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Summary: DESIGN FOR THE NETWORKED WORLD

These past few years have seen a great shift in technological use and augmented reality. Networked devices are constantly collecting data about us, our environment and more. In fact, it is made more difficult for us to prevent this data collection than to just let it happen. Nearly everyone has a cellphone, some type of portable computer with a GPS, a smartwatch with vital sign sensors, or even just a way to browse social media. With all of these networked together, very powerful identities are made of us which others can take advantage of, or use to our benefit.

Augmented reality has also evolved recently. While it has technically been around for thousands of years in the form of man-made objects improving quality of life, it has recently been introduced in the screen form. And as quickly as that shift happened, another is happening through the use of networks. Networks in AR change the meaning of otherwise ordinary objects or places. Interactivity with an inanimate object such as a chair happens through the lens of the devices we use and the networks they are a part of. That chair becomes an element of something bigger. Today, seeing the connections we have to the networks we are a part of is increasingly difficult. Machines are making decisions for us; some designed with less than pure intentions.

For this reason, the world needs designers to lay the foundations for what will become of networks in the future. The environments the designs will take place in and the people whose day to day lives will be affected by the design all need to be carefully considered.

The ever-changing environment must also be accounted for. With “smart” objects we interact with, we see the shift back to physical and architectural design and away from screen-based intelligence, making the object’s space more important. For example, a box attached to a ski is a smart object communicating with an app. Without proper attention to the environment

during the box's creation, it would likely be broken on its first ride down the slopes. For artists and designers to be able to create new interactionist works, they now need to learn new technologies and work with people from a variety of different fields. The traditional, static designs which most are accustomed to are much less interesting than new networked art that adapts and reacts to different users and environments.

In the twenty-first century, the foundations of design have been revisited with new additions by Dave Malouf. He includes texture, agency, opacity and reflexivity. These refer to how the pieces of the system react with one another, the rules and hierarchy of the system, how apparent the network is from an outsider's view, and how the feedback and communication work.

A good designer's skillset is becoming increasingly diverse as the technology of other fields is required to create projects that are relevant. It is becoming normal for a designer to work with large datasets, something which a while ago would have been reserved for a computer scientist. Complex designs are easier to make as well, with the help of machines such as 3D printers.

With networks come great decisions for today's designers. For example, there are important implications in the foundations of texture, agency, opacity and reflexivity. Designers need to ask themselves whether their creations will help in making the world they want to see.