

Design for This Century

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09.13.17

Response

I'm fascinated by the concepts of signifier and signified in semiotics. We we create or design something, the meaning we intended to convey may not be the same as the audience interpret. Individual interpretation can differ through the process of initial perception, then the digestion based on his/her unique backgrounds. In this scenario, the power of seeing is equally important as the perception of what has been seen. The angle of a single event, the right to be informed and the freedom to interpret are all indispensable rights of a human-being. When I look at the controversy of representation, it is fundamentally about the quest of power: who creates the meaning in our life and who sets the rules to express and interpret meaning. The discussion of representation will still exist, as long as there is the interest of power involved.

Speaking of the angle of event, it reminds me of the evolution of representing media of our society. From the 2-D street representation of ideas and values through posters, we now enjoy a decentralized form of propagating through social media. I cannot say that social media completely eliminate the bias of representing meaning. However, it does offer us various angles when looking at a single event. Since everyone has the power to create contents, the only questions left is to either trust the content and how to interpret that. I believe in a decentralized world facilitated by technology. There are always going to be debates and flaws of certain technology. But it can't be denied that we are getting closer and closer to the real representation of meaning in this technological world.