

the working method of the artists' collective Orgacom (see case study 5 and Dorst 2002b), which creates social artworks for organizations. Their strategy begins with immersing themselves in organizational culture. To shape their first understanding of the culture, they interview many people throughout the organization. Then Orgacom physically moves in and occupies a very visible location within the company (the restaurant is often a good spot) and, working in public, they create about ten proposals for artworks which represent different aspects of the organizational culture. The staff is encouraged to look over their shoulders and comment on the developing ideas. After about ten days of working as very public "artists in residence," they present proposals before the entire staff, who elect three or four for further development. Orgacom works on these proposals, developing a feasibility study and a price tag. The developed proposals are again presented to all staff and a final artwork is chosen. When the artwork is unveiled, Orgacom keenly observes the initial reactions to see how the work contributes to the discussion about the company culture. After all, this is a social artwork that needs to function in a social environment.

Please note that these curious design practices are analytical as well as creative. They are an intense form of sense-making, and include subjectivity and creativity in the act of giving precedence to some aspects of a complex reality over others. Themes are ambiguous in this respect—and this two-facedness is reflected in the ambiguous status that "themes" have within design reasoning: they are meaningful elements of the design situation, yet they are neither problem nor solution, but rather present a neutral ground that holds potential for development. They are on the cusp. All the projects that were described in chapter 2 have exhibited that moment of suspension, of ambiguity and tension—where the original problem has become almost insignificant and where all aspects of the entire problem situation are up in the air, so that they can come together in new ways. That is how new approaches were formed in response to problem situations as diverse as the entertainment district violence and the integrated living of mentally handicapped in society.

5 FOSTERING A DISCOURSE

Where do themes and frames come from, when they are not apparent in the original problem situation? In this section, we will look at expert designers' strategies when they create the physical and intellectual environment that nourishes inspiration and reflection. These multifaceted environments are the locus where the themes and frames that the designer stands for are born,