/aesop-boston-by-william-obrien-jr/>;

<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/11/12/aesop-boston-by-william-obrien-jr/>; 12 November 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 Plinth
- Craft-1 Cabinetry
- Cstel-1 Wash trough
- Cstel-2 Point of sale counter; without bulkhead or pendants
- Ens-1 Arrangement of brown bottles on shelves
- Form-1 Raised ceiling
- Index-1 Faucet
- Iter-1 Cornice used as shelf
- SVeh-1 Typography: information
- Techn-1 Faucet
- Techn-2 Perimeter bulkhead
- Techn-3 Recessed lighting
- Trad-1 Washing trough

**CONNOTATION**

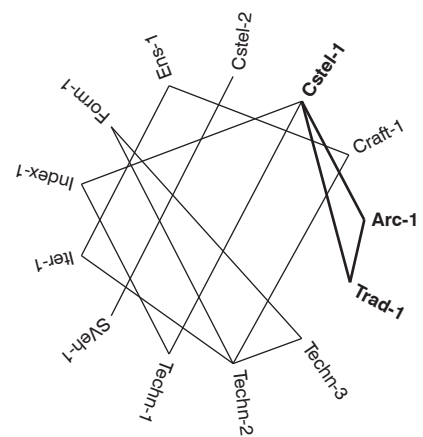
- Laboratory - storage of light sensitive materials
- Reference to hand washing

**SEMIOSIS**

Archetype is a traditive method.  
 Craft is both a technical and a traditive method. Traditive and technical methods are use in conjunction to create contemporary meaning.

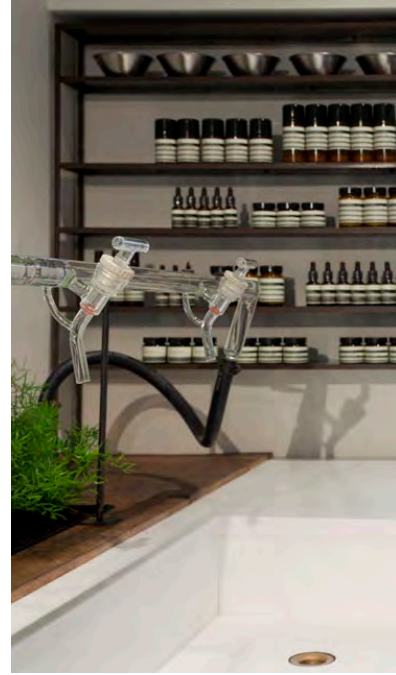
**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Indentity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://img3.etsystatic.com/000/0/6251950/il\\_fullxfull.262088899.jpg](http://img3.etsystatic.com/000/0/6251950/il_fullxfull.262088899.jpg)

047 Aesop Islington



Aesop interiors are included as examples of iteration between projects for the same corporate identity, although designed by different design firms.

The interior has references to early 20th Century laboratories. Although this might currently have negative and sinister connotations (e.g. *American Horror Story*), it also indicates nostalgia and a long tradition of research and innovation. Contemporary artefacts (e.g. laboratory faucets) are used in conjunction with dated ones (e.g. laboratory desk with marble top).

The chemical connotations are supported by the merchandise and organisation thereof (brown bottles).

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**Aesop Islington; Typology; Retail - Cosmetics; Islington, London, UK; c. 2012;**  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/09/26/aesop-islington-by-ciguel/>;  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/09/26/aesop-islington-by-ciguel/>; 26 September 2012;





## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |                                       |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| Ens-1   | Laboratory faucets; sink; and plants  |
| Furni-1 | Generic steel shelving; brown         |
| Light-1 | Natural: sky light; bright            |
| Light-2 | Artificial: general; dim              |
| Light-3 | Artificial: spot lights; bright       |
| Mat-1   | Marble/Granite: laboratory countertop |
| Mat-2   | Reclaimed/Reused timber: cabinet      |
| Mat-3   | Masonry: bagged; painted white        |
| Mat-4   | Masonry: plastered; painted white     |
| SMot-1  | Threshold: to lighter area            |
| SMot-2  | Den: bright area at the back          |
| Techn-1 | Step: floor level difference          |
| Techn-2 | Open shelf                            |

### Discourses

Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste

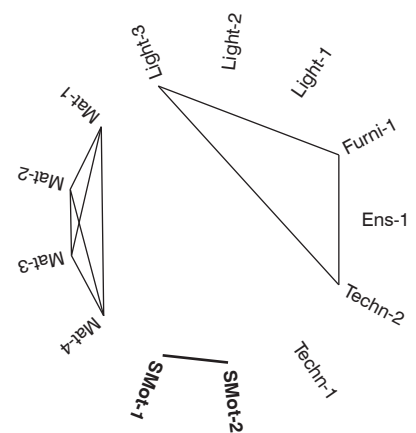
## CONNOTATION

Level of illumination is used to high light a destination or to place importance on merchandise

The differentiation between material use indicates that an alteration took place in the past

## SEMIOSIS

Places of refuge or destinations are indicated with a threshold in a strong boundary.



<http://goingplacesnearandfar.files.wordpress.com/2010/01/edison-ford-hse-010910-c-karen-rubin-048e-lab.jpg>;



Aesop interiors are included as examples of iteration between projects for the same corporate identity, although designed by different design firms.

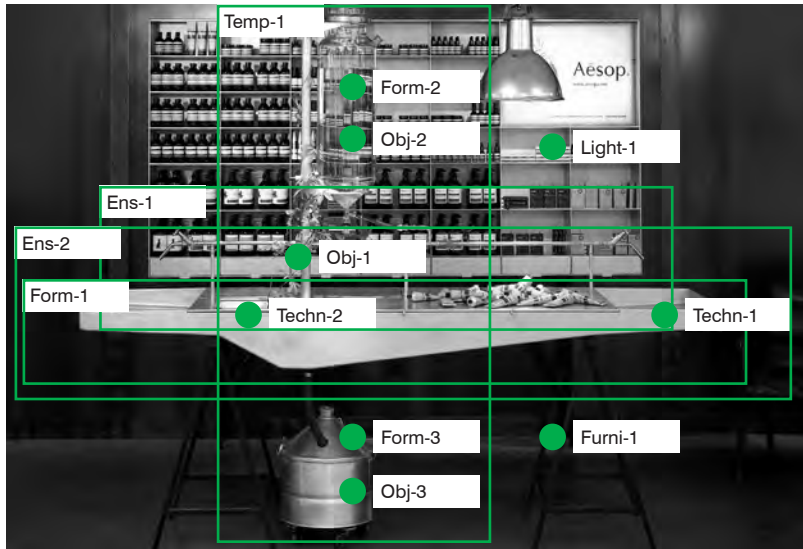
In this case the laboratory table and freestanding shelves are specifically isolated for consideration and is treated as a freestanding installation. All services are self-contained.

The inclusion of a live plant and storage container for water is noted; also note the different form and material for containers for soil water and potable water (conical GMS container on wheels opposed to a cylindrical suspended glass container).

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31. Non-Canonical

**Aesop Chez 'Merci'**; Retail - Cosmetics; Ciguë; Paris, France; 2011;  
<http://www.cigue.net/fic/pdf/press-book.pdf>; Louis Baquiast;  
<http://www.cigue.net/fic/pdf/press-book.pdf>; c. 2011;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Ens-1 Faucets and pipes
- Ens-2 Laboratory table and sinks
- Form-1 Angular drop-edge
- Form-2 Silinder
- Form-3 Cone
- Furni-1 Steel trestle; re-used
- Light-1 Light cone: focus
- Obj-1 Plant: creeper
- Obj-2 Glass container: water
- Obj-3 GMS container: water
- Techn-1 Sink
- Techn-2 Planter
- Temp-1 Timeliness indicated through water consumption

**CONNOTATION**

The form was generated specifically and is not simple the result of expediency

Clear, clean - potable

Unseen, dirty - waste water

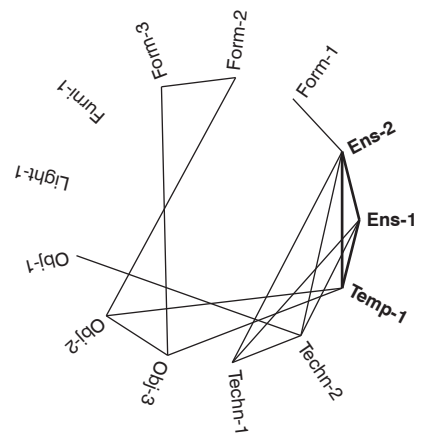
**SEMIOSIS**

Temporality is indicated through the process of water consumption and disposal.

This is supported through the use of ensembles, objects, technemes and forms; all of these are proximal and technical methods used synthetically.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Indentity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://www.flickr.com/photos/pankaj4bt/4734420236/sizes/l/in/photostream/;](http://www.flickr.com/photos/pankaj4bt/4734420236/sizes/l/in/photostream/)

049 Kimono



The store was designed in an attempt to revive traditional Japanese dress. The shop is located in a 70 year old tofu factory, of which the original tiles were retained. (The tiles were purposefully damaged to increase texture).

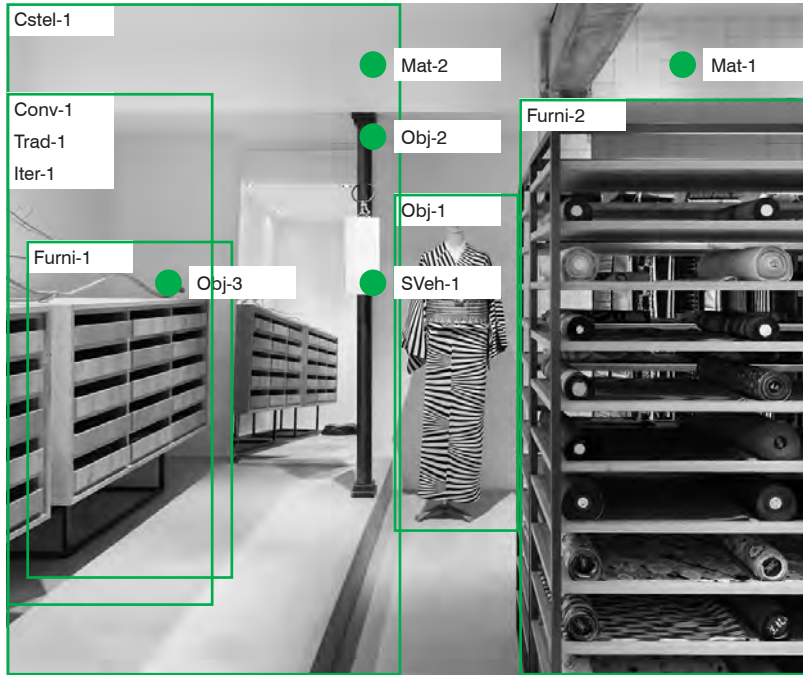
The shop uses traditional organisation and references and these are combined with contemporary artefacts and craft techniques.

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31. Non-Canonical

**Otsuka-Gofukuten Kimono Store; Retail - Fashion (Kimono; gender not indicated); Yusuke Seki; Kyoto, Japan; c. 2012;**

[http://24.media.tumblr.com/22f8d718cb37e408445465c19dea5ed4/tumblr\\_mhuh38VHhP1rj7v02o2\\_1280.jpg](http://24.media.tumblr.com/22f8d718cb37e408445465c19dea5ed4/tumblr_mhuh38VHhP1rj7v02o2_1280.jpg); Takumi Ota;

[http://24.media.tumblr.com/b6d9dc35ba5f5f5be5c3663caa6bd77bc/tumblr\\_mhuh38VHhP1rj7v02o3\\_1280.jpg](http://24.media.tumblr.com/b6d9dc35ba5f5f5be5c3663caa6bd77bc/tumblr_mhuh38VHhP1rj7v02o3_1280.jpg); 07 February 2013;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Conv-1  | Contemporary variation of <i>tokonoma</i> |
| Cstel-1 | Raised floor with merchandise             |
| Furni-1 | Bespoke timber chest of drawers           |
| Furni-2 | Steel and timber shelving for textiles    |
| Iter-1  | Iteration of <i>tokonoma</i>              |
| Mat-1   | Glazed tiles: distressed                  |
| Mat-2   | Plaster: painted white                    |
| Obj-1   | Mannequin with kimono                     |
| Obj-2   | Existing column                           |
| Obj-3   | Branch: painted orange                    |
| SVeh-1  | Notice board: empty                       |
| Trad-1  | Japanese: ethnic use of objects           |

## CONNOTATION

|  |
|--|
| Importance   |
| Textiles are stored flat or on rolls: this indicates care in the use and storage of the material |
| Japanese tradition; domesticity  |
| Use, age (artificially distressed)   |
| Tradition; heritage; iteration   |

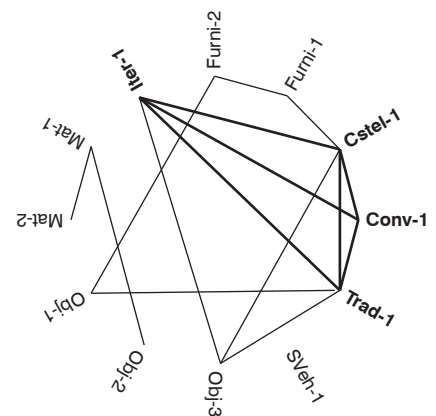
## SEMIOSIS

Cultural innovation is dependent on iterative practices.

The use of constellation could also be considered as an archetype; consider the association between these methods.

## Discourses

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://www.sjqiltmuseum.org/images/primg/primg\\_ChildsKimono.jpg](http://www.sjqiltmuseum.org/images/primg/primg_ChildsKimono.jpg)



050 Takeo Kikuchi



A sense of traditional masculinity is portrayed through the use of materials and the prominent placement of merchandise; artefacts, such as a bicycle used in the display, contribute to this. Merchandise is densely displayed (e.g. jackets close together in double tiers).

A strong connection is maintained with the exterior through floor to soffit glazing; the boundary is intact however.

The interior creates a dichotomy between the informality of urban wear and traditional male retailers.

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**Takeo Kikuchi; Retail - Fashion (Male); Schemata Architecture Office: Jo Nagasaka; Tokyo, Japan; c. 2012;**  
<http://www.designboom.com/architecture/schemata-architects-takeo-kikuchi-interior-design-shibuya/>; Schemata Architects;  
<http://www.designboom.com/architecture/schemata-architects-takeo-kikuchi-interior-design-shibuya/>; 27 November 2012;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |                                     |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Arc-1   | Sunspine: curtain wall              |
| Boun-1  | Curtain wall: view to outside       |
| Furni-1 | Accessories display unit            |
| Furni-2 | Clothing display: rails             |
| Light-1 | Natural: sunlight from curtain wall |
| Mat-1   | Timber frame                        |
| Mat-2   | Steel/Aluminium mullion             |
| Obj-1   | Bicycle                             |

## CONNOTATION

|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| Boundary: open interiority  |
| Tectonic, additive assembly |

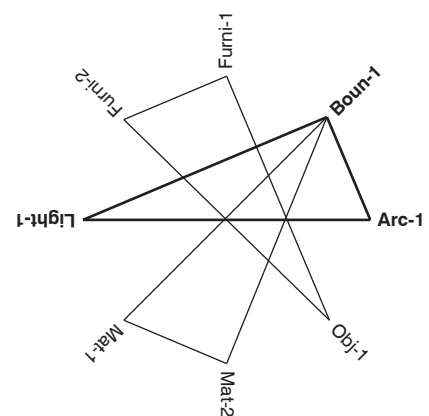
## SEMIOSIS

A transparent boundary allows light to penetrate the interior: this generates the archetype (sunspine).

The boundary (high-order method) is made up of a number of materials (low-order methods).

## Discourses

Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste



[http://25.media.tumblr.com/tumblr\\_m28h1h2xhW1row5hio1\\_1280.jpg](http://25.media.tumblr.com/tumblr_m28h1h2xhW1row5hio1_1280.jpg)



051 Bao Bao



This is an accessory outlet for the fashion label, Issey Miyake.

The walls are covered in tiles in a *bilbao* pattern, which gradually changes from predominantly black to predominantly white. This pattern is repeated from the merchandise and creates a strong identifying link between product and interior.

The merchandise is displayed sparingly, on simple shelves. It is expected that the store will have a high service level.

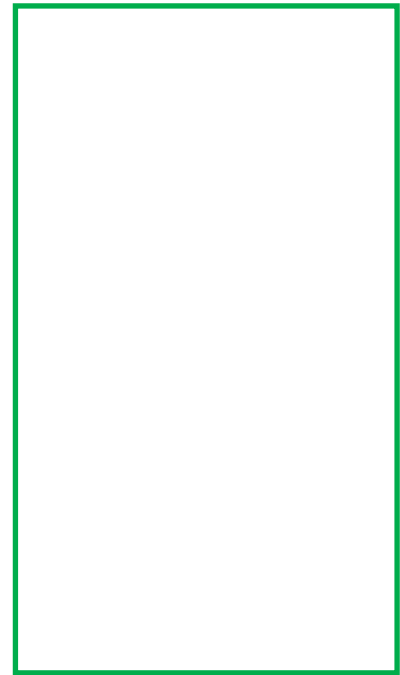
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**Bao Bao by Issey Miyake; Retail - Fashion (Accessories; Female); Moment; Tokyo Japan; c. 2013;**

<http://www.designboom.com/design/bao-bao-issey-miyake-shinjuku/>;

<http://www.designboom.com/design/bao-bao-issey-miyake-shinjuku/>; 07 February 2013;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |                                      |
|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Arc-1   | Harlequin: black and white tiles     |
| Col-1   | White: glazed tiles                  |
| Col-2   | Black: glazed tiles                  |
| Conv-1  | Sparse display of merchandise        |
| Dec-1   | Pattern: <i>bilbao</i>               |
| Iter-1  | Repetition of sign vehicle           |
| SVeh-1  | Typography: signage                  |
| SVeh-2  | Typography: backlit signage          |
| Techn-1 | Floating shelf (no visible brackets) |

### Discourses

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste

## CONNOTATION

Gender-neutral colours: although the interior is clearly feminine - through merchandise in same colour and pattern.

Status; expense. The items on display are samples - stock is stored back-of-house.

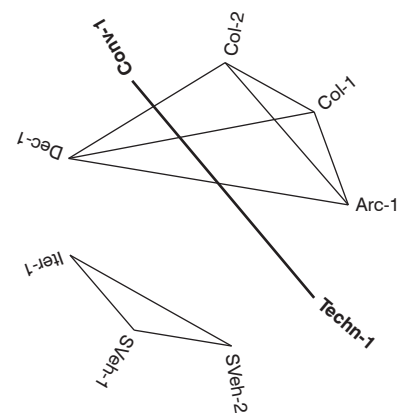
Repeated from merchandise: connection between place and product

Iteration reinforces the brand identity

## SEMIOSIS

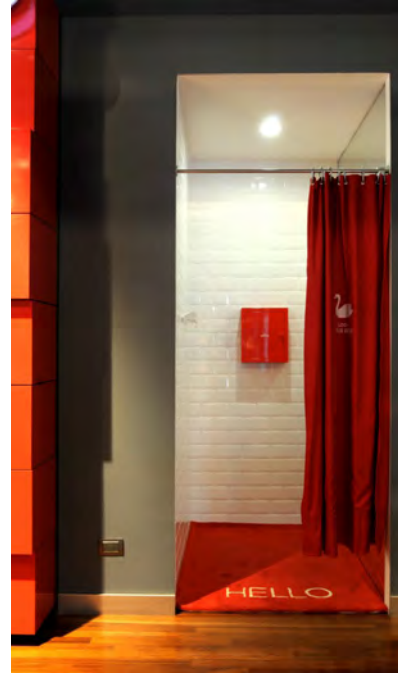
Iteration of an archetype and repetition of a theme reinforces identity.

Technemes in a hierarchical tree supports higher order methods.



URL Photo 3;

052 Puma Lab



The store looks informal and youthful. The darkened soffit with exposed services is a typical gesture in this target market.

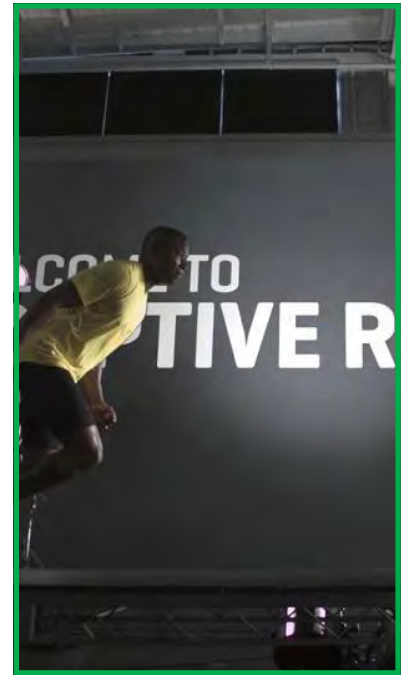
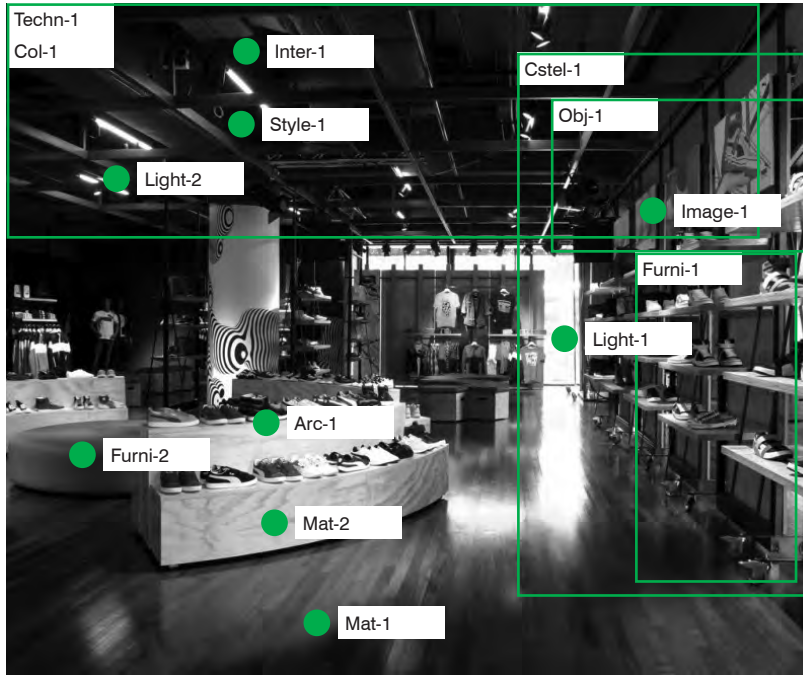
A consistent brand identity is created through the use of material and colours associated with the product and corporate image.

Applied images are used on walls and glass (e.g. a drawing of a sneaker in vinyl).

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31. Non-Canonical

**Puma Lab; Retail - Fashion (Informal; Sportswear; Unisex); Plajer & Franz; Santiago de Chile, Chile; 2011;**  
[http://www.archdaily.com.br/38258/loja-pumalab-plajer-franz/tienda-pumalab\\_plajer-franz\\_1330701884-2/](http://www.archdaily.com.br/38258/loja-pumalab-plajer-franz/tienda-pumalab_plajer-franz_1330701884-2/); PumaChile;  
[http://www.archdaily.com.br/38258/loja-pumalab-plajer-franz/tienda-pumalab\\_plajer-franz\\_1330701972-16/](http://www.archdaily.com.br/38258/loja-pumalab-plajer-franz/tienda-pumalab_plajer-franz_1330701972-16/); 18 March 2012;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 Plinth
- Col-1 Black: painted soffit
- Cstel-1 Shelving with billboard above
- Furni-1 Wall mounted shelving for merchandise
- Furni-2 Bespoke ottoman: upholstered, red
- Image-1 Photographs: sneakers
- Inter-1 Brand consistency
- Light-1 Natural: window behind display
- Light-2 Artificial: general illumination and spotlights
- Mat-1 Hardwood flooring: planks
- Mat-2 Softwood plywood: plinth
- Obj-1 Billboard of images
- Style-1 Skeumorphic styling: exposed soffit
- Techn-1 Soffit with exposed services

**Discourses**

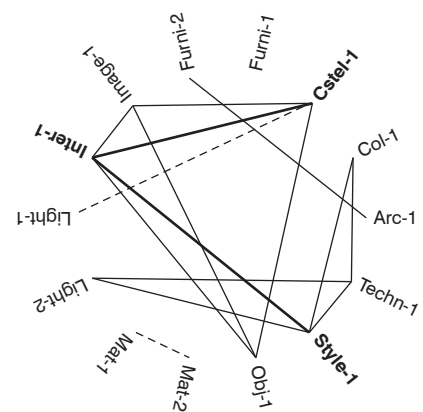
- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste

**CONNOTATION**

- Display of merchandise
- Brand connotations
- Expensive
- Cheap
- Services, technology; thrift

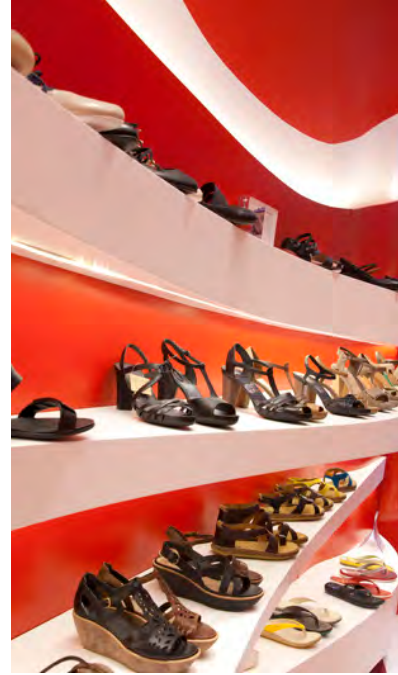
**SEMIOSIS**

It is unconventional to block a window with shelving. The constellation and light is used in a disassociative manner. Skeumorphic styling is used as a method to achieve brand consistency.



[http://external.ak.fbcdn.net/safe\\_image.php?d=AQCnme0mNOD4CSpD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fvthumb.ak.fbcdn.net%2Fvthumb-ak-frc1%2Fs960x960%2F632217\\_10100669558890411\\_10100669557248701\\_12904\\_651\\_b.jpg&jq=100;](http://external.ak.fbcdn.net/safe_image.php?d=AQCnme0mNOD4CSpD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fvthumb.ak.fbcdn.net%2Fvthumb-ak-frc1%2Fs960x960%2F632217_10100669558890411_10100669557248701_12904_651_b.jpg&jq=100;)

053 Camper Granada



Camper will be included as an example of a single brand utilising multiple interior identities, but still achieving a consistent brand identity.

This smooth, sinuous interior seem in disjunction with the shoes, which have a handcrafted, natural feeling.

Colour and material use is limited, colour specifically is limited to only red and white (which has obvious associations with the brand identity.)

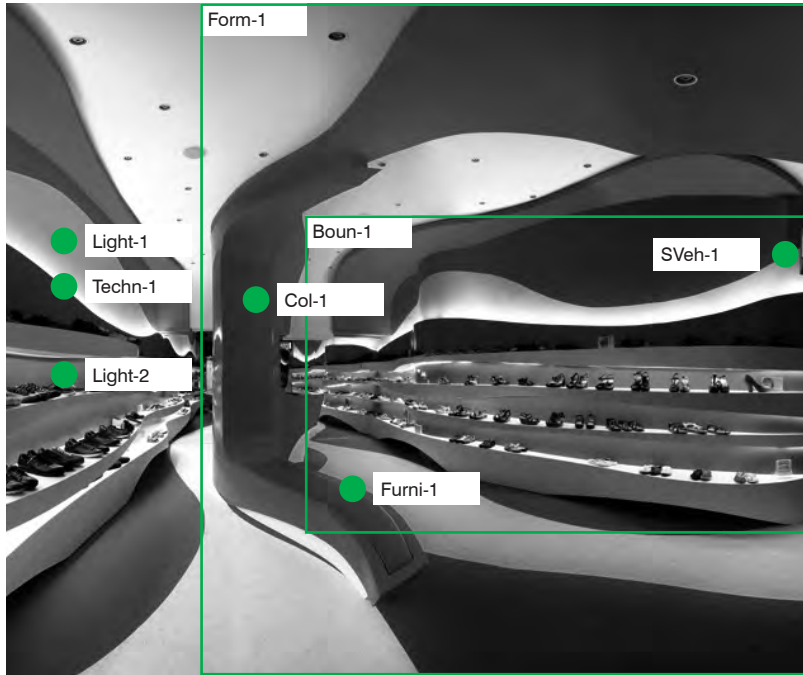
1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
8. Contrived/Fictional
9. Broad Reading
10. Iconic of Built
11. Cultural Context
12. Small Scale Production
13. Media
14. Expert
15. Layperson
16. Semantic
17. Critical
18. Installation
19. Insertion
20. Intervention
21. New
22. Dominant Centre
23. The South
24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**Camper Granada; Retail - Fashion (Footwear; Unisex); A-cero; Granada, Spain; c. 2012;**

<http://www.archdaily.com.br/58783/loja-camper-em-granada-a-cero/stitched-panorama-3/>; A-cero;

[http://adbr001cdn.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/1341955308\\_1340401881\\_20\\_p.jpg](http://adbr001cdn.archdaily.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/1341955308_1340401881_20_p.jpg); 11 July 2012;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Boun-1 Merchandising creates edge of space
- Col-1 Red: bulkheads; ceiling; floor; display
- Form-1 Organic and sinuous
- Furni-1 Built-in bench
- Light-1 Artificial: effect
- Light-2 Artificial: cove lighting, merchandise display
- SVeh-1 Logo: signage
- Techn-1 Lightwell

**CONNOTATION**

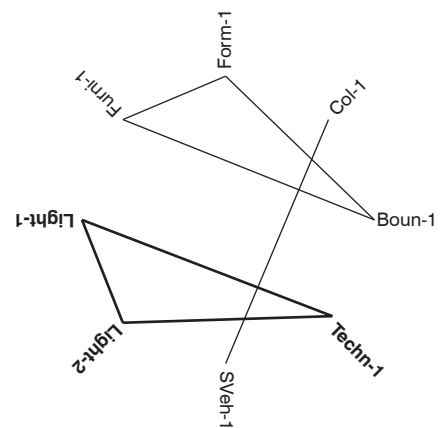
Branding and Corporate Identity connotations

**SEMIOSIS**

The combination of the techneme (lightwell) and light (alcove and effect lighting) is a technical method to encode cultural meaning.

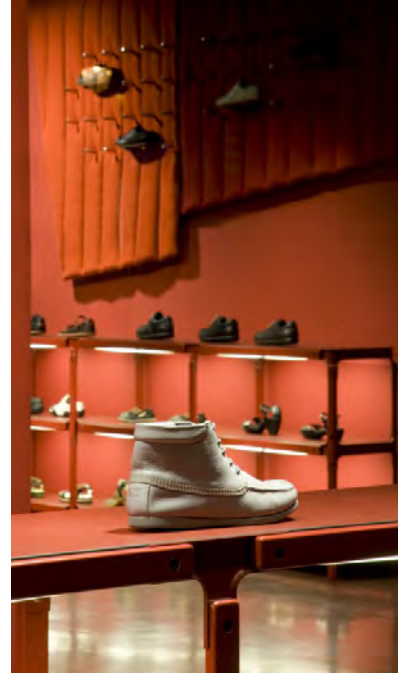
**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://www.surfedn.com/fp/78788.JPG> ;

054 Camper Paris



Camper will be included as an example of a single brand utilising multiple interior identities, but still achieving a consistent brand identity.

Although this project is considered as canonic and falls outside the synchrony, I include it for its utility to the study. At this point it is necessary to include iterative projects over a longer time span; although still relatively new.

The project is also included as an example where a relatively crude techneme is reinterpreted in a visually more sophisticated manner.

1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
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8. Contrived/Fictional
9. Broad Reading
10. Iconic of Built
11. Cultural Context
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25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**Camper Paris; Retail - Fashion (Footwear; Unisex); Studio Bouroullec; Paris, France; 2009;**

<http://www.archello.com/en/project/camper-store/image-10>; Studio Bouroullec;

[http://www.bouroullec.com/image\\_zoom.php?img=f197\\_erb\\_2009\\_camperstore\\_bdf\\_5\\_large.jpg](http://www.bouroullec.com/image_zoom.php?img=f197_erb_2009_camperstore_bdf_5_large.jpg); 07 July 2009;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Arc-1   | Plinth  |
| Col-1   | Range of reds and oranges                     |
| Fur-1   | Applique quilt                                |
| Furni-1 | Bolted steel shelving                         |
| Iter-1  | Contemporary reinterpretation                 |
| Style-1 | Skeumorphic styling: tectonics of manufacture |
| Techn-1 | Bracket: steel                                |
| Techn-2 | Peg display                                   |
| Trad-1  | Quilt as wall-hanging                         |

## CONNOTATION

|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| Shoe display                |
| Traditional                 |
| Tectonic; additive assembly |

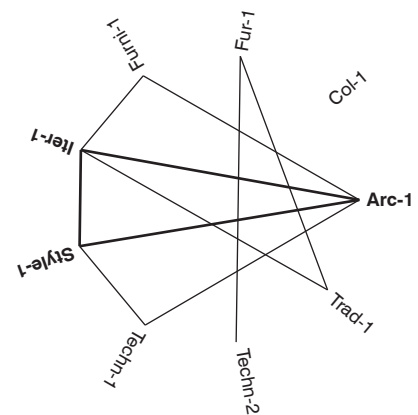
## SEMIOSIS

Interior design construction methods are often tectonic and uses additive assembly. This offers an opportunity to encode meaning through skeumorphic styling.

Style should be considered as both a traditive and an iterative method.

## Discourses

Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste



<http://i945.photobucket.com/albums/ad300/TOLOFSON/workbenchcroppedandedited2-1.jpg>;

055 Camper Soho



Camper will be included as an example of a single brand utilising multiple interior identities, but still achieving a consistent brand identity.

The brand identity is conveyed by boldly and in oversized text applying the logo to the display shelving. The merchandise is not visible as customers enter the store, as it is concealed within the display system.

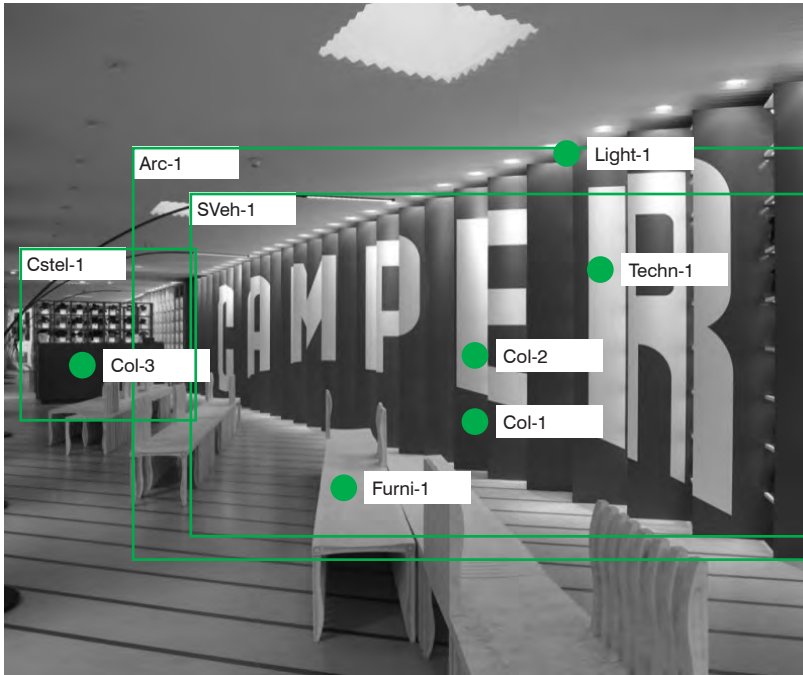
1. Interior Design
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29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical



**Camper Soho;** Retail - Fashion (Footwear; Unisex); Shigeru Ban Architects and Dean Maltz Architects; SoHo, New York, USA; c. 2012;

<http://www.archdaily.com.br/53914/loja-camper-shigeru-ban-architects-dean-maltz-architect/1337812483-20120105-mg-5687/>; Marian Montoro; <http://www.archdaily.com.br/53914/loja-camper-shigeru-ban-architects-dean-maltz-architect/1337812457-20120105-mg-5726/>; 23 May 2012;





## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Arc-1   | Billboard                                 |
| Col-1   | White: typography                         |
| Col-2   | Red: background                           |
| Col-3   | Green: counter                            |
| Cstel-1 | Point of Sale counter with display behind |
| Furni-1 | Bespoke bench: facing                     |
| Light-1 | Artificial: spotlight on merchandise      |
| SVeh-1  | Logo: signage on wall                     |
| Techn-1 | Shelving: angled on plan                  |

## CONNOTATION

Contrast with rest of interior: importance

Scale: saturate interior with brand identity

## SEMIOSIS

A complex artefact, employing a range of methods, may be used in an otherwise simple interior to construct and clear and strong message.

## Discourses

Alteration

Episteme

Form

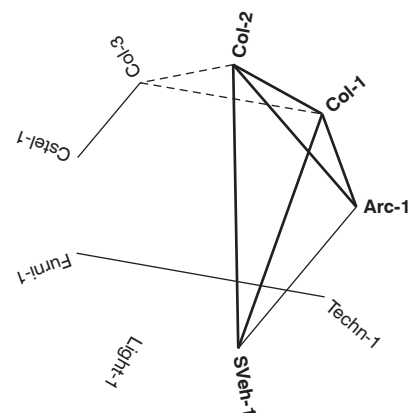
Gender / Sexuality

Identity / Ontology

Inhabitation and the Body

Interiority

Taste



<http://www.surfedn.com/fp/124672.JPG>;



056 WUHAO



The shop is located in a renovated building in a hutong in Beijing. The shop is curated by Isabelle Pascal as a platform for new designers to introduce their products.

Colour is used extensively throughout and large amounts of original material are visible.

The projects is included as an example of curation as method, with the assumption that the placement of objects and visual merchandising plays a large part in the creation of the interior atmosphere.

The interior is very space specific, and to an extend can be considered as expressing national identity, since hutong's are so strongly associated with Beijing.

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31. Non-Canonical



**WUHAO Curated Shop; Retail - Various (Fashion; Furniture; Objects; Tea; etc.); Isabelle Pascal (curator); Beijing, China; 2010;**

<http://www.welovedesign.rs/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/001.jpg>;

<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/11/05/wuhao-curated-shop/>; 05 November 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 Specimen: choice of objects
- Cur-1 Selection and arrangement of merchandise
- Mat-1 Timber: framed structure: dark
- Mat-2 Plastered wall: painted white
- Mat-3 Parquet floor: dark
- Obj-1 Mirror: floor to ceiling
- Obj-2 Merchandise: clothing: on wall
- Obj-3 Merchandise: shoes: on floor
- Trad-1 Clerestory windows

**CONNOTATION**

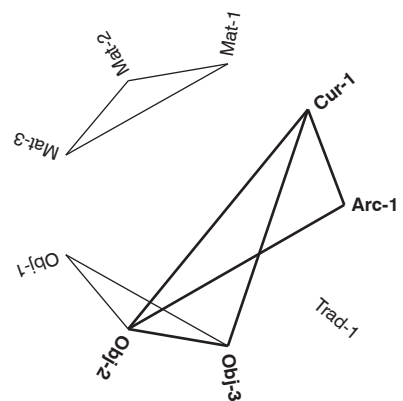
Proximity and position of merchandise mimics use application

**SEMIOSIS**

The selection and arrangement of objects has synthetic and proximal agency.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://kingsjoyhostel.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/hutong-flags-copy.jpg>;

057 S the Yoga



A yoga studio utilising large areas of timber to connote meaning. Apertures in the cladding control views to the outside and allows natural light to enter (I assume in small quantities.)

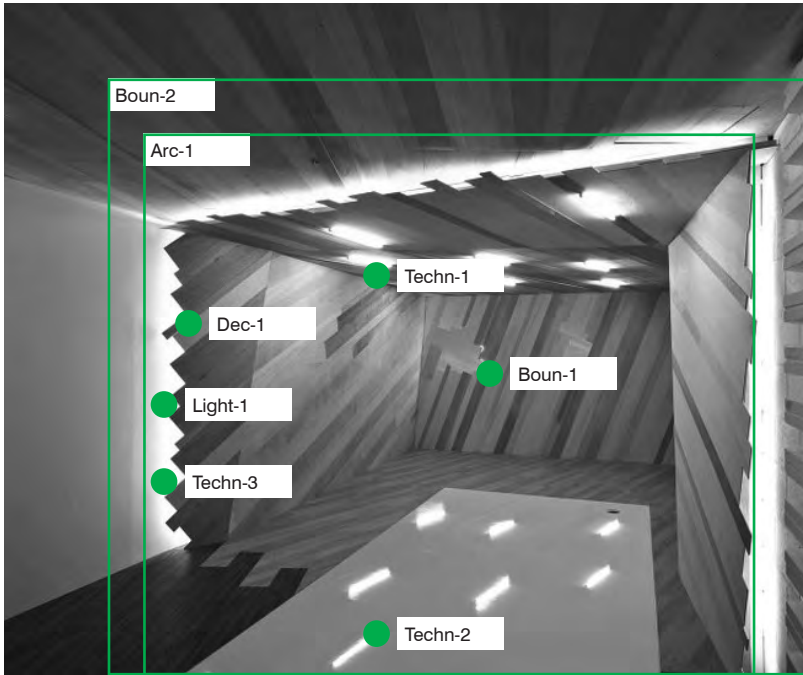
The studios (practices areas) themselves are utilitarian, with some aesthetic connection to the remainder of the interior. They are non-descript however, and apart from some graphics may be any exercise area.

Material is used to emphasise openings. The palette is limited and discreet.

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**S. The Yoga Studio; Services - Fitness (Yoga Studio);** YoonSpace Design & Architecture; Gyeonggi, Korea; c. 2012;  
<http://www.designboom.com/architecture/y-space-design-yoga-studio-in-gyeonggi/>; Song Gi Myoun;  
<http://www.designboom.com/architecture/y-space-design-yoga-studio-in-gyeonggi/>; 10 April 2013;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Arc-1   | Incubate: place of reflection                 |
| Boun-1  | Facade: windows with limited views to outside |
| Boun-2  | Interior edge                                 |
| Dec-1   | Material use/application: staggered edge      |
| Light-1 | Artificial: effect; halo                      |
| Techn-1 | Exposed fluorescent: ceiling mounted          |
| Techn-2 | Flush ground light                            |
| Techn-3 | Lightwell                                     |

## Discourses

Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste

## CONNOTATION

Usually used as shared space in offices; here used as a space of reflection

Several methods are used in combination to define an edge; although it can be crossed freely; symbolic boundary

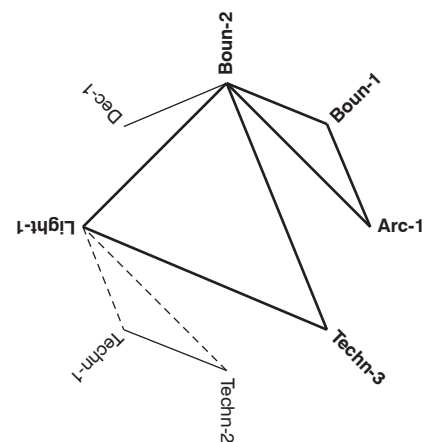
Separation of enclosed space from larger volume

Placement pattern repeated on soffit and floor

## SEMIOSIS

An interior is separated from a larger space through the use of a symbolic boundary.

The proximity and synthesis of a techneme and light creates a boundary.



<http://www.etsy.com/listing/116829417/samurai-pants-green-timber-trouser-baggy;>





This project is included as a boundary object and is considered as the convergence of several practices (Art, architecture, product design, exhibition design, etc.). Since it won an award at a major design show (Habitare - 2012) it is further considered as canonical.

It is a conceptual work and is intended as a shelter and place of light and warmth during the polar autumn. The interior is small and contained.

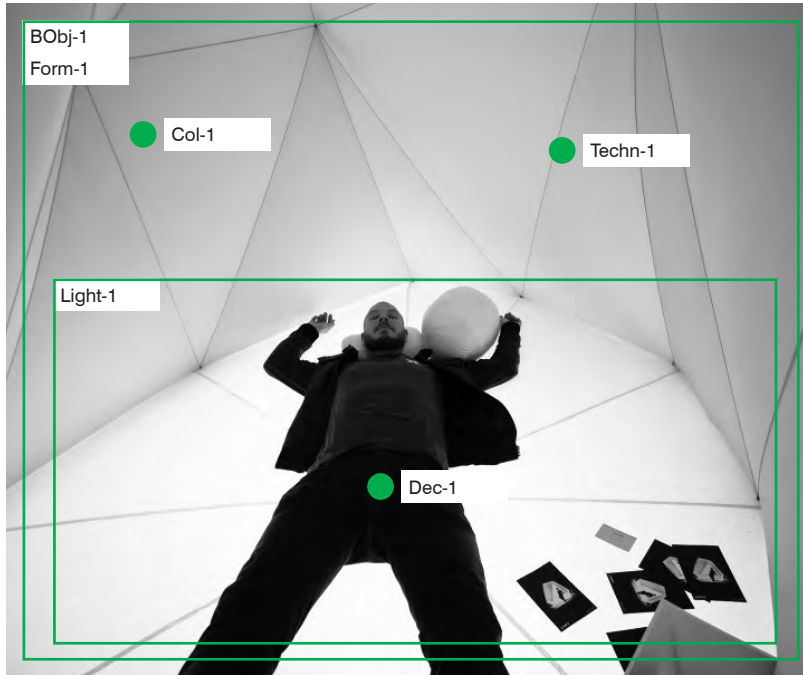
1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
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25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**LYHTY - Habitare;** Installation - Interior Artwork; Erkko Aarti Architecture; Habitare Design Fair, Helsinki, Finland; 2012;

<http://www.erkkoarti.fi/#LYHTY-Habitare-2012>; Pyry Kantonen;

<http://www.designboom.com/readers/lyhty-interior-space-by-erkko-aarti/>; 17 September 2012;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- BObj-1 Interior exhibit
- Col-1 White: all interior surfaces
- Dec-1 Pattern: joints
- Form-1 Irregular polyhedron: crystalline
- Light-1 Artificial: backlit floor
- Techn-1 Joints/folds between panels

**CONNOTATION**

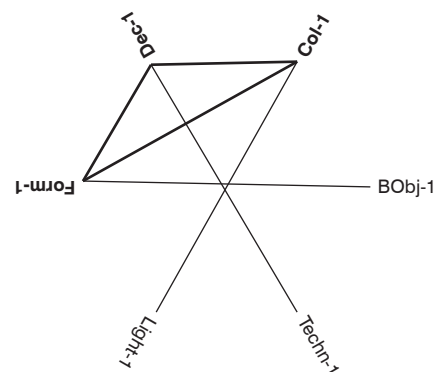
- White-out; connotes arctic winter and vernacular habitation ('igloo')
- Convergence of joints in centre of floor: importance centrality
- Composed of various panels; additive Geometric

**SEMIOSIS**

A vernacular form is interpreted and regenerated through geometry.  
Colour, form and decoration, in combination demarcates the interior.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form**
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body**
- Interiority**
- Taste



<http://p.im9.eu/igloo-at-night-vermillion-lakes-banff-national-park-alberta.jpg>



This project is the result of collaboration between an interior designer acting as installation artist and the sportswear brand. Although the interior seems fairly conventional it does include a number of references which may not be associated with a technologically innovative company (e.g. patinated steel; cast plaster wall cladding; etc.)

Original materials are exposed in areas, e.g. the hexagonal penny tiles (mosaics) on portions of the floor.

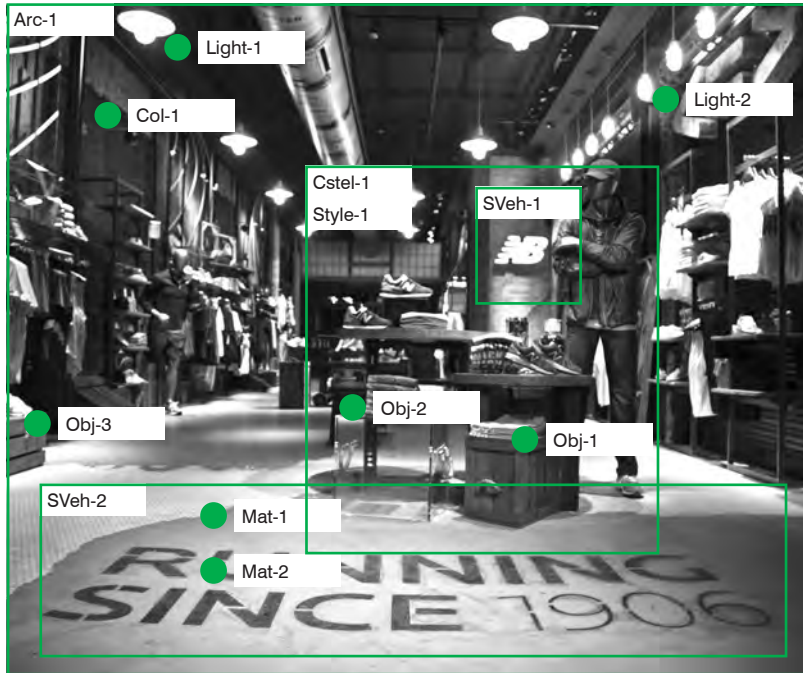
The store is strongly associated with the Boston marathon, the world's oldest city marathon.

1. Interior Design
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27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**New Balance Boston Experience Store; Retail - Fashion (sportswear; unisex); Nikole Nelson; Boston, USA; c. 2012;**

<http://www.cravingdepth.com/blog/tag/mark-keegan>; Conor Doherty;

<http://www.cravingdepth.com/blog/tag/mark-keegan>; 13 June 2012;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Arc-1   | Black-out  |
| Col-1   | Gray: walls and soffit                                   |
| Cstel-1 | Various display items and manquins; clustered centrally  |
| Light-1 | Artificial: high-bay; dim                                |
| Light-2 | Artificial: pendant, illumination on merchandise; bright |
| Mat-1   | Existing hexanogal penny tiles (mosaic)                  |
| Mat-2   | New screed   |
| Obj-1   | Timber crate: painted                                    |
| Obj-2   | Perspex plinth   |
| Obj-3   | Timber crate: unfinished                                 |
| Style-1 | Iconic styling: eclectic                                 |
| SVeh-1  | Logo: backlit sign                                       |
| SVeh-2  | Typography: historic statement                           |

### Discourses

Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste

## CONNOTATION

Importance of objects placed in the interior

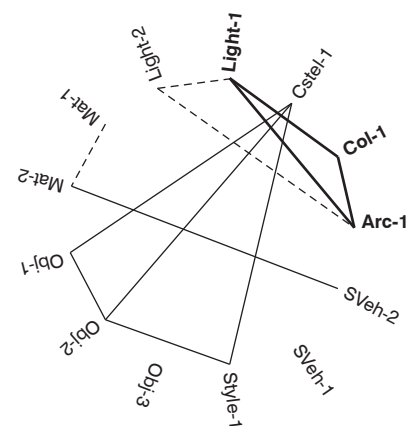
Emphasis on merchandise through lighting: contrast with environment

Establishes the brand's history and credibility

## SEMIOSIS

The archetype (black-out) specifically under-emphasises the interior identity, giving precedence to the product.

The product is further informed through the display of brand history and connotations in the interior.



[http://farm4.staticflickr.com/3067/2731975201\\_df1ef6c7f1\\_o.jpg](http://farm4.staticflickr.com/3067/2731975201_df1ef6c7f1_o.jpg)



060 Nikole Nelson New York



This project is the result of collaboration between an interior designer acting as installation artist and the sportswear brand. It is included as an earlier iteration and specific focus is placed on the paper mache sculpture.

The sculpture is placed at the entrance to the shop and incorporates artefacts from the shoe manufacture process, shoes and materials.

The sculpture is used to portray events in the brand's history.

1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
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31. Non-Canonical

**New Balance NYC Experience Store; Retail - Fashion (sportswear; unisex); Nikole Nelson; Flatiron District, New York, USA; c. 2011;**

<http://www.designboom.com/architecture/nikole-nelson-new-balance-experience-store/>; Jeff Harris;

<http://www.designboom.com/architecture/nikole-nelson-new-balance-experience-store/>; 07 September 2011;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Craft-1 *Papier maché*
- Cur-1 Selection and arrangement of objects; materials; and methods
- Obj-1 Deconstructed running shoe
- Obj-2 Sewing machine
- Style-1 Isochrestic styling: related to craftsmanship
- Synth-1 Pastiche of various objects; materials; and methods
- TGood-1 Assembled artwork: ugly and crude object

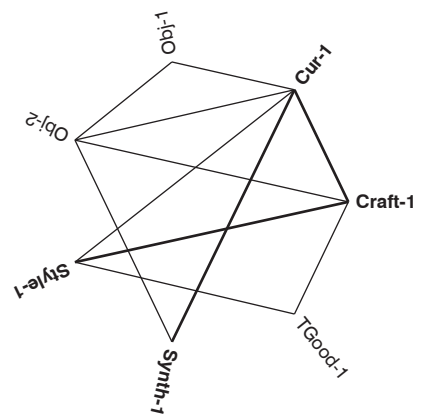
**CONNOTATION**

**SEMIOSIS**

Curation includes the selection of methods.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-VGwysBbMNCc/T-\\_7PJ0TgdI/AAAAAAAAADC4/Pm2Uv1s2p\\_k/s1600/New\\_Balance\\_998\\_Junya\\_watanabe.jpg](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-VGwysBbMNCc/T-_7PJ0TgdI/AAAAAAAAADC4/Pm2Uv1s2p_k/s1600/New_Balance_998_Junya_watanabe.jpg);



061 Haberdash



This men's fashion retailer is identifiably contemporary, but the products have a clear nostalgic influence; this is strengthened by the brand name.

The interior is open and airy, which contrasts with the warmer tones of the merchandise. The palette is limited with timber and leather prominent, and other materials painted gray.

The store does not sell its own brands, its identity is therefore more reliant on the interior design.

1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
8. Contrived/Fictional
9. Broad Reading
10. Iconic of Built
11. Cultural Context
12. Small Scale Production
13. Media
14. Expert
15. Layperson
16. Semantic
17. Critical
18. Installation
19. Insertion
20. Intervention
21. New
22. Dominant Centre
23. The South
24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**Haberdash; Retail - Fashion (informal wear; male); Form Us With Love; Stockholm, Switzerland; 2012;**  
[http://www.formuswithlove.se/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/121021\\_image\\_04\\_v2.jpg](http://www.formuswithlove.se/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/121021_image_04_v2.jpg); Jonas Lindström;  
<http://afflante.com/13285-haberdash-shop-form-us-with-love/>; 06 June 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Boun-1 Curtain wall in Mansard-roof
- Col-1 Light gray: walls and soffit
- Ens-1 Cluster of pendants above display unit
- Furni-1 Upholstered ottoman; leather
- Icon-1 Trestle - not adjustable
- Icon-2 Printer's tray
- Light-1 Natural: from curtain wall
- Light-2 Artificial: backlit glass; from below
- Obj-1 Mirror; framed with pipe
- Obj-2 Taylor's mannequin with suit
- Techn-1 GMS water pipes with threaded connections

**CONNOTATION**

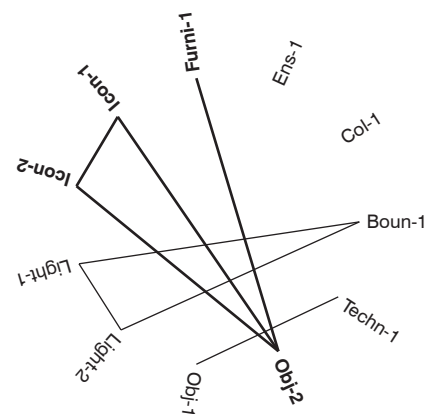
- Conspicuous consumption
- Functionality; technicality
- Collections; specimens

**SEMIOSIS**

Iconic connections are used in objects and furniture to create external associations (connotations).

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://24.media.tumblr.com/tumblr\\_lucfwzUcAW1qarksao1\\_1280.jpg](http://24.media.tumblr.com/tumblr_lucfwzUcAW1qarksao1_1280.jpg);



UNIQLO is associated with 'fast fashion' and is owned by Fast Retailing. The first store opened in Hiroshima in 1984 under the 'Unique Clothing Warehouse' banner.

The clothing is displayed en masse, and it is clear that most stock is kept on the retail floor. There is thus the expectation of a low level of service, and that customers must help themselves.

The identity is presented in a way that refers to universality or a certain lack of identity. The space is reminiscent of factory outlets or storage; although of better quality.

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24. Alpha City
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26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**UNIQLO Ginza Flagship Store;** Retail - Fashion (informal wear; Unisex); Wonderwall Inc: Masamichi Katayama; Ginza, Tokyo, Japan; c. 2012;  
<http://tokyofashion.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Uniqlo-UT-T-Shirts-2012-002.jpg>; Will Rob;  
<http://tokyofashion.com/uniqlo-ginza-opening-pictures/>; 16 July 2012;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1     Marching order
- Arc-2     Kaleidoscope
- Arc-3     Specimen
- Col-1     Various: merchandises  
          arranged by colour
- Image-1   Billboard: electronic display
- Mat-1     Mirror: ceiling
- Obj-1     Merchandise in display boxes  
          in taxonomic array
- Use-1     Display
- Use-2     Storage

**CONNOTATION**

The combination of three archetypes contribute to a sense of great quantity.

All merchandise is stored on the shop floor; there are not sizable storage areas back-of-house.

**SEMIOSIS**

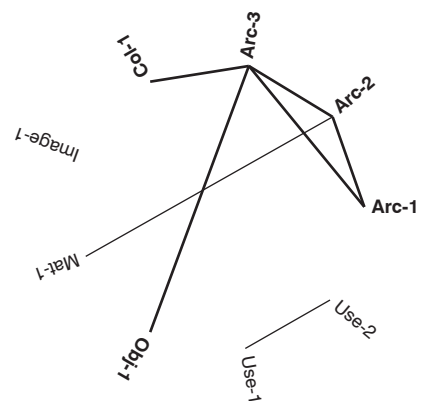
Great quantity and in-store storage is used to indicate value for money.

Arranging items in taxonomic array indicates an explicit organisational system.

Archetypes are used in combination to construct meaning; which is supported through the use of objects and colour.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://farm9.staticflickr.com/8338/8189184487\\_92a7a978c7\\_o.jpg](http://farm9.staticflickr.com/8338/8189184487_92a7a978c7_o.jpg)

063 MenScience



The store evokes a sense of masculinity through a number of methods: the use of material (steel and worn timber); lighting (dark and dramatic, with concealed lighting) and colour (black, gray and yellow).

The visual merchandising is formal.

Furniture is used for their connotative purposes (e.g. Tolix stool and barber's chair).

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31. Non-Canonical

**MenScience Androceuticals Flagship Store**; Retail - Cosmetics and Nutrition (male); HWKN (Hollwich Kushner); Matthias Hollwich, Marc Kushner; New York, USA; 2012;  
[http://www.archdaily.com/264545/menscience-flagship-store-hwkn/1233\\_01-1/](http://www.archdaily.com/264545/menscience-flagship-store-hwkn/1233_01-1/); Michael Moran;  
[http://www.archdaily.com/264545/menscience-flagship-store-hwkn/1233\\_04-1/](http://www.archdaily.com/264545/menscience-flagship-store-hwkn/1233_04-1/); 17 August 2012;





## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |                                     |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Col-1   | Yellow: bar stool                   |
| Col-2   | Yellow: backpained glass countertop |
| Col-3   | Light gray: cabinets                |
| Col-4   | Dark gray: shelving                 |
| Form-1  | Rectangular: cabinets               |
| Form-2  | Rectangular: shelving               |
| Form-3  | Box with open sides                 |
| Furni-1 | Tolix bar stool                     |
| Furni-2 | Re-used barber's chair              |
| Light-1 | Natural: through shopfront          |
| Light-2 | Artificial: recessed downlighters   |

## CONNOTATION

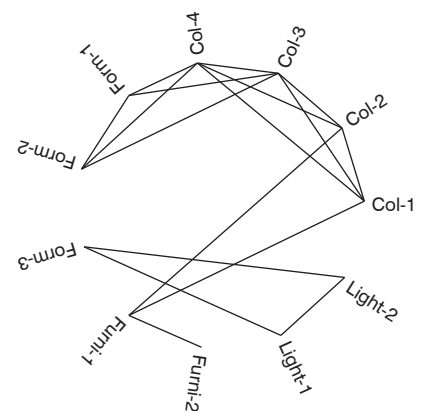
|   |
|---|
| Colour use: chroma and proportion of colour: reflects corporate identity applied graphically (e.g. bottle labels) |
| Proportion between forms: reflects graphic identity   |
| Interiority; containment; boundary  |
| Masculinity: grooming   |

## SEMIOSIS

An identity created by another design discipline can be directly, but critically translated to a spatial identity. Consider this when design distribution must be taken into account.

## Discourses

Alteration  
Episteme  
Form  
Gender / Sexuality  
Identity / Ontology  
Inhabitation and the Body  
Interiority  
Taste



[http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-7XB-8PpZXag/UU9x6JwZPzI/AAAAAAAAAB9Q/TnqcnPzGgBg/s1600/men\\_rock\\_straight\\_razor.jpg](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-7XB-8PpZXag/UU9x6JwZPzI/AAAAAAAAAB9Q/TnqcnPzGgBg/s1600/men_rock_straight_razor.jpg)



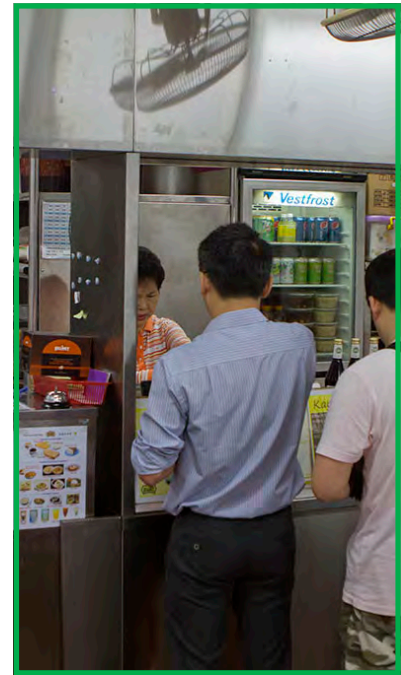
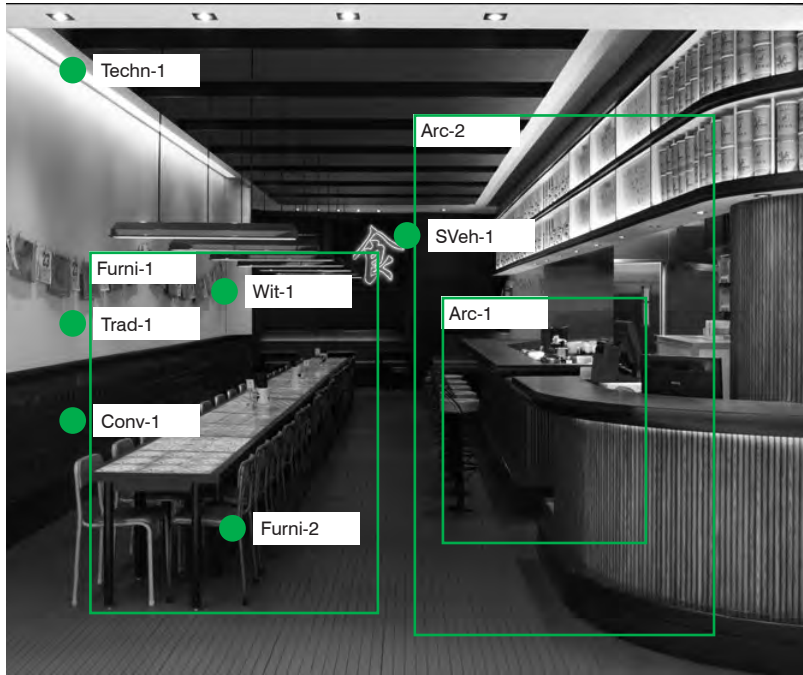
This restaurant in Hong Kong is reminiscent of Asian tea houses and night markets. (It specifically refers to Malaysian coffeeshop called 'kopitiam'.)

Although the interior is contemporary, it does have a nostalgic atmosphere which references the past. The expectation is that the product offering will be of good quality, but traditional and conservative.

The tables are decorated with tiles found in Malaysian streets

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**Old Street Kobiteh; Eatery - Restaurant; NC Design and Architecture: Nelson Chow; Hong Kong, China; c. 2012;**  
<http://twentyninespace.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Old-Street-Kobiteh01.jpg>; Dennis Lo Designs;  
[http://www.howardkwong.me/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/IMG\\_0602.jpg](http://www.howardkwong.me/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/IMG_0602.jpg); P24 February 2013;



## DENOTATION

### Methods

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Arc-1   | Dual-desk  |
| Arc-2   | Bottoms-up                                       |
| Conv-1  | Timber wainscoting replaced with tiles           |
| Furni-1 | Cafeteria table                                  |
| Furni-2 | Generic plywood and steel 'school' chair         |
| S Veh-1 | Signage: backlit                                 |
| Techn-1 | Light alcove; wall washing                       |
| Trad-1  | Dado with wainscoting and painted wall           |
| Wit-1   | Printed images on clothing line; fixed with pegs |

### Discourses

Alteration

Episteme

Form

Gender / Sexuality

Identity / Ontology

Inhabitation and the Body

Interiority

Taste

## CONNOTATION

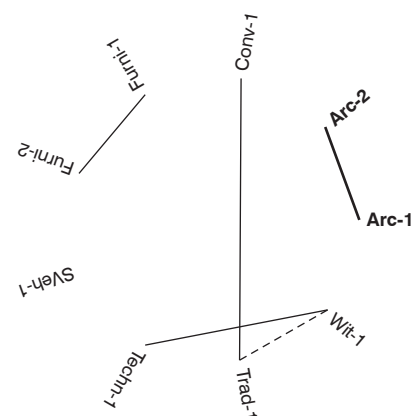
Separation between public and private  
Indicates service space

Not practical: stylised; edited for the sake of the photograph  
Functional; cost-effective; 'no-nonsense'

Symbolic

## SEMIOSIS

Reciprocal archetypes communicate social function; separation between service and served spaces.



[http://www.gluttonsquest.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Singapore-Feb\\_070.jpg](http://www.gluttonsquest.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Singapore-Feb_070.jpg)



065 Pizza Faro



The restaurant ceiling is decorated with rolling pins which clearly references the making process (baking).

The interior is decorated in a rustic manner with traditional materials (face brick, timber) and furniture.

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31. Non-Canonical



**Pizza Faro; Eatery - Restaurant (pizzeria); Pizza Faro (in-house); Yvette Romanin; Thornbury, Australia; c. 2012;**  
<http://www.decisivecravings.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/PIZZA-FARRO-PIC-POST.jpg>;  
<http://alittlewit.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/pizzafarro05.jpg>; 07 March 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Ens-1 Cruet set and menu
- Furni-1 Various re-used timber chairs; mixed
- Furni-2 Timber tables with painted legs
- Icon-1 Rolling pins
- Mat-1 Exposed stock bricks; repaired
- Mat-2 Homemade quilt
- Obj-1 Rolling pins
- Wit-1 Use of rolling pins as decoration

**CONNOTATION**

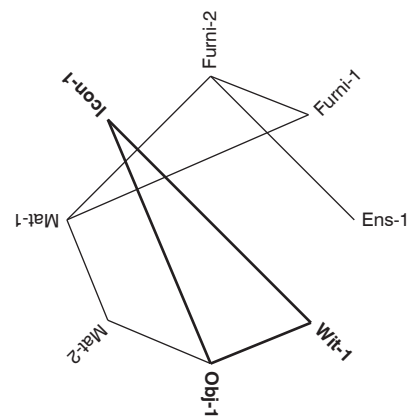
- Baking; bread making
- Thrift
- Transfunctionalisation

**SEMIOSIS**

Very direct iconic connections and material use connote a traditional offering and interior.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://www.leosimports.com.au/product\\_images/h/Pizzutti-Pizza-Flour\\_\\_31305.JPG](http://www.leosimports.com.au/product_images/h/Pizzutti-Pizza-Flour__31305.JPG);



066 Fabbrica Bergen



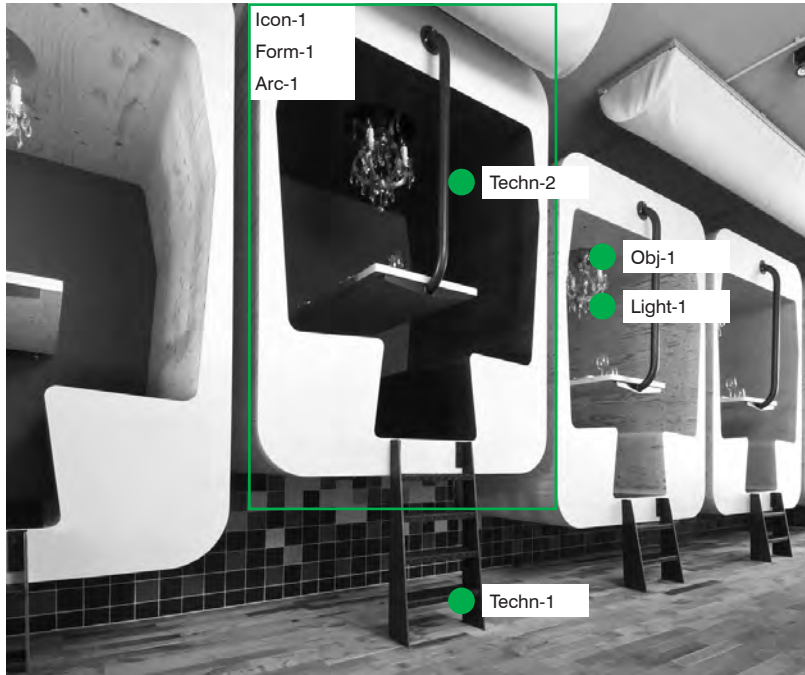
This is the version for Bergen in a chain of restaurants designed by Tjep. It therefore serves as an example of iteration.

Individual booths are arranged like dining cars; they are an efficient way to demarcate semi-private areas in a public space. The constellation (dining table and seating / booth) is altered in form to make an iconic reference.

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**Fabbrica Bergen;** Eatery - Restaurant; Tjep: Frank Tjepkema, Leonie Janssen, Jeroen van Laarhoven; Bergen, The Netherlands; 2011;

[http://www.tjep.com/uploads/projects/tjep\\_fabbrica\\_bergen\\_12/tjep\\_fabbrica\\_bergen\\_12\\_1225x900.jpg](http://www.tjep.com/uploads/projects/tjep_fabbrica_bergen_12/tjep_fabbrica_bergen_12_1225x900.jpg); Yannic Alidarso, Tjep; [http://www.tjep.com/uploads/projects/tjep\\_fabbrica\\_bergen\\_2.2/tjep\\_fabbrica\\_bergen\\_2.2\\_1440x899.jpg](http://www.tjep.com/uploads/projects/tjep_fabbrica_bergen_2.2/tjep_fabbrica_bergen_2.2_1440x899.jpg); 09 January 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 Incubation
- Form-1 Extrusion
- Icon-1 Railway car
- Light-1 Artificial: cove lighting in alcove
- Obj-1 Chandelier
- Techn-1 Ladder
- Techn-2 Armature

**CONNOTATION**

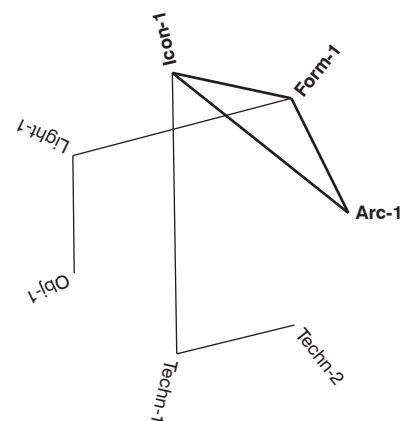
- Inhabitation and privacy
- Privacy; interiority

**SEMIOSIS**

The form of the archetype connotes meaning through iconic connection. This is reinforced through the use of objects and lighting.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



URL Photo 3 <http://www.kojonuptourrailway.com.au/Images/KTR%20zoo%20train%20carriages.jpg>;

067 Xing



A multi-coloured band is used as a bulkhead; this frames the counter (which emphasises it) and serves as an organising device through the space.

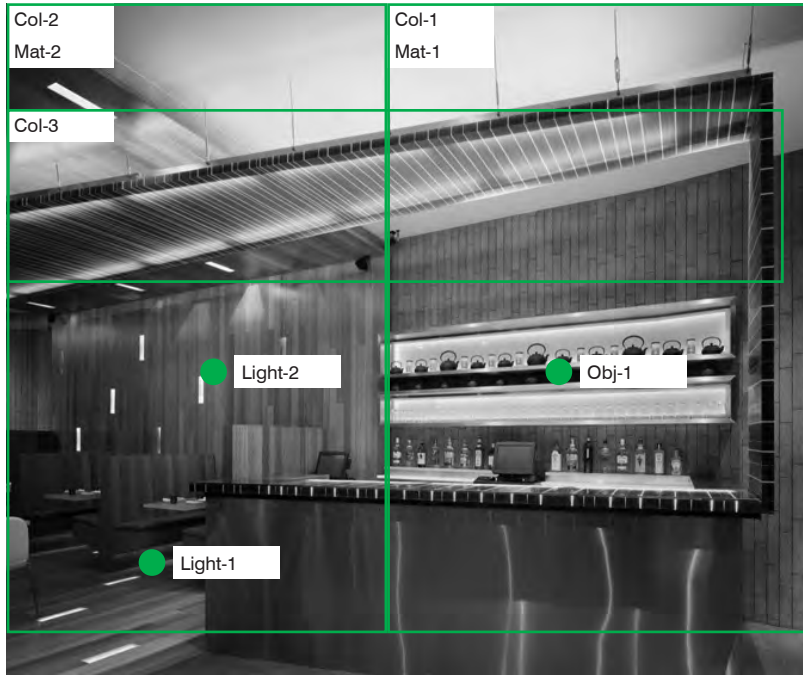
Tea-pots are placed on display – with obvious associative purposes.

The colour palette towards the front of the restaurant is simple (mainly gray; green; and timber) while a contrasting colour scheme is used at the back (with the introduction of red wall cladding).

1. Interior Design
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30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical



**Xing Restaurant; Eatery - Restaurant; LTL Architects (Lewis, Tsurumaki, Lewis); New York, USA; 2005;**  
<http://retaildesignblog.net/2011/12/16/xing-restaurant-by-ltl-architects-new-york/>; Michael Moran;  
<http://retaildesignblog.net/2011/12/16/xing-restaurant-by-ltl-architects-new-york/>; 24 May 2011;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Col-1 Gray: tiles
- Col-2 Brown: wall cladding
- Col-3 Green, with yellow and white stripes: bulkhead and counter
- Light-1 Artificial: effect lighting; in shadowline; red
- Light-2 Artificial: alcove lighting
- Mat-1 Tiles
- Mat-2 Timber cladding
- Obj-1 Cast-iron teapots

**CONNOTATION**

Traditional reference

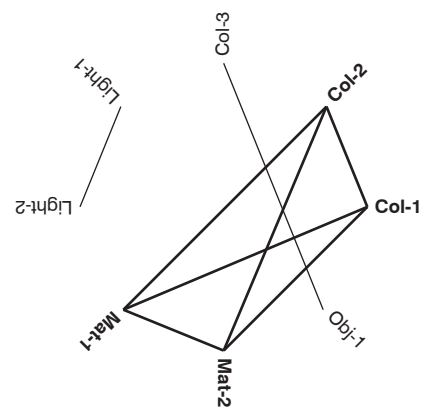
**SEMIOSIS**

The shared relationship between colour and material; applied or integral should be considered as synthetic and decorative methods.

This indicates an association between decoration and synthesis.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://us.123rf.com/400wm/400/400/markskalny/markskalny1202/markskalny120200040/12424651-tea-served-in-a-traditional-japanese-cast-iron-tea-pot-and-cups.jpg>;



068 Pizza Express



This project falls outside the synchrony but is included for its utility to the study. Other restaurants (specifically pizzerias) included had a nostalgic and traditional feeling, which is countered by this project.

The project uses constellations in novel ways (e.g. the use of a massive pendant luminaire to demarcate a private booth).

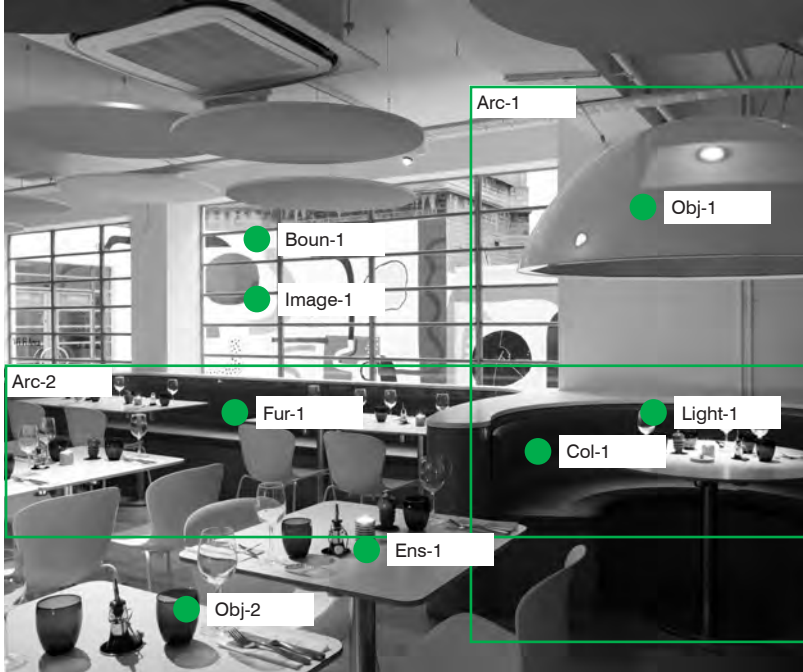
Tableware is used in a decorative fashion as accent to the colour scheme of the interior.

Mirrors are used on the ceiling to reflect food preparation areas, implying that patrons have the right to scrutinise the preparation process.

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29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**Pizza Express Concept Restaurant; Eatery - Restaurant (pizzeria); Ab Rogers; Richmond, London, UK; c. 2010;**  
<http://www.lovefoodlovedrink.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/PizzaExpress-restaurant-and-illuminated-parabolic.jpg>;  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2011/01/05/living-lab-by-ab-rogers-for-pizza-express/>; 05 January 2011;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 Incubate
- Arc-2 Padded perimeter
- Boun-1 Windows behind banquette
- Col-1 Red: upholstery
- Ens-1 Place setting: glasses; cutlery; candle and cruet
- Fur-1 Vinyl upholstery
- Image-1 Mural: outside, visible through windows
- Light-1 Artificial: Light cone
- Obj-1 Oversided pendant: dome
- Obj-2 Water glass: blue

**CONNOTATION**

Interiority; boundary; privacy

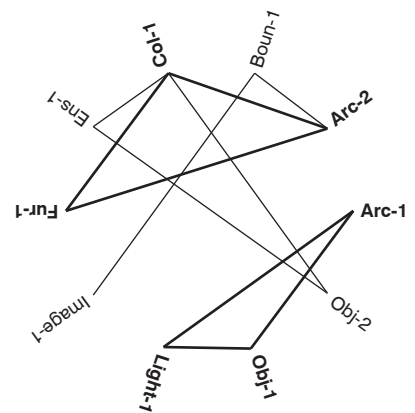
**SEMIOSIS**

Furnishing is a convenient method to introduce colour; both can be considered as lower-order methods. (In this case they present a proximal nesting within an archetype.

In a similar manner object and light are proximal methods nesting in an archetype.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://www.newyorkdailyphoto.com/nydppress/wp-content/uploads/2007/03/Camper.jpg>;

069 Spiegel Kantine



The project is included as an artefact that exists between typologies (as a canteen it serves a corporate function with the cultural associations of a restaurant).

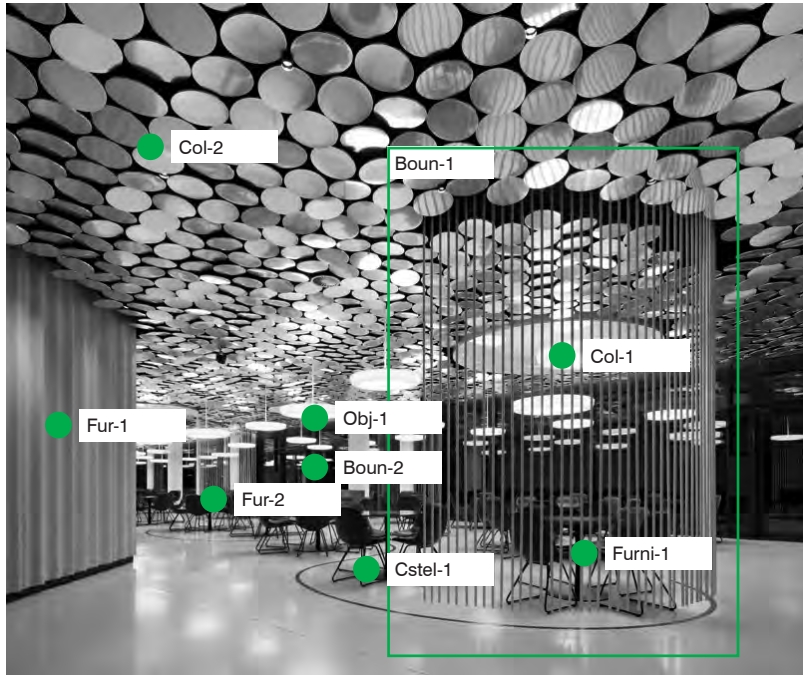
The interior conveys expense and sophistication. Colour use is limited to a palette of grays, with yellow accents (bulkheads over tables).

Although the furniture has the appearance of being placed informally; it is clear from their alignment with the ceiling that the furniture layout is very specifically determined.

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31. Non-Canonical



**Kantine for Der Spiegel; Eatery - Canteen (Corporate; journalism); Ippolito Fleitz Group Identity Architects; Hamburg, Germany; 2011;**  
[http://glocal.mx/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/p393\\_SPIEGEL\\_press-08.jpg](http://glocal.mx/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/p393_SPIEGEL_press-08.jpg); Markus Tollhopf;  
[http://www.ifgroup.org/ifpage\\_us/index.cfm/fuseaction/home.showintrotext/CFID=25131758&CFTOKEN=34457587.cfm](http://www.ifgroup.org/ifpage_us/index.cfm/fuseaction/home.showintrotext/CFID=25131758&CFTOKEN=34457587.cfm); 30 November 2011;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Boun-1 Pallisade
- Boun-2 Curtain wall
- Col-1 Yellow: bulkhead
- Col-2 Gray: ceiling panels
- Cstel-1 Dining table with four chairs
- Fur-1 Curtains: against wall
- Fur-2 Curtains: against curtain wall
- Furni-1 Pedestal table
- Obj-1 Pendant luminaire

**CONNOTATION**

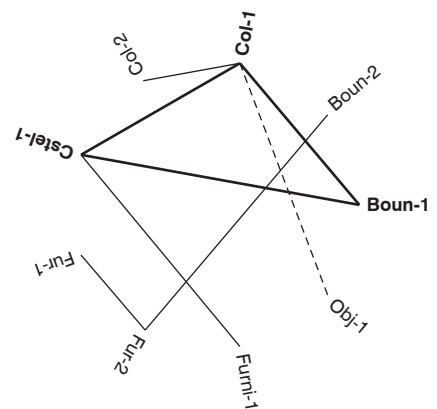
Contrast: places emphasis on objects and constellations on the floor

**SEMIOSIS**

The indirect use of colour (applied elsewhere) is used with a transparent boundary to place emphasis on constellations. This creates variation and interest in an interior which could become monotonous.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



[http://www.budding.dk/maanen\\_spiegel\\_stor.jpg](http://www.budding.dk/maanen_spiegel_stor.jpg);



070 Starbucks Library



In this version of the international coffee franchise (which is characterised by individualised interiors for different outlets) the coffeehouse typology is subverted and replaced by that of a library. Orders are placed when patrons select the relevant item (as if a book from a shelf) and taking it out at the counter.

It is assumed that the photograph is editorial and that more furniture will be placed in the interior (this will probably more clearly connote the function).

The concept is very clearly communicated with an iconic connection; indexical signs are used to place an order.

1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
8. Contrived/Fictional
9. Broad Reading
10. Iconic of Built
11. Cultural Context
12. Small Scale Production
13. Media
14. Expert
15. Layperson
16. Semantic
17. Critical
18. Installation
19. Insertion
20. Intervention
21. New
22. Dominant Centre
23. The South
24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical



**Starbucks Espresso Journey; Eatery - Cafe (take-away); Nendo; Tokyo, Japan; c. 2012;**

<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/10/10/starbucks-espresso-journey-by-nendo/>; Daici Ano;

<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/10/10/starbucks-espresso-journey-by-nendo/>; 10 October 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Boun-1     Service counter
- Conv-1     Bookshelves against boundary / edge
- Furni-1     Philippe Starck 'Heritage' stacking chair, for Emeco
- Iter-1     Interpretation of shelving and books - replaces menu board
- Light-1     Artificial: spot light on shelving
- Light-2     Artificial: Recessed, general illumination
- SVeh-1     Logo: applied on wall
- Techn-1     Fixed shelving
- Type-1     Morphological: library

**CONNOTATION**

- Edge between served and service spaces
- Limited function in libraries
- Formality

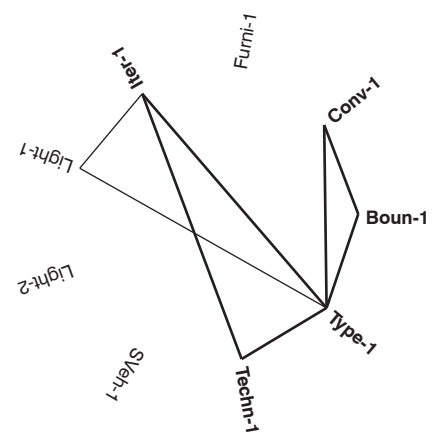
**SEMIOSIS**

A convention / typology is transfunctionalised to connote new meaning.

It is an iterative process to transfunctionalise the techneme (nested within the convention).

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://www.studio5555.de/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/starbucks-japan-19.jpg>;



071 A Cantina



Patrons are reminded of dining al fresco through the use of constructed trees over the tables.

The volume is high with an open and airy feeling, the level of illumination is high – factors which contribute to a feeling of being outside.

Applied colour is limited to brightly coloured glazed tiles on the serving counter.

1. Interior Design
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11. Cultural Context
12. Small Scale Production
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21. New
22. Dominant Centre
23. The South
24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical



**A Cantina; Eatery - Canteen (Museum; Shop); Estudio Nômada; Cidade da Cultura, Galicia, Spain; c. 2012;**  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/10/29/a-cantina-by-estudio-nomada/>; Santos-Diez/BISimages;  
<http://www.dezeen.com/2012/10/29/a-cantina-by-estudio-nomada/>; 29 October 2012;



**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Ana-1 Tree
- Arc-1 White box
- Col-1 White: painted walls and soffit
- Dec-1 Pattern: coloured glazed tiles
- Form-1 Elongated cube: counter
- Light-1 Natural: high level of illumination
- SMot-1 Mystery: 'forested' area behind threshold
- SMot-2 Threshold: edge between shop and canteen

**CONNOTATION**

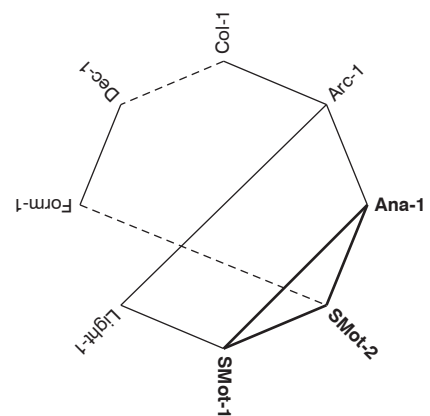
Museum connotation; appropriate for project

**SEMIOSIS**

Two symbolic motifs indicate a mystery and a threshold to that mystery. Analogy is used to create interest in the mysterious area.

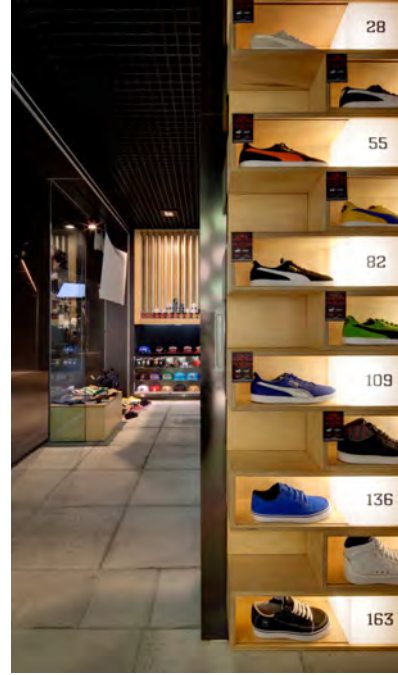
**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://www.ashbyfarmgoats.com/images/Herd/EatingTrees.jpg>;

072 Sneakerology

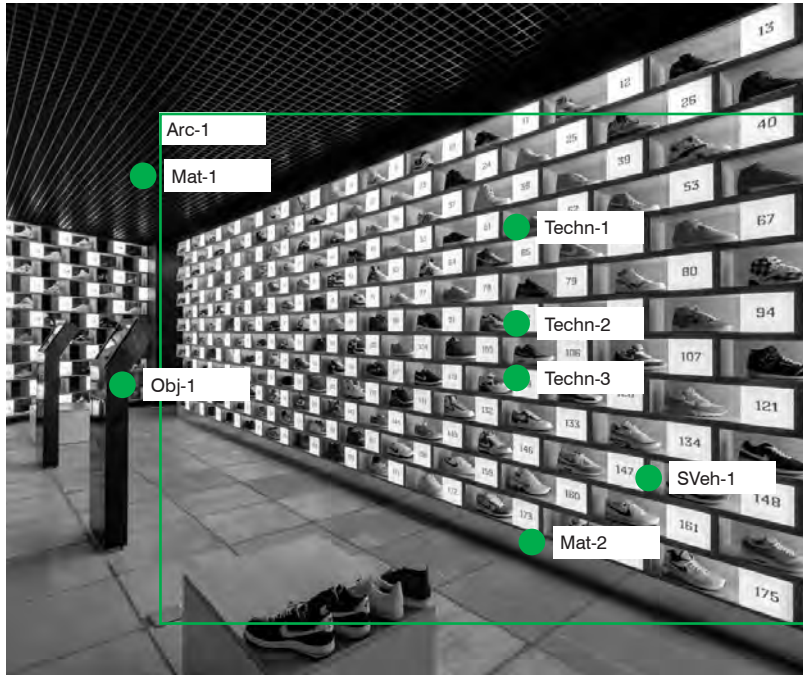


Merchandise is displayed as decoration against the walls and on some plinths (in limited amounts). The sneakers are numbered and arranged numerically. The display niches are reminiscent of shoe boxes – the effect is that the wall is presented as a collection of packaging.

1. Interior Design
2. Commercial
3. Public Access
4. Physical Context
5. Synchrony
6. Contemporary
7. 'New'
8. Contrived/Fictional
9. Broad Reading
10. Iconic of Built
11. Cultural Context
12. Small Scale Production
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14. Expert
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23. The South
24. Alpha City
25. New/Young Firms
26. Value Judgement
27. Utility
28. Taste
29. Gender
30. Privacy/Interiority
31. Non-Canonical

**Sneakerology**; Retail - Shoes (sneakers); Facet Studio: Olivia Shih, Yoshihito Kashiwagi; Sydney, Australia; 2011;  
[http://www.archdaily.com/145887/sneakerology-facet-studio/so\\_01/](http://www.archdaily.com/145887/sneakerology-facet-studio/so_01/); Katherine Lu;  
[http://www.archdaily.com/145887/sneakerology-facet-studio/so\\_07/](http://www.archdaily.com/145887/sneakerology-facet-studio/so_07/); 25 June 2011 ;





**DENOTATION**

**Methods**

- Arc-1 Specimen
- Mat-1 Alluminium ceiling panels:  
black
- Mat-2 Mirror: plinth
- Obj-1 VDU: pedestal mounted
- SVeh-1 Typography: numbers
- Techn-1 Alcove
- Techn-2 Backlit signage
- Techn-3 Alcove lighting

**CONNOTATION**

Connotes a shoe shop

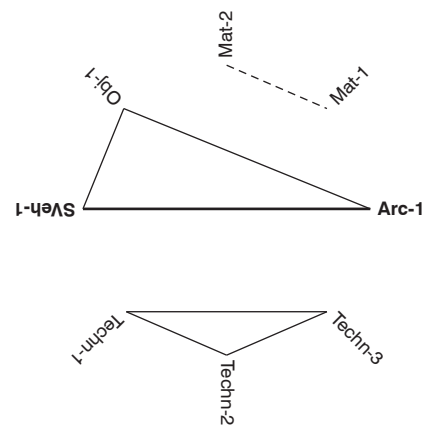
**SEMIOSIS**

Sign-vehicles (numbers) are used to support the archetype.

When archetype is used as a method, it must be supported with other, appropriate methods.

**Discourses**

- Alteration
- Episteme
- Form
- Gender / Sexuality
- Identity / Ontology
- Inhabitation and the Body
- Interiority
- Taste



<http://newhouseprssa.org/dev/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Converse-converse-1554611-2045-1333.jpg>;

## **ADDENDUM B EXAMINERS' REPORTS**



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, BUILT  
ENVIRONMENT AND INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY

Our ref.: Mrs Dawn Taljaard  
Tel: +27 (012) 420 4095  
Fax: 086 544 3024  
Email: dawn.taljaard@up.ac.za

# EXAMINER'S REPORT: DOCTORAL THESIS

---

**CANDIDATE:** Mr Raymund König

**EXAMINER:** Associate Professor Suzie Attiwill  
**ADDRESS:** School of Architecture and Design, RMIT University, 388 Swanston Street,  
Melbourne, Victoria, 3001, Australia

**TELEPHONE:** + 61 438 571 154

**Email:** [suzie.attiwill@mit.edu.au](mailto:suzie.attiwill@mit.edu.au)

1. Does the candidate show proof of original research and/or creative work which makes a real and substantial contribution to the knowledge of the corresponding science and/or practice? **YES**
2. Have significant parts of the thesis been published or are they suitable for publication? **YES**
3. Does the candidate show sufficient acquaintance with the relevant literature? **YES**
4. If not, which literature has been omitted?
5. Is the thesis acceptable with regard to:
  - Arrangement and lay-out? **YES**
  - Presentation (typographical, legibility)? **YES** - except for excessive use of footnotes referring to previous/future sections of thesis and without page numbers. This is overwhelming for the reader and does not aid with understanding
  - Literary presentation? **YES** however the writing and argument is overly dense and abstract at times. The occasional humorous comment offers some necessary relief

5. **Recommendation**

- The thesis is acceptable and the candidate passes: \_\_\_\_\_
- The degree can be awarded only after successful corrections have been made to the thesis as mentioned in the detailed report : Minor changes recommended
- If corrections are necessary, must these be made to the satisfaction of the supervisor, or to the satisfaction of the external examiners? \_\_\_\_\_
- The candidate must expand or amend the thesis (as mentioned in the detailed report) and submit the revised thesis for re-examination: \_\_\_\_\_
- The thesis is rejected and the candidate fails: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Which sections (if any) of this report and of the detailed report may be revealed to the candidate? ----

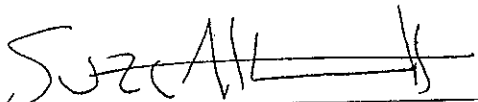
ALL

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7. (Supervisor only)

A suitable paper about this work has been submitted for publication:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF EXAMINER

7.7.15  
DATE

Attention:  
Professor BTJ Maharaj  
Dean  
Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology  
University of Pretoria

Examiner's Report – Associate Professor Suzie Attiwill, School of Architecture and Design, RMIT University

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Please find following a detailed report that summarises key findings in my examination of Raymund König's PhD research titled *An Imaginal Interpretation of Interior Design's Methods of Cultural Production: Towards a Strategy for Constructing Meaning*.

As directed by the Guidelines for the Examination of a Doctoral Thesis that was provided with the submission, this report comments on the findings mentioned in the examiner's report; any additional aspects of importance; and suggested changes/corrections.

Overall my recommendation is for this PhD thesis to receive a pass. There are some aspects of the thesis that I recommend Mr König addresses before final submission.

In summary and to commence this review, I firstly wish to congratulate Mr König on an ambitious body of research that seeks to make a significant contribution to the discipline of interior design through an articulation of its cultural value. The research is original and has the potential to make a substantial and critical contribution. The thesis is well written and there are very few typographical areas. The argument and theoretical framework that is developed is consistent throughout. There is also evidence that this research has been published and disseminated through a series of conferences as well as engaged with the international professional organisation for the discipline – IFI (International Federation of Interior Architecture). This is one of the strengths of the contribution as a direct link is made with the strategic initiatives of this association in relation to the profession and education.

Mr König identifies the importance and value of making a contribution to the contemporary emerging discourse in the field and offers a different orientation to prevailing themes and assumptions that prevail. His focus on developing a strategy (as distinct from a method) is vital to understanding how this research is to be engaged and used. As the inaugural doctoral study in Interior Architecture at the University of Pretoria, it is to be commended for its contribution to the discipline. Mr König has addressed the range of issues that surface with this study with exemplary thoroughness. The research also demonstrates an expansive knowledge of its subject i.e. contemporary interiors both in the collection of interiors and in some of the astute observations (for example p.132 footnote 135).

There is an obvious pleasure expressed through the writing in the engagement with ideas and analysis to produce a theoretical framework. This is coupled with a sense of a significant commitment to the thinking as well as an appreciation of interiors, their materiality, structures, joinery and other details.

The development of the hypothesis and its theoretical development is an original and substantive contribution to the interior design body of knowledge and expertise: 'Interior design produces culture through synthesis, proximity, associations, timeliness and technification.' A new taxonomy / canon is developed which offers a way for people to understand interior design that is different to the current historic/teleological approach

The situating of the approach within a poststructuralist framework enables a level of complexity to be played out through the analysis and positioning of the research – as Mr König notes 'I commit myself to reach such an incomplete and contestable result'.

The focus of the investigation on the creation and transmission of meaning via the iconic structure/the image picks up on valuable precedent propositions regarding the production of a design canon (Downton), and the relation between image and interior (Rice). These are then extended to foreground the specificity of the discipline of interior design as one engaged in the production of fictive and imaginable worlds. Mr König's concepts of 'the imaginal interior' / 'the imaginal interior hypothesis' / 'an addressee oriented approach' make a substantial contribution to the re-posing of theoretical engagements in the discipline and through this (as he argues) also the production of interiors.

The argument regarding the use of photographs as 'primary empirical evidence' is clear. The use of Trigoni's dissertation as a key reference to make evident the different approaches between the two theses to interpretation and the use of photographs as empirical evidence is important. The emphasis on cultural production rather than production methods is also key to positioning the contribution of this research.

There could have been more attention paid to the complexity around production of meaning in terms of the distinction between experiencing visual images and interiors as material, physical, temporal. Given the poststructuralist framing and references to Eco – one thinks of Foucault's *This is not a pipe* – yet this dilemma is not attended to in the thesis.

The continual acknowledgement that 'personal limitations' come into play in the assembling of the corpus seems contrary to a poststructuralist position. There is also a tension throughout the PhD between analytic and synthetic concepts of knowledge, poststructuralism and a modernist concept of subjectivity that is continually inflected: 'a reflexive approach with the centrality of the subjectivity of the researcher'; a 'subjective view of the world informs the research process' – this is not particularly poststructuralist in its centring of the subject as the knower (Cartesian).

*In vivo* codes – identifying idiosyncratic qualities of interior artefact (p.183 onwards). It would be valuable to have a sense of what was *not* included and why so as to understand the selection process. The reference to the literature re-sourcing of codes – why this selection of literature? What does it reflect? The selection could have a consistency that skews the codes in a particular way. Are they different theoretically?

The deductive analytic process that shapes this research is an abstract process that is difficult to pull back and examine/evaluate. When it is brought back into dialogue with existing literature it becomes important in the form of testing the ideas. For example, the idea of boundary: the reference used is one from 1984 and does not have an interior design focused. Yet there is a plethora of current discussion in the discipline regarding relational definitions that are dynamic and not boundary defined. While distance from the discipline of architecture is articulated for the practice of interior design, the distinctive qualities are not strong conceptually: archetype, boundary, colour, decoration, furnishing, performance (here with reference to Goffmann via Edwards), temporality (this understood in terms of change yet the complexity of this as a poststructuralist concept/concern seems to be missing; and interior design academic Ed Hollis's Memory Palace would have been a valuable reference and point of negotiation); and typology.

The rationale to focus on commercial interiors makes sense in relation to production and consumption. And as someone within the interior design discipline, I appreciate the conceptual positioning of the 'mood board' in relation to the collection process where taste and preferences are privileged and the mood board is presented as 'a visual synthesis of my normative position to the ontological position',

At times the writing style is dense and frustrating due to the many footnotes that refer the reader to another section in the thesis (without a page reference). The frustration occurs as one needs reminding regarding the point being made / what the terms being referred to means. Instead there is a sense of the footnote being about accountability rather than attending to the reader. A lot is asked of the reader, particularly when the argument is so finely crafted that words mean very specific things. For example p.130 – statement "This is not the 'new' in Deleuze's terms or

innovative in Eco's sense ...". with a footnote references the reader back to 2.2.4, no page number and no reminder at this point what Deleuze's 'new' and Eco's 'innovative' meant and how they were different.

There is also a tendency to make reference to other texts without going into the reference and unpacking the issues so that the reader understands the position. This assumes that the reader will know the reference and it also prevents an examination of the candidate's understanding of the position being made. Further, some paragraphs include many references and yet each brings with it nuanced differences that should have been more finely tuned through elaboration.

It is stated that parts of the thesis have previously been published. If there is further publication of this research, I recommend that some of the comments above regarding the writing style are re-visited so that it offers more to the reader.

#### RECOMMENDED CHANGES:

1] Include in the introduction, an articulation of 'the thesis's poststructural position' on p.23 in relation to the selection of literature and philosophers – primarily Barthes, Baudrillard and Eco. These are a specific trajectory of poststructuralism and it is important at this early stage to elaborate for the reader that this trajectory (and not others) are the focus of this research. For example, Derrida is not addressed and while this is fine, there needs to be a paragraph or two that critically reflects on the kind of poststructuralism being engaged with in order to orient the reader in a particular way and not leave them to ask 'why not Derrida?' given the interest in grammar; nor 'why is a modernist subject and subjectivity maintained given the inclusion of Deleuze and Grosz as references?'

2] For this reason, I also recommend that the few references to Gilles Deleuze and Elizabeth Grosz are removed. These are different poststructuralist positions to those engaged in the thesis and the implications of these philosophies find no purchase/expression in the research or thesis. Hence their inclusion is misleading for the reader. It has the effect of making the thesis seem ambitious beyond its capacity. An example: p.30 'Grosz (2009:127) elaborates that when we interact with objects there is interference; the medium of analysis will transform the reading (Mowitt, 1992:216)'. To have two references in the one sentence and both vastly different theoretically/philosophically is problematic. There is also a conflation and misrepresentation of both of these positions. This should be removed. In the discussion of Objects p.45 – there is no reference to Grosz's concept of 'the thing' that has been referenced previously and introduces a very different idea of 'object' that is not evident anywhere in the thesis.

#### QUESTION FOR VERBAL EXAMINATION:

In the thesis, there is a tension between analytic and synthetic concepts of knowledge, poststructuralism and a modernist concept of subjectivity.

A number of subjects/subjective positions are articulated in the thesis and I would like to hear more about how these are understood within the poststructuralism framework that is employed within this thesis:

- The researcher as subject: 'a reflexive approach with the centrality of the subjectivity of the researcher'; and 'subjective view of the world informs the research process'.
- 'A relativist ontology and a subjective epistemology'.

How are the above reconciled with a poststructuralist theoretical framework?

And in 'an addressee oriented approach', how are the subjectivities of the other key subjects – gatekeeper, reader, model inhabitant, user – in this thesis understood and positioned in relation to the production of meaning?



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, BUILT  
ENVIRONMENT AND INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY

Our ref.: Mrs Dawn Taljaard  
Tel: +27 (012) 420 4095  
Fax: 086 544 3024  
Email: dawn.taljaard@up.ac.za

# EXAMINER'S REPORT: DOCTORAL THESIS

CANDIDATE: Konigk R

EXAMINER: Professor Anne Massey

ADDRESS: School of Art & Design, Middlesex University, London  
NW4 1BT, United Kingdom

TELEPHONE: 00 44 784 361 8248 Email: a.massey@mdx.ac.uk

1. Does the candidate show proof of original research and/or creative work which makes a real and substantial contribution to the knowledge of the corresponding science and/or practice?  
Yes
2. Have significant parts of the thesis been published or are they suitable for publication? Yes
3. Does the candidate show sufficient acquaintance with the relevant literature? Yes

If not, which literature has been omitted?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Is the thesis acceptable with regard to:
  - Arrangement and lay-out? Yes
  - Presentation (typographical, legibility)? Yes
  - Literary presentation? Yes

5. **Recommendation**

- The thesis is acceptable and the candidate passes: Yes
- The degree can be awarded only after successful corrections have been made to the thesis as mentioned in the detailed report : \_\_\_\_\_
- If corrections are necessary, must these be made to the satisfaction of the supervisor, or to the satisfaction of the external examiners? \_\_\_\_\_
- The candidate must expand or amend the thesis (as mentioned in the detailed report) and submit the revised thesis for re-examination: \_\_\_\_\_
- The thesis is rejected and the candidate fails: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Which sections (if any) of this report and of the detailed report may be revealed to the candidate?

All sections and the detailed report also.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. **(Supervisor only)**

A suitable paper about this work has been submitted for publication:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

K A Massey  
SIGNATURE OF EXAMINER

30th March 2015  
DATE

Professor Anne Massey

Detailed Report: PhD Thesis by Konigk R

***An Imaginal Interpretation of Interior Design's Methods of Cultural Production: Towards a Strategy for Constructing Meaning***

This thesis constitutes a thorough, detailed and theoretically adventurous piece of research and writing. It provides a welcome and original addition to the study and analysis of contemporary interior design. The thesis is expertly presented and has obviously been very carefully produced.

I would encourage publication of the work, either in journal articles which consider the innovative methodology or some of the case studies scrutinised. Journals such as *Interiors: Design, Architecture, Culture*; *Journal of Interior Design* or *Design Journal* may be worth considering. Alternatively, the thesis could be published as one or even two books, and a publisher such as Routledge may be interested.

The candidate demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the subject and begins the thesis with an all-embracing theoretical overview. Whilst this thoroughness is a positive aspect of the work, it does make the text highly repetitive and prone to constant iteration. This is acceptable for a PhD dissertation, but if the candidate were to consider publication, which I would encourage, then this needs to be rigorously edited out. There is also a tendency to use footnotes to refer to other parts of the thesis, which would appear clumsy in a publication – eg p149 footnote 1. These asides in the footnotes are self-evident if the text is clearly written.

There is a fascinating interrogation of relevant critical theory, and the discussion of Baudrillard on pp129 onwards is thought provoking in relation to interior design and contemporary patterns of consumption.

The structure of the thesis enables a logical move from the general to the specific, and the seven chapters are clearly laid out and articulate with one another. Each chapter successfully builds on the last. The tone of the thesis is objective, scientific and highly theoretical at the beginning but by Chapter 3 when more is revealed of the candidate and their academic milieu, the thesis succeeds in arguing for a more engaging and innovative approach which is necessarily self-reflective (p65). The discussions around image making, photography and the interior in Chapter Three, Section Four are particularly lucid, and bring in a wealth of sources. This would form an excellent journal article. Likewise, there is an interesting and self-aware discussion of ephemerality and novelty vis-à-vis interior design. Is this really such a shortcoming? Couldn't it be regarded as a positive feature of the discipline?

This is not a criticism, but I am left wondering if the candidate has considered linking his approach with more general theories of design, as interior design is so often neglected in favour of product design in these discourses. This is in addition to interior design's lowly position vis-à-vis architecture. Fashion theory may also provide a useful paradigm, for example, Agnes Rocamora's article, 'Personal Fashion Blogs: Screens and Mirrors in Digital Self-Portraits' in *Fashion Theory* 2011.

The use of post-structuralism and the death of the author are adept, but I was left wondering if this critique didn't contradict the candidate's anxiety about interior design 'striking a new course' (p134)? Is this within the profession's control?

The use of grounded theory is crucial to the success of the thesis, and is clearly set out at the start of Chapter Three and builds on the Literature Review in the previous chapters. The thesis draws on a wealth of sources, but if the work is to be published I would scale back the over reliance on Taylor and Preston (2006), excellent as this resource is, there is no need to cite it quite as much as is done. The Bibliography is comprehensive.

This is necessarily an exposition about contemporary interior design, with some mention of the history of the subject. Also, no domestic interiors are considered, nor amateur design or interior decoration. Perhaps this could be stated more clearly near the start as being beyond the scope of this exhaustive work. The research cannot be emblematic of all interior design practice, if these elements are not included.

Although gender, sexuality and identity are mentioned in the thesis, there is no mention of race. Grounded Theory is employed to guarantee an 'inclusive criteria' as set out in Chapter Four. Again, this is something to be addressed if the work proceeds to publication.

Chapter Five tends to be largely descriptive, and for publication this would need to be edited or indeed could form a standalone volume.

The thesis concludes well, and the point about education and training for interior designers on p286 is well made and this pedagogic context could be expanded.

In summary, this was an engaging and innovative piece of research and writing at doctoral level. I hope to see the work published more widely.

Professor Anne Massey

School of Art & Design, Middlesex University and Editor-in-Chief of *Interiors: Design, Architecture, Culture* (Routledge).

30<sup>th</sup> April 2015

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, BUILT  
ENVIRONMENT AND INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY

Our ref.: Mrs Dawn Taljaard  
Tel: +27 (0)12 420 4095  
Fax: 086 544 3024  
Email: dawn.taljaard@up.ac.za

# EXAMINER'S REPORT: DOCTORAL THESIS

CANDIDATE: Raymund Konig

EXAMINER: Professor Charles Rice

ADDRESS: Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building  
University of Technology Sydney

TELEPHONE: +61 2 9514 8924 Email: Charles.Rice@uts.edu.au

1. Does the candidate show proof of original research and/or creative work which makes a real and substantial contribution to the knowledge of the corresponding science and/or practice?  
Yes

2. Have significant parts of the thesis been published or are they suitable for publication?

Potentially, subject to editing

3. Does the candidate show sufficient acquaintance with the relevant literature?

Yes

If not, which literature has been omitted?

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4. Is the thesis acceptable with regard to:

▪ Arrangement and lay-out?

Yes

▪ Presentation (typographical, legibility)?

Yes

▪ Literary presentation?

Yes



5. **Recommendation**


- The thesis is acceptable and the candidate passes: Yes
- The degree can be awarded only after successful corrections have been made to the thesis as mentioned in the detailed report : \_\_\_\_\_
- If corrections are necessary, must these be made to the satisfaction of the supervisor, or to the satisfaction of the external examiners? \_\_\_\_\_
- The candidate must expand or amend the thesis (as mentioned in the detailed report) and submit the revised thesis for re-examination: \_\_\_\_\_
- The thesis is rejected and the candidate fails: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Which sections (if any) of this report and of the detailed report may be revealed to the candidate?

All  
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7. **(Supervisor only)**  
A suitable paper about this work has been submitted for publication:

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SIGNATURE OF EXAMINER

18/5/15  
DATE

18 May 2015

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Dear Professor Maharaj,

**RE: PhD Thesis of Mr Raymund Konigk**

It is with pleasure that I report on the PhD thesis of Mr Raymund Konigk. I deem the thesis to be the result of advanced original research and scholarly inquiry, and to make an original contribution to knowledge in the field of interior design. The thesis is a thorough and careful investigation of its stated objective: 'interior design's methods of cultural production'. I would only take issue with the use of the word 'method'. By its own admission, the thesis seeks to interpret the way interior design produces culture; it is not an attempt at an analysis of design method. In conclusion Mr Konigk makes a claim for an 'imaginal strategy' for the production of meaning in new interior designs, but this is not claimed as a model or method for design. In this way the thesis could be clearer in its terminology, but this does not detract from the thrust of the argument.

The thesis presents a thorough application of semiotic theories to the reading of interior designs, in the process specifying ways in which the interior produces culture. Semiotic theory is complemented with grounded theory as a way of accounting for the inductive nature of the theoretical reasoning. In the process of making this argument, Mr Konigk shows himself to be aware of the possibilities and pitfalls of the methods he has chosen, and to a reasonable extent how they relate to the existing historical and theoretical literature on the interior. Perhaps more awareness could have been shown about alternative methods available, such as critical theory (though there is a brief excursion into Marxist theory), or more recent critical frameworks which discuss representations (e.g. Beatriz Colomina, WJT Mitchell) or objects (e.g. Latour). The work of Eco and Barthes is, by now, historical (and itself the subject of historical and theoretical reflection). It is not simply 'available' to culture in the way it was in the 1970s or 80s when it shaped certain methods of cultural production, and was a method of cultural production in its own right. If a claim is being made for the importance of a contemporary archive of interior design as the basis for the analysis, then some reflection should be given to the contemporaneity (or otherwise) of the main theoretical apparatus employed. On its own terms, however, the thoroughness of the investigation and use of semiotic theory does show sustained theoretical insight.

The thesis is meticulous in its organisation, but this leads to a certain fastidiousness which stands in the way of what could be a clearer exposition of the material. There is much repetition between sections, and footnotes compound this; most of them are unnecessary, as the main body of the text

should provide sufficient signposting in a way more amenable to the reader. As a result, no sections of the thesis are publishable as is. While the findings of chapters 5 and 6 are worthy of being published, they would have to be written up in a more readerly way so that they would be in a position to have impact in a field where theoretical erudition is rare. Rather than being a major flaw however, this is a challenge to Mr Konigk to outline a programme of publications which would derive from the thesis. There is clear evidence of Mr Konigk's commitment to contemporary interior design, and the advancement of its theoretical interpretation, and I look forward to seeing publications emerge from the thesis.

Sincerely,



Charles Rice.