

POLITECNICO DI MILANO



**Facoltà del design**  
**Open lecture Design of the other Things**  
anno accademico '10-'11

Docente: **Stefano Maffei**

Cultori: **Massimo Bianchini** | **Ursula Borroni** | **Beatrice Villari**

## **D - Cloud**

**Amandolese Daniela**

**Difonzo Alessandro**

**Mainente Elisa**

**Napoli Marco**

**Salvioni Ilaria**

**Saviotti Federica**

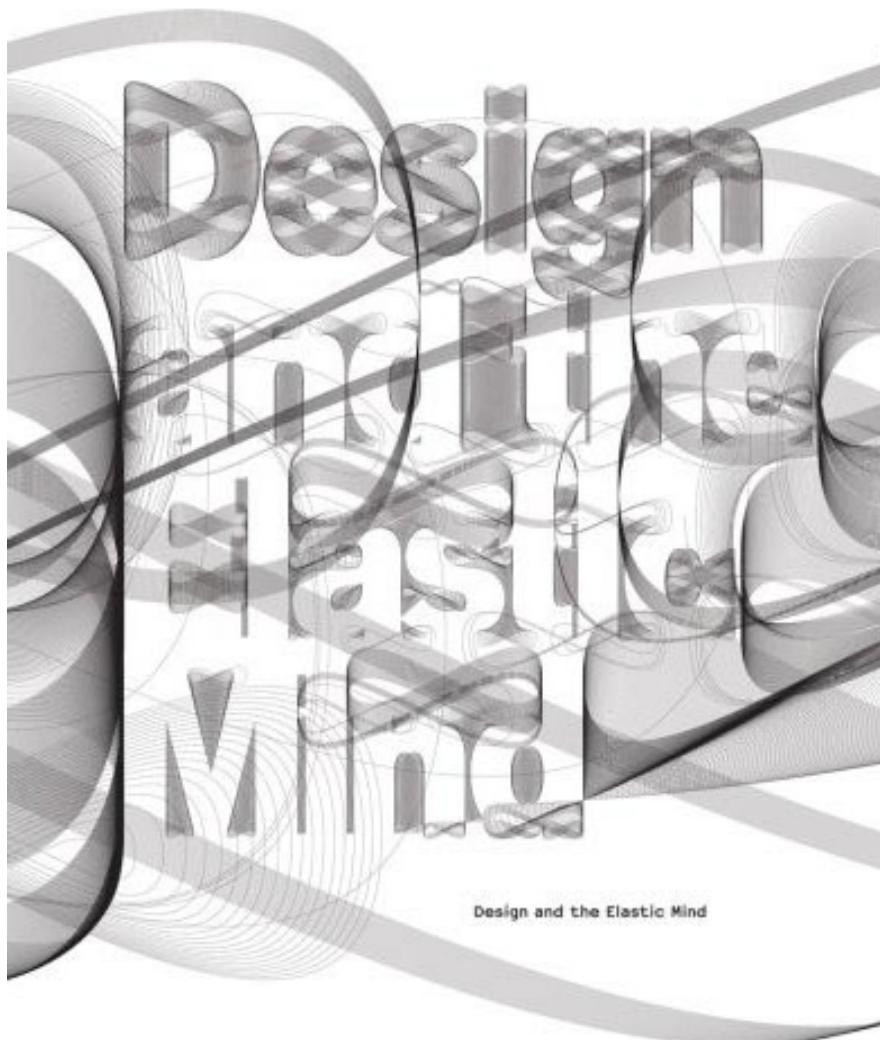
**Caso Digitale : DESIGN AND THE ELASTIC MIND**

**DESIGN  
OF  
THE  
OTHER  
THINGS**

## Design and the Elastic mind

La mostra Design and the Elastic Mind, curata da Paola Antonelli, in esposizione al Museo d'Arte Moderna di New York fino al 12 Maggio, esplora la relazione biunivoca tra scienza e design nel mondo contemporaneo, coniugando oggetti di design e concetti provenienti dalle avanguardie della ricerca scientifica secondo il criterio dell'intelligenza elastica, ossia adattabilità più accelerazione, le caratteristiche indispensabili per rincorrere i cambiamenti della società in cui viviamo.

La mostra sottolinea l'abilità di quei designer che sono in grado di afferrare il senso dei cambiamenti in atto, nella tecnologia, nella scienza, nella storia (cambiamenti che richiedono un adattamento dei comportamenti sociali), e li traducono in oggetti davvero funzionali. Il sito che presenta la mostra è in sé un esempio di interfaccia avanzata e contiene trecento progetti, cinquanta in più di quelli esposti. Tra i tanti, vi segnaliamo un progetto a cui siamo particolarmente affezionati, Painstation, interfaccia di gioco ideata dai tedeschi FFur.



# Design and the Elastic mind

## curatrice mostra : Paola Antonelli

Dal '99 è curatore responsabile del dipartimento di Architettura e Design del Museum of Modern Art (Moma) di New York , è tra i maggiori esperti internazionali di design. Vive a New York e poi fa la spola tra Los Angeles e Milano. Originaria di Sassari, si è laureata al Politecnico di Milano, è stata docente ad Harvard, nel '94 è entrata in forze al Museum of Modern Art di New York (MoMa) nella veste di curatore associato. Ha curato mostre al MoMa, in Italia, Francia e Giappone, come quella con cui ha debuttato "Mutant material in Contemporary Design" (1995), e poi "Thresholds: Contemporary Design from the Netherlands" (1996); "Achille Castiglioni: Design!" (1997-98), "Matter and Workspheres: Design in the Workplace of Tomorrow" (2001); "Humble Masterpieces" (2004) che riuniva 120 oggetti scelti tra gli oltre 3.800 pezzi del MoMa, tra cui elicotteri e microchips e ancora sulle collezioni del museo "Objects of Design and Safe: Design Takes on Risk" (2006). Oltre a collaborare con numerose riviste ha pubblicato diversi libri insieme a Steven Guarnacci e Achille Castiglioni (Corraini, 2000); con Sparke Penny, e Russel Andrei, "Design Gran Bretagna" (Rizzoli, 2000) E' stata tra i vincitori del prestigioso concorso statunitense 2006 National Design Awards.

## intervista

*When setting up a new exhibition, how do you try and capture the attention of the audience? How do you lure people into the exhibition?*

I don't know. It kind of comes naturally. There needs to be a good balance, of course you want to convey a certain idea and you hope that the idea will push the whole world a little further and forward. But, at the same time you need to do it with some grace without being too pandering and too heavy. So there are always a little sense of humor in certain objects, some lightness every now and then, even when you have a serious message to convey. Then there is also the idea that you want to show that design is a very creative discipline and that there is playfulness in it and talent, but there is also a lot of thinking and reasoning. And, more than anything, there is a lot of thinking about human beings.

However, people usually like it better when it's not that abstract, where their lives are not at stake. So one of the best ways to make the exhibition engaging for people is to make them understand that it is about people. What designs do is they really focus on people's lives, even when they use the most advanced of technologies. They are the ones that guarantee that these devices actually work for people. It's a mixture of that and the overall design of the space, ensuring its attractiveness, and the choice of objects. I always compare curators, especially curators at MoMA, to movie directors. It's as if I was the director and MoMA was the studio. Each director has their own personality. It really has to do with the philosophy of displaying and the philosophy of exhibiting.

# Design and the Elastic mind

*You see a lot of new forms of design popping up, like 'critical design' and 'green design'. What new form of design appeals to you the most?*

"Design for the Elastic Mind" was all about new forms of design. But, the type of design that I'm really interested in is all of them. I love the way designers work with scientists, biomimicry, and nanodesign. I love tissue design, behavioral design, and I'm interested in social design depending on how it's done. I'm very passionate about informational design and visualization, I think it is one of the biggest avenues for designers in the future. In a way, I'm interested in any form of design that doesn't start with an object but rather starts with reasoning. A reasoning about how people live and how they could live better in the future.

*What, for the coming decade, will be an important influence/change for the way we approach design?*

I think more and more it will be not about objects, but rather about other things. Or at least the objects will be in the computer screen. I think the designer that are going to survive are the ones that have studied how to make chairs, but are more interested in experiences, interaction, and interfaces. The next show that I'm working on is about this, called "Talk to Me." It's about the communication between people and objects. I really believe that's what's going to happen the most.

I also feel that designers will start to be employed more in policy making, and sociology and ethnography. Their knowledge of how people think and behave will be exploited better.

*Over the last decade, which product has made the most impact on you and why?*

The iPod, which then became the iPhone, really it's the whole i-suite. I use a BlackBerry personally, but any kind of portable communication device that supports both text and email has revolutionized our life the most.

*How do you see the balance between input from users and the brilliance of designers when designing new products?*

It depends on the product, because every product requires a different balance. There are some products that are all about how people want them to be: these tend to be open source. There are others where people want the hand, or mind, of designer. They want the signature. It's becoming more and more thinking before doing, and understanding where the object sits. Let's say you want to buy a Cabana chair for \$10,000, you don't want your input in it. You want it to be their input only. Instead, you want to customize your Firefox, you want to customize it all by yourself. Your input is in the parts you decide to assemble and all the plugins that you want. So you see, there is a big difference between the functionality and symbolism of the object.

# Design and the Elastic mind

*In an article you once wrote that “the figure of the designer is changing from form giver to fundamental interpreter of an extraordinary dynamic reality”. What did you mean by this?*

What’s happening is that designers used to be those that made chairs, or those that made posters. Instead, right now they look at the way people live and they try to translate their observations into better products, better interfaces. Objects that are better, more flexible, more adaptable, and more elegant artifacts that we can surround ourselves with. Since people are changing everyday faster, and what’s happened in the past decade is the rate of change has become more rapid, what designers have to do is first and foremost be like anthropologists, or ethnographers. They have to observe how things happen and interpret them as fast as possible in a smart way.

What designers have to do is first and foremost be like anthropologists ... observe how things happen and interpret them as fast as possible in a smart way.

*In the same article you wrote this beautiful sentence “If design is to help enable us to live to the fullest while taking advantage of all the possibilities provided by contemporary technology, designers need to make both people and objects perfectly elastic” How do you make people more elastic?*

People might become more elastic before you make them. But, it’s a matter of open-mindedness and getting people to accept change. The reason people call innovation distributive is because when it’s imposed upon society by the people creating it, they don’t give a damn about the people. They don’t care about the consequences of the innovation, rather they just pass on the innovation to society. Designers try to ensure that innovations are able to be used by people and it speaks the language that the people are familiar with. This is how you make objects more elastic, how you make people more elastic is by making them more comfortable with change as it happens. It’s not a one way street, both people and objects need to have better interfaces.

## Link

<http://johnnyholland.org/2010/01/22/design-and-the-elastic-mind-an-interview-with-paola-antonelli/>

# Design and the Elastic mind

attori : Artisti e opere

## "Made by Bees"

by Tomas Gabzdil Libertiny



To create "The Honeycomb Vase," Tomas Gabzdil Libertiny designed a temporary frame in the shape of a squat vase with a slender neck. A colony of nearly 40,000 bees then went to work for a week constructing a hive over it in what the designer calls "slow prototyping" — a pointed reference to the methodical repetition of the old assembly line.

The resulting voluptuous, translucent form reflects a close collaboration between man and nature in which the artist serves as a gentle guide before allowing the bees to take over.

## "Rules of Six"

by Benjamin Aranda and Chris Lasch



But the show is about more than gorgeous, environmentally sensitive designs. The human body is repositioned as part of a fluid, elastic chain that extends from minuscule atomic particles to global communication networks.

The best example of this approach is Benjamin Aranda and Chris Lasch's "Rules of Six," which uses algorithms to fashion an organically based architecture. Mimicking the growth patterns of microscopic nanostructures, they envisioned an unpredictable, self-generating landscape that can multiply indefinitely without sacrificing stability. Their design is indifferent to scale: the sprawling matrix of three-dimensional, interlocking hexagons could represent rooms, buildings or entire urban neighborhoods.

# Design and the Elastic mind

attori : Artisti e opere

## **"Bone Chair"** by Joris Laarman



It was created with computer software that mimics the creation of human bones. The weight and stresses on a typical chair are programmed into the computer, which then works out an appropriate "bone" structure, churning out a series of increasingly refined prototypes. (The final computer version has a raw, undigested quality, but Mr. Laarman couldn't resist adding a final dash of aesthetic refinement by smoothing over the rough edges, a nice little example of how reluctant some designers are to yield control.)

## **"New City" (2008)** by Peter Frankfurt, Greg Lynn and Alex McDowell



"New City," a projected three dimensional display of a virtual world by Peter Frankfurt, Greg Lynn and Alex McDowell, is a model of an idealized society where buildings, cities and entire geographic regions all flow seamlessly together. It suggests how the Internet could be used as a testing ground for an emerging utopia.

## **Center image, "Tyosperma"** by Oded Ezer



In another fascinating if fanciful application of nanotechnology, the typeface designer Oded Ezer proposes using it to imprint incantatory typed messages on spermatozoa, the high-tech equivalent of a primitive fertility ritual.

# Design and the Elastic mind

## motivazioni : Critical design sulla East Cost

Il caso studio vuole indagare come il Critical Design viene affrontato oltre oceano, in America, in questo caso.

La città di New York come organismo pulsante assimila ed espelle eventi rilevanti che percepiscono visioni immanenti e scenari futuri.

In una città poliglotta sensibile alle nuove tendende il MoMa diventa luogo e fulcro dove concretizzare e rendere fruibile nuove linee di sviluppo tra arte e design.

Dalla mostra "Design and the Elastic mind" del 2008, si è sviluppato un flusso continuo di progetti che sfocerà nella primavera del 2011 con eventi, happenings e installazioni in tutta la città; dal museo alla strada il Critical Design sta prendendo piede nella cultura del Design dell'architettura e dell'arte diventando un linguaggio di progetto.



CRITICAL  
DESIGN  
NEW YORK

Want to receive email updates? Please sign up:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="submit" value="Submit"/>

Hello

Attendees

Exhibitors

**We've POSTPONED.  
It's OK.  
Next Year. We're Coming.  
2011**



# Design and the Elastic mind

## link

### **MoMa**

<http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2008/elasticmind/#>

### **Catalogo mostra**

[http://books.google.it/books?id=u1kxPGb2hrQC&printsec=frontcover&dq=design+and+elastic+mind&source=bl&ots=eKfUF32DP&sig=LOEUH6u54l\\_vbCeip-Po86Fhsol&hl=it&ei=4Fa9TICEB4qDOtmJ-VY&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=10&ved=0CEkQ6AEwCQ#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.it/books?id=u1kxPGb2hrQC&printsec=frontcover&dq=design+and+elastic+mind&source=bl&ots=eKfUF32DP&sig=LOEUH6u54l_vbCeip-Po86Fhsol&hl=it&ei=4Fa9TICEB4qDOtmJ-VY&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=10&ved=0CEkQ6AEwCQ#v=onepage&q&f=false)

### **Intervista**

<http://johnnyholland.org/2010/01/22/design-and-the-elastic-mind-an-interview-with-paola-antonelli/>

### **Articolo New York Times**

[http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2008/02/22/arts/22elasslideshow\\_7.html](http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2008/02/22/arts/22elasslideshow_7.html)  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/22/arts/design/22elas.html>

### **Video**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBdGU1\\_1I-8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBdGU1_1I-8)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAs5rqg1MPU&feature=related>