CURIO-URBIA:
A curiosity exploration of hidden urban interactions

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Thesis / Interaction Design Master / K3 Malmö University, Sweden / Aug 2011
“Thus the task is not so much to see what no one yet has seen, but to think what nobody yet has thought about that which everybody sees.”

Schopenhauer
Abstract.

KEY WORDS:
EXPERIENCE DESIGN, EXPLORATIVE INTERACTION DESIGN, URBAN ART, PervasIvE GAMING, HIDDEN, PLACE CENTRIC COMPUTING, VISUAL PERCEPTION, TANGIBLE DESIGN, TRANSMEDIA.
Firstly, this research is a collaboration with Granny’s Dancing on the Table, a transmedia film project in which the public has the chance to affect a film script through different social media channels. Before the actual film release there will be different game-episodes released in connection to the film. I have mainly been in contact with the game company Ozma, a part of the ‘Granny team’ working on cross-media games for the project. This thesis is a side-project with the aim of exploring a more “hidden universe”, which can later be applied to the design process.

Secondly, the research provides a broad picture of the dilemmas faced when applying cryptic design strategies in an urban environment. I explore a few design qualities, how they can enhance user experience and make the user curious about hidden artefacts found on the street or in a public environment. I approached the problem by placing experiments linked to one of Granny’s Dancing on the Tables’ social media channels, in the streets and institutions of the Möllan neighbourhood in Malmö, Sweden. I collected information from both field studies and the interaction design world, regarding the application of design qualities to an artefact. Moreover, I based the research on street art, human behaviour, the psychology of curiosity and visual perception within the field of (transmedia) experience design. Based on my findings from these experiments and interviews I have come up with a set of guidelines to use when applying “hiddenness” to an artefact or design concept.
Acknowledgement.
Help & support:
SUPERVISOR: Mikael Jakobsson.
CO-SUPERVISOR AT MEDEA: Erling Björgvinsson.
OZMA: Bobbi Augustine Sand, Karin Ryding, Kristina Björkman and Axel Olsson.

Feedback:
Ozma, Mikael Jakobsson and Erling Björgvinsson.

Participants:
Anna, Linus, Graham, Roberta, Nicola, Mark and Daniel

Inspirational:
Ted.com, Streetartupia.com, Ozma and Granny dancing on the Table.
Films: Exit Through The Gift Shop, Inside Out, Pan’s Labyrinth and Coraline

I am heartily thankful to my supervisor, Mikael Jakobsson, and also to my co-supervisor Erling Björgvinsson, whose encouragement, guidance and support from the initial to the final level enabled me to develop an understanding of the subject.

Lastly, I offer my regards and blessings to all of those who supported me in any respect during the completion of the project.

Best regards,
Therese Nilsson
Content.
Intro.

CURiosity & Hidden Design
Urban & Fine Art
Experience in a Hidden Interactive Cross Media World
QR-Codes & Technology
Code Tracking

Identifying the Problem.

The Purpose of the Research
Limitations

History & Background.

Granny’s Dancing on the Table
Public Spaces & the City Scape
City Plan of Malmö
Mobile Places
Experience Design
Transmedia/Cross Media

Curiosity & Design Qualities.

Curiosity Theories
Ambiguity
Ambiguous Curiosity
Applying Various Design Strategies to Artefacts
Reversed Affordance

The Design Process.

Methodology
The Process
Meetings & Brainstorming
A Collection of Inspirational Projects
Problem Framing
Target Audience/Persona
DESIGNING BY DOING
DOORS OF PERCEPTION
MOODBOARD AND STYLE
FROM SKETCH TO FINAL ARTEFACT
PHRASE ONE: URBAN LOCATIONS
EXPERIMENT SECOND PHRASE
TECHNICAL PROBLEM SOLVING

The Design Process cont...

Experiments.

EXPERIMENT: CUBES
EXPERIMENT: CARDS
THE MAIN EXPERIMENT: SHOES
EXPERIMENT: YARN

SCENARIOS

Reframing.

Interviews.

Observations.

Results & Findings.

Early Concepts.

Outcome.

VISUAL PERCEPTION VS SOCIAL & HUMAN BEHAVIOUR
HIDDEN DESIGN FILTERING

Concept & Conclusion.

References.

Thank you!
"To some people breaking into a property and painting it, might seem a little inconsiderate, but in reality the 30 square centimetres of your brain are trespassed upon every day by teams of marketing experts”

Banksy (Tresspass...,2010)
In 2000 I had a meeting with ‘Why Not Associates’, a highly awarded design agency in London. They presented me with some examples of their work, including a book about their work and in between two pages printed on double paged papers, they showed me a secret: - Here we have left a message to one of the biggest icons in the fashion world, they told me. Something that has been kept at the back of my mind for a long time and will now flourish – perhaps one of many reason for choosing a topic related to that, but here in a more urban context.

URBAN & FINE ART

My interest for urban art grew out of having lived in a few big cities. London and Santiago in particular, the later with Valparaiso around the corner, which is a very creative city, flowering with urban stencil art and experimentation. Other cities which I frequently visited during my stay in Latin America are Sao Paulo, Brazil and Buenos Aires, Argentina, both with a very rich culture of street art. When I was living in London in the late 1990s and early 2000s I worked in a New Media area next to the White Cube gallery on Hoxton Square, with Tracey Emin as one of the artists in residence. I was fortunate to be there when Daimien Hirst and Banksy were at their very peak (within the art world.) Banksy being the front figure in the street art scene and the other two in fine art. This gave me a chance to view the urban art form within a broader art and design context. Banksy sneaking into galleries to hang his own art on the walls, in museums without being noticed1, to Emin leaving an unmade bed (Fig1) in another gallery.

“A consummate storyteller, Tracey Emin engages the viewer with her candid exploration of universal emotions...Her ability to integrate her work and personal life enables Emin to establish an intimacy with the viewer.”

Emin’s bed which two artists3 during the exhibition, unnoticed by security, interacted with by jumping on it (Fig2) to make what they proclaim to be their own art(show) or statement, which made big media headlines at the time. Not to forget the Swedish artists Dan Wolgers whose work I am also a great admirer of. For an exhibition on the subject ‘criminality’ he secretly stole or ‘borrowed’ benches from Liljevalchs gallery in Stockholm4, and sold them. For his exhibition he just left a message in a bowl with his name on. When he later was taken to court he never opened the letter informing him of a law suit against him. He instead sold it as art.

2. Tracy Emin ‘My Bed > http://www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/artists/artpages/tracey_emin_my_bed.htm
These artists all have a drive to be thought provocative by questioning society and bringing it into the public sphere. Why I mention them in this context of interaction design is because I am looking at different aspects of fostering curiosity and exploration; using various strategies to reveal hidden information. With their art, these artists all wanted to make a statement and make people grab the hidden messages that they wanted to come across in a more abstract yet still significant way. They tried to grab the viewer’s attention, not only visually but also on an emotional level. This can relate to when someone for the first time notices a stencil, a sticker on the back of a mailbox or a cleverly added sculpture on a street sign. Suddenly the viewer gets transported to a different realm, to a vibrant subculture that changes or infiltrates the viewer’s monotony of everyday life. (McCormick C..et al. 2010)

“Aesthetic arousal implies excitement, vivacity, surprise and a sense of discovery ad enlightenment, which helps consumers of public spaces plunge into the experience of extraordinary urban life”  
Visconti L., Sherry Jr J et.al

I currently live in an area where street art meets many different cultures. This area is a huge melting pot for urban explicit experimentation and creativity. It therefore comes very natural to me to explore an area such as this. The public interest for urban art has exploded over the last decade, from being judged by many as vandalism to now being more accepted as an explicit art form. (McCormick C..et al 2010). One interviewee stated that street art has a huge impact and that it brings happiness to everyday boring life, as well as a sense of community (Visconti L., Sherry Jr J et.al). I am exploring how physical urban and public art or artefacts can become more interactive and energised, to make a person willing to explore it further and make the user to take the step to participate in a transmedia experience (p.29), using printed media/figurative art, personal media, websites and facebook as platforms to communicate a message and to discuss a topic.
CURIOSITY & HIDDEN DESIGN

My aim is to draw the user into another universe by the means of hidden information. I am investigating hidden aspects of urban interaction design, but not neglecting the fact that it also should draw people’s attention, yet in a more mysterious and secretive way. With a background in visual design and information design, I would like to discuss the dilemma of utilising the tension between hidden and revealed information, from an aesthetic perspective of interaction design. This is done by focusing on using a set of design qualities, to be mentioned later on, to foster curiosity. In a technology-driven world it is easy to forget the more artistic qualities of design, as concluded in the paper: ‘Peepholes as means of engagement in Interaction Design’ (Daalsgaard and Didler Dindler Christian. 2009) is that the danger for interaction designers is to be enamoured with technological fixes. Here they suggest to look back at examples of outstanding non-digital peepholes. This notion can as well be applied to the artefacts discussed in this project. By technology fixes they mean that the digitalised world is generally separated from the more arty world and one can question if that is the way it should be or if they are better off being more intertwined. Here I look at urban artefacts/art forms with hidden information and how they can be brought to light and contribute to transmedia or cross media platforms. By addressing the gap between visible and hidden urban information my big challenge here is to hide information and at the same time motivate the viewer to want to explore it further in order to find more information. I aim to investigate the tension between the visible and the invisible world and in one way these two contradict and are opposites. I would like to explore how the user’s motivation can be enhanced and make him/her curious to reach out for hidden information. According to Loewenstein (1994) curiosity happens when we feel a gap in our knowledge. “These gaps cause pain. It’s like having an itch that we need to scratch…” (Jonah Lehrer, 2010 The Itch of Curiosity).

EXPERIENCE IN A HIDDEN INTERACTIVE CROSS MEDIA WORLD

The transmedia (p.29) world is filled with opportunities to fill these gaps. For many people it not enough to watch a film or a series, it has to be explored further in the real world as well as on a website or in one’s palm. The curiosity to find out about information in advance, for example from the next episode of a TV-series, is the same as having to have knowledge that no one else has. It becomes a game that the most eager ones win. To get hold of this secret knowledge can be very challenging, but to be the first to encounter it feels very rewarding for that specific
target audience. Here I try to approach a small technology-driven indie audience, who is curious enough to explore hidden territories. This group of people would like to feel exclusive and chosen that they found a hidden secret that no one else knows about (they believe). Within the media world there have been many attempts to get people to participate in savage hunts around cities, like geocaching and/or scavenger hunts as marketing tools. Similar areas are here further explored by utilising handheld technology based medias such as QR-Codes and augmented reality, which I am exploring and using as suggestions for a more final approach. In these game-like situations there is a big focus on the user experience and satisfaction.

Experience design is a emerging field within interaction design, with a knowledge gap in research that focuses on what strategies to best be applied to reveal hidden information within a transmedia and urban art and design context. For example, hidden information to be explored over a cross-media spectrum such as print, smart materials, art and sculpture to digital such as the web on personal handheld devices. In this project the hiddenness is meant to be revealed by curiosity as a means to foster interaction and exploration. Berlyne (1950) believes that curiosity is a motivational prerequisite for exploratory behaviour. In my case the curiosity is building up from one artefact through game play to be explored over a few different medias to create a short narrative. Moving from print based or figurative artefacts to QR-Codes on mobile devices then online to websites and social media discussions. The information gathered here could then be transformed to another cross media artefact at a later stage of the design process.

QR-CODES & TECHNOLOGY

QR-Codes, (Quick Respons) (Fig3) also known as 2D codes, are square configurations of blocks specifically placed to identify a particular website when scanned by smart phones5. Similar to bar codes, the QR-Code is instead of scanned with a handheld device, photographed or scanned using an advanced mobile phone (smart phone) that handles mobile applications or with a built in QR-Code reader. There are various Qr-reader applications on the market, such as 'ScanLife' and 'QRReader'. By scanning the code (Fig4) using one of those applications, the viewer gets directed to specific online information such as a blog, website or video clip. QR-Codes6 can store a vast amount of information and can be compared to the traditional barcodes in the sense that they store scannable hidden information. The QR-Codes carry information both vertically and horizontally which

How it works:

1. It’s quick and easy to create an QR-code for a url. Just visit a website with a generator on it, for example: qrcode.kaywa.com and copy your url into the text field (1), click generate (2) then it creates a code for you to add to any printed material or website.

2. Open the QR-reader application (or if you have a phone with a QR-reader) scan the code that you just created or any other QR-code that you find in magazines, books, online or outside around the city.

3. It might take a minute and there you go! It takes you to a website or to information on your phone that is linked to a unique code.

Fig4. Inspired by beqrious.com/show/how-it-works

means that the QR-Code can carry up to several hundred times the amount of data carried by an ordinary bar code7. They carry a vast amount of information compared to traditional barcodes in the sense that they store scannable hidden information. Hidden information that is not so often being reflected on are the ones on bank notes, barcodes or the QR-Codes just mentioned. I will look at hiding information explore not just one level, but on multiple platforms. Using a scannable bar-code can therefore function as a bridge between a physical artefact and the virtual social media web world.

CODE TRACKING

By placing scannable QR-Codes on the artefacts it allowed me to also follow and measure whether people interacted with the artefacts, using web tools like bit.ly (Fig5), or google url shortener (Fig6), which can track when someone scans the code and provide statistics over the hits and clicks and where and when someone scanned a specific code. This way, the QR-Code can also act as a monitoring tool as well as a link from the urban world and the virtual world on someone’s mobile phone. I learnt from my investigations that ‘Google’s shortener’ is preferred

Fig5. Statistics from Bit.ly

Fig6. Statistics from Google's Url shortener.
when creating multiple codes for a unique url. ‘Bit.ly’, for example, was more troublesome. After lots of investigation I found out that it is possible to add a number after the name of the url, to create multiple urls for a unique website, after having shortened an url with Google shortener. The result and data collected from these provided me with insights and knowledge to find out if the user goes all the way to Granny’s Dancing on the Table’s facebook community. On facebook they are asked to take part in a collaborative environment which involves answering a question and sending in their own pictures and material, if they so wish.
Identifying the problem.

Design is a response to social change

George Nelson
My focus is on curiosity and how it can be used to attract a user and induce them to find out more about hidden information using preselected aesthetic qualities such as: ambiguity, gestalt psychology, emplacement, forbiddance, obscurity, surprise, secrecy and affordance. The hidden aspect plays a major role in this research about curiosity and the users experience when exploring an artefact in the urban landscape within a specific situation. By questioning people about what makes them curious and demonstrating it with examples, I aim to explore a few preselected qualities to find out what the users are likely to get curious about and what issues one has to be dealing with when fostering curiosity within a hidden urban environment.

THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

My aim is to investigate what design issues have to be taken into consideration when placing a hidden artefact in public spaces in the city, in order for people to be curious and want to explore it further.

LIMITATIONS

The research is limited due to the set time frame of one semester and is lacking in-depth research with vast amounts of analysis, interviews and observations. This research is a small field study exploring only a few of the qualities mentioned above.
History & Background.

“Curiosity will conquer fear even more than bravery will.”

James Stephens
GRANNY’S DANCING ON THE TABLE

In writing this paper I have worked with ‘Grannys Dancing on the table‘ which is a Transmedia film and game project, a Malmö collaboration between MEDEA, Ozma, Tangram Film etc and the public. The project will be released in three game episodes before the Film is released. The film being a product where people around the globe contributes with their thoughts and ideas by playing the games, leaving comments on the blog or messages and personal stories on facebook. This material that will later be used to shape the final film script. So what is my role in all of this? With my project about hidden information I’m investigating what different strategies that can be used to attract a specific audience to ‘the Granny project‘. Mainly to get knowledge about them by the ‘Granny‘ facebook page where the aim is to make potential users collaborate with myself and the Granny team. The following text is taken from Grannys facebook8.

“Granny’s Dancing on The Table is a world of stories, including a game and a movie, and live events. Anyone can take part in and become co-creators of the granny-universe. “The Granny-world includes the themes of identity, origins, sexuality, to live in your own body, control, power and to break isolation.

Granny’s Dancing on The Table is a dark tale, in the borderline between fantasy and reality, and centers around a girl with the power to predict earthquakes. Her name is Eini and she grows up isolated in the Swedish woods together with her father. When she’s 17 she runs away from home and enters a society full of unwritten social codes and rules. Here she starts her journey to find herself and her identity, but also her granny who was born during the horrible earthquake in Messina, Sicily in 1908.

We truly believe that sharing is caring and creating together will build bridges and relations between people. And of course, the script will be way more substantial with input from your real everyday lives!! So take part and become a co-creator!”

8. Granny’s Dancing on the Table > www.facebook.com/grannysdancing?sk=info
PUBLIC SPACES & THE CITY SCAPE

In this paper I do not simply focus on the outdoor urban environment, but also on public spaces within it, such as art centres, cafés and other cultural places or spaces in which the people I target frequently move.

When designing for an urban environment one must consider various factors, as public spaces are an integral part of the modern urban landscape (Dekel A, Simon Y, Dar H et al. 2005). Some spaces act as throughways for people to move between different parts of the city centre, often where short-term activities take place. Meanwhile, in public parks, people generally spend more time sitting, resting, playing and socialising. In city squares and on pedestrian streets, social areas with benches, etc. take up large areas, while the remaining space is used for foot traffic. The types of activities that take place should influence the designs applied to these spaces.

Dekel, et al. explain: […] exposed places will encourage public interaction, whereas enclosed spaces will enable more intimate social interactions. Both of these models are important for a city since they satisfy people’s basic needs for public or intimate social encounters, and even enable a form of urban escapism.

But social and cultural materials of human environments have not always been inherent concerns in the field of interaction design, as Messeter acknowledges in the paper ‘Place-specific computing, a place-centric perspective for digital design’ (2009). In the 1990s this changed and social analysis of interactions suddenly became more important, though the concepts of space and place for mobile and ubiquitous interaction remain rather new areas within the field.

“The activity among people and medias are not so much depending on the space but more the understanding of behaviour and action”.

Harrisson and Dourich (1996)

On the other hand, place is important but the more specific emplacement plays a major role in this research and that is a part of the space – also depending on how ‘space’ is defined. I believe that the location of the artefact within a given place is an important factor when it comes to fostering curiosity. Everything that surrounds the artefact and the way people move in these spaces may effect it in different positive and negative ways, depending on its shapes and colours. If the object is hanging freely in the space it might attract more attention, but also de-
pending on at what level. Eye level or up in the air on a rooftop makes a huge difference for the visibility from street level. Some people are more alert and explorative than others and there are people that look out for or easily notice the hidden things on rooftops or streets, while for others they can be displayed there for weeks without being reflected on. Whether it has to do with interest or different mentalities is a question I want to explore.

I want to address how to make mysteriously hidden messages within the cityscape grasp people's attention in order to be further explored. This depends on the position within a place and the social and cultural activities in a given location, such as clubs, art centres, places like squares, walking paths and community parks and alike. It will most certainly profit me more if my artefact was mysteriously placed on a bench where people often relax and have time for some activity, than if placed on a wall on a street were generally not many people pass by it. In my experiments, I have tried to be considerate about the emplacements of the artefacts and make the best use of the space they are given in a specific place in the urban landscape, in the city of Malmö, Sweden.

CITY PLAN OF MALMÖ

This multicultural city, situated at the very southern part of Sweden, known as one of Sweden's most cultural cities, is developing quickly to become one of the most high technological areas in the country. In this very concentrated city it is easy to move, within the central part, either by bike or by foot. The parks within this urban landscape are important for the city as they are the green areas were people exercise, go for a walk with or without their dog and also places for social gatherings, cultural event and happenings – some with stages and others with restaurants and cafés. The city also has beaches and sidewalks by the sea and many walking streets in the centre, all of which provide plenty of opportunities for activities such as interactive play. I've mainly focused my research around the area of Möllevången and its surroundings, which is an area where many cultures meet, as well as being a centre point for art and culture within this city. The cityscape of this area is also walking-friendly, including the square from which the name 'Möllan' is derived from. The area in the summer months is characterised by many restaurants and bars with outdoor seating on the square or nearby. The community park works as an attraction spot in the summer-months, with various events and clubs and grass to sit on for picknicks or relaxation in the sun. In this area 'Möllan', most of the more alternative clubs and concert places are situated as well as the more hipster style and bars and cafés.
MOBILE PLACES

When moving across different medias, it is difficult to mention only one single place. We can be in various places at one time, online and offline. The object explored might also be feasible and easy to move with you to a different location and to another moment in time. People's mindset and activities may change over time, therefore it is worth keeping that in mind when designing for exploration over a cross media spectrum.

“By changing space, by leaving the space of one's usual sensibilities, one enters into communication with a space that is physically innovating...For we do not change space, we change our nature”

Bachelard G, The poetics of space

Curiosity might slowly fade out while we are on the move or get interrupted by a phone call while exploring something of interest or, for example, if we engage in a game while waiting for the bus and the bus suddenly arrives. Our curiosity can have a very short life-span and quickly be interrupted by other things in life. While commuting to work, there is a transition time when people often tend to read papers or books, play games offline or online on a laptop or other handheld devices. I think the blend of what was seen on the street and seen online can work well here when people often try to kill time. Suddenly discovering a half hidden message on the platform while waiting for a train can all of a sudden shape an unknown dramaturgical experience, first offline and continued online while on the train.

HIDDENNESS/ PARTIAL EXPOSURE

When playing a game, whether it is online or offline, hidden factors can play an interesting role in fostering curiosity. Hidden is an adjective9 that can be defined as follows - not accessible to view; invisible, unseeable - impossible or nearly impossible to see, obscure and concealed.

Here I would like to use a definition that its not totally invisible to the eye but merged in a background, half visible or ambiguous, such as hidden images in ambiguous patterns or camouflaged into the background or in the air, not visible straight away. Like an image that is fuzzy or a out of focus and later becomes in focus or an image that, looked at from a distance, is more visible than close up, or even things just visible from a specific angle. Hidden information can either be totally hidden to the eye or hidden behind another layer of information or for exam-

ple inside a box or underneath another object, like a covered object or message. Hiddenness can be leaked information that is just available to a few. A camouflaged figure is concealed or half hidden as well as a cryptic message or a picture with secret information not yet known; hidden inside a pattern to be revealed by looking closer at it. The curiosity to reveal hidden information will be further explored here. I am also interested in hiddenness that over time is visually revealed by different materials such as dust, like on the ‘Friend’s of the Earth’ sticky poster below. (Fig7) or powder (Fig8) on a sticky surface for a graffiti image by JR, who is a French street art famous for his big faces on walls and around the world, also featured on TED10.

In relation to the Granny’s Dancing on the Table project, about a girl who has the ability to predict earthquakes, it would also be interesting to reveal hidden information with motion, by shaking or using vibration and turbulence, by taking advantage of the I-phone’s or other smartphone’s accelerometer technology11.

Camouflaging I also would like to include here, as partial exposure, seen in the images below.

The object or the person melts nicely in with the background, without standing out too much at first, but once discovered I think an emotional experience from the viewer starts to take shape. A hypothesis is that a dialog (interaction) between the user and the artefact materialises and hopefully there will be an urge to explore the artefact further. My assumption is that camouflaging and other ways of hiding could work as tools to enhance a user’s experience. There are a few street artists that cleverly make objects or themselves blend into their surroundings and backgrounds. For example Liu Bolin ‘the invisible man’ in the first image below (Fig9).

EXPERIENCE DESIGN

Experience design (XD) is the practice of designing artefacts, processes, services, events and environments with a focus placed on qualities and user-centred experience and human behaviour, with relevant solutions for a specific culture and less emphasis on increasing and improving a design’s functionality. It is an emerging discipline, which draws from several other disciplines like cognitive psychology and perceptual psychology, linguistics, cognitive science, architecture and environmental design, haptic, product design, performance, information design, information architecture, ethnography, brand strategy, interaction design, service design, storytelling, technical communication and design thinking, to mention a few12.

Here I give a brief description of experience design and the background of this relatively new area of research which evolved from a discipline better known as UX (user experience), starting in the 1990s with the growing popularity of the internet. Thereafter, I provide a more detailed description of experience design and transmedia design.

The text below is summary of an interview from 2009 about Experience design ‘Podcast: Tea with Theresa’ with Peter Merholz, President and Co-founder of Adaptive Path.

Merholz mentions that the user interface experience in the 1990s was too focused on the on-screen experience, but we are now seeing the industry coming out of that. With the web the expertise on user experience design was a bit isolated, only focusing on online customers, when there is so much more to experience design than computer interfaces. It’s important to look at user experience more holistically, through many channels. Nowadays there are various other aspects that experience designers need to address. It’s such a complex area with a vast amount of media channels to take into consideration. The future of experience design is more about holism, he says.

This, I think, means we live in very exciting times now and can relate a lot to a transmedia user experience. By merging ‘Experience Design’ and ‘Transmedia Design’ we get a totally new user experience field to be aware of. The user experience specialist Don Norman, in his talk on ‘The transmedia design Challenge: Co-creation’, says that most dictionaries do not have the word transmedia in them, but wikipedia does. By this statement it is pretty obvious that not enough research has been done in this new field and especially not in creating a total ‘transmedia experience’ which Norman’s title so nicely illustrates. The transmedia design challenge is here and now!

TRANSMEDIA/CROSS MEDIA

In his book Convergent Culture, Jenkins defines transmedia storytelling as follows:

“Immerses an audience in a story’s universe through a number of dispersed entry points, providing a comprehensive and coordinated experience of a complex story.”

On the website: ‘Transmediator’ they divide transmedia into the following three areas which work in unity with each other:

• **Immersion**
  Immersion can be described as being intensely focused, also described as ‘flow’, with a distorted sense of time and effortless action. “You want the audience to be so into the story that they are actually willing to hunt it down (following the bread crumbs, so to speak).”
• **Participation**

Participation follows from immersion but it goes further. It is when having a social-community who give their opinions on your content, a place where people feel comfortable to share their ideas and reflections. If this results in quality participation, then the content is enriched by a community and only gets more immersive and better with time. This often means that the story is not told in a linear, time-restricted style, but can be enjoyed on several levels and at different points in time and at different places. This usually lead to good word-of-mouth where your network does some promotion and distribution for you. This poses certain design challenges, as there is no strict control of how and when an audience member will come into contact with the content.

• **Experiences**

Experiences can be explained as refinement of participation. When the audience is hooked, they are inspired to co-create. They are often willing to share their own experiences to enrich an experience or story. Eventually it becomes everyone’s story… because they all have shared touch points and it becomes a universal experience.

My main focus here is on the experience, but as these three tend to work together as a transmedia concept I am also involving the other parts in my experiments and concepts. Norman (2009) describes the transmedia experience as being something fun and pleasurable and that emotions are a part of design thinking. He goes on saying

“ In the bad old days we learned that thinking - cognition - was king. Emotion was bad. We were encouraged to memorise, to study, to think abstractly in words: reading, writing, and arithmetic prevailed. But that is not how people have evolved. We are living animals.. We use our bodies to understand the world: we learn from concrete experiences, not from abstractions: abstraction comes last. If cognition is about understanding the world, emotion is about interacting with it: judging, evaluating, and preparing to engage”

Norman also says that naturally we explore the world by playing. Playing to foster engagement is a key factor in transmedia storytelling. I would like to relate playing and curiosity to generating excitement in a transmedia experience and explore different possibilities of applying design qualities to enhancing a playful and rewarding experience. Curiosity and ambiguous patterns, ambiguous sentences, ambiguous shapes and images and exploring different levels of curios-
ity through obscurity, to find out if different emplacement of the information can change the scope of one's curiosity. The different platforms require different expressions of hiddenness. A cityscape is a huge canvas to work on in terms of creating physical artefacts in comparison to online and handheld digital medias. Although there is a difference in canvas and depth, this gives the interaction designer and researcher an opportunity to try out different designs over different platforms and environments. There is therefore a wide range of issues to be addressed when creating a transmedia experience, and I can therefore only focus on a few here; mainly issues related to curiosity and an artefact hidden in an urban setting and different design strategies applied to it.
“Caring about users and their lives is absolutely at the core of user-centered design. Curiosity is a natural outcome of caring, and it is the single greatest contributor to effective user research… Caring and curiosity engender personal investment, and investment motivates a researcher to develop a deep understanding of users.”

Demetrius Madrigal and Bryan McClain
CURIOSITY THEORIES

There have been many research attempts and models created on curiosity, beginning over a century ago. Earlier theories on the topic can be summed up with the following phrase: “Curiosity can be defined as a recognition, pursuit and intense desire to explore novel things, challenging and uncertain events”. (Kashdan and Siliva 2008)

Most theories agree on that curiosity can be seen as a state of motivation associated with exploration (Kashdan and Siliva 2008). Lowenstein (1994) explains the curiosity phenomena as feeling a gap in one’s knowledge which often cause pain. For example seeking out knowledge out of interest or out of frustration of not knowing, explained as this:
“-Its like an itch that we need to scratch”

Curiosity is not merely a synonym to enjoyment, happiness or well-being, (Silvian Tomkins 1962) because curiosity and happiness are different positive emotions. Curiosity is also often associated with both interest and enjoyment. Interest can be explained as a trigger to try out new and challenging thing, explore complexity, meet intriguing people and do novel actions. Kashdan and Siliva (2008) go on saying that interest explains how long people visually explore, for example, an image. Enjoyment, on the other hand, predicts the action of exploration. Enjoyment also motivates the user to attach and make associations to familiar things, which reinforces feelings of enjoyment. Curiosity, according to Lazarus (1991), does not necessarily relate to positive emotions like enjoyment often refers to people tend to get curious about the unpleasant and unfamiliar and sometimes unrewarding activities. It can be argued that without a reward or not, whether the reward being a good feeling of a pleasant experience, high scores in a game or a dinner for two at a restaurant. The emotional satisfaction of good experience can be more rewarding, depending in whose company you are in, the atmosphere and the specific experience in itself. Obviously the reward itself drags one into wanting to know more about something, often when it is uncertain, therefore the good experiences has to build up, or be playful and exciting, for one to feel rewarded with a ‘feel good’ experience.

I believe curiosity to be individual, depending on interests and one’s state of mind at a certain moment and situation. More social activities where people are interacting with each other, can relate to more recent studies that examine the more unknown territories of curiosity in the social world. Although researchers have been focusing a lot on bizarre experiences and with
surprising endings to stories, this has been in a more nonsocial context. Interestingly some research (Kashdan and Roberst, 2004; Peters, 1978) show that people with greater curiosity are more open for ambiguity in social activities and opportunities for sharing their stories with others. These are interesting facts in regards to my research when trying to grab individuals, to trigger their curiosity and then collaborate and share their ideas with others on the Granny’s Dancing on the Table team.

Curiosity is a motivator for people to be explorative and to challenge themselves. It is a very useful quality for engaging people in game-like experiences. Beswick (1971) and Loewenstein (1994) suggest that the positive emotions that curiosity brings forward derive from deconstructing ambiguity and uncertainty. In his master discourse ‘Curious-action,’ Rob Tieben summarises the existing literature in the area of persuasive technology and states that curiosity is either being almost totally neglected or purely a quality for enrichment. He argues that curiosity can be used as a persuasion principle in interaction design and it is already applied by using surprise and ambiguity in many commercials, by Gaver’s (2003). I want to add that it is also a lot more applied in areas such as the art- and game design world. For example art that changes its meaning – at first glance it might be interpreted in one way but after a closer look it means something else to the viewer. This notion of playing with the viewer’s perception will be discussed in this thesis, not only on the visual experience, but also to make it into a more pleasurable experience within an urban street art setting; to make people stop and think for a second.

I have already mentioned a few ‘qualities’ which designers often tend to use to enrich user experience and to trigger curiosity, such as ambiguity, obscurity and surprises to mention a few. These can relate to the theories of curiosity i.e., novelty, interest uncertainty and individual interpretation. I have also taken inspiration from the researcher D.E Berlyne, who in the 1950s was one of the first to try to categorise curiosity into two different types: (Stephen Anderson, 2009) Perceptual (desire from novel and complex things) and Epistemic (desire for knowledge). In his paper ‘Applying Curiosity to Interaction design..’ Anderson extends this theory from his own understanding and adds another two categories: Diverse (attempt to seek any information stimulation to prevent boredom) and Specific (desire for particular information), (see appendix). I, on the other hand, focus more on the qualities that are connected to these theories, but where the person does not seek out knowledge or does so after finding a thread of a story or a visual image where some information or knowledge is missing, or in my definition here as ‘being hidden’. Partial exposure and uncertainty are two parameters that are usually trigger-
ing the knowledge search, Anderson (2009). In the model (Fig 10) I have tried to illustrate the connections between those, plus the early curiosity theories, and the design qualities which I’m focusing on in this thesis. Ambiguity is placed in the centre, mainly because it can relate to all the qualities, especially the six that the grey arrows are pointing at. Ambiguity is therefore more focused on than the other qualities. I have also briefly mentioned a quality named Playability (Löwgren 2007). There are certainly more qualities of interest, but my focus is on the eight (coloured green in the figure) which I found most relevant for this particular project.
AMBIGUITY

The Oxford dictionary defines ambiguity as follows:

“Wavering of opinion, hesitation, doubt, uncertainty, as to one’s course”, “capable of being understood in two or more ways”, “doubtful, questionable, indistinct, obscure, not clearly defined” and finally “admitting more than one interpretation or explanation; of double meaning or several possible meanings”

From a usability aspect ambiguity was in the past seen as something that mislead the user and not highly appropriate in the traditional Human Computer Interaction (HCI) field. Whereas today there is so much more to interaction design than a user-friendly and easily accessible website or artefact. Ambiguity can be frustrating to be sure, but also intriguing, mysterious and delightful, by impelling people to interpret situations for themselves. The ability for ambiguity to evoke personal relationships with technology is particularly relevant as digital technologies are designed to support activities outside of work. In my experiments, unlike the early HCI experts, I want to treat ambiguity as a recourse to foster curiosity in relation to both physical and digital artefacts. As Gaver, Beaver, Benford (2003) suggest, ambiguity can be divided into the following three broad classes when linking people with an artefact.

1. AMBIGUITY OF INFORMATION: Its source lies in the artefact itself

2. AMBIGUITY OF CONTEXT The source is in the sociocultural discourse used to interpret it

3. AMBIGUITY OF RELATIONSHIP Is defined in the interpretative and evaluative individual

The ambiguity of information can be described as the qualities of ambiguity which ask the viewer to interpret the missing visual, tactual or textual information out of his own expectations. Lack of information such as historical background or vague information leaves plenty of opportunities for the viewer to fill in the missing gap. The ambiguous context is in what cultural context, environments or situations the information is found within. For example the art piece
‘My Bed’ by Tracy Emin that I mentioned earlier, where the bed gives a choice of interpretations: is it just a bed to sleep in or a piece of art? Finally ambiguous relationship is about personal interpretations, how we create meanings of what we experience and our individual associations and relations to a specific artefact or our experience of interacting with it.

With this project my aim is to look at ambiguity in the context of unclear/uncertain information in relation to a user experience in an urban environment. How is a user interpreting certain information found in artefacts placed on the street? I want to explore if I can create a pleasurable experience using hidden and vague information as a motivational tool to trigger curiosity. To investigate the boundaries between the real world and the virtual by creating situations in which users are forced to make meanings of what they are perceiving, commonly applied in the fine art and performative arts. Often the art suggests an individual interpretation of what it is all about, by letting the viewers make up their own stories in their heads. Ambiguity can also relate to gestalt psychology and the gestalt laws, which is a school of thought within visual perception and psychology with focus on how people interpret the world. They consider the brain to be holistic, parallel, and analog, with self-organising tendencies. Within this field a set of perceptual laws was created. The one that is familiar to most people is the figure ground concept (Fig11). Another of the gestalt laws is good continuation (Fig12). This particular law is often mentioned in graphic design field and in the psychology of perception, which I believe to be a very effective tool when triggering curiosity. Gestalt psychology often reflects upon that ‘the whole is greater than the sum of its parts’, a good example of this is in the advert for the Picasso exhibition at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in New York (Fig13), were the sum of many QR-Codes, makes up Picasso’s face. As explained before, these QR-Codes can hold a vast.

13. The Gestalt principle of “good continuation” says that graphic elements that suggest a continued visual line will tend to be grouped together. In addition, visual patterns with good continuation may suggest to the viewer that the pattern continues beyond the end of the pattern itself. That is, we mentally “fill in” or “paint in” the rest of the pattern. > http://www.bastoky.com/GoodContinue.htm

amount of data. Within these codes, making up the face, there are several hidden layers of interactivity which lead the user into a virtual world on his/her handheld device. The campaign is extended into the social media world and displays features of augmented reality as well. In short the gestalt laws tell us that our perception is sometimes fooled. What is first perceived is not always the truth, which sometimes gives us a sensation of surprise by, for example, not knowing what was to be found behind something like closed doors.

AMBIGUOUS CURIOUSITY

Ambiguity or lack of information as an interactive tool is here looked at from a promotional/collaborative point of view. By giving just a hint of a story or information, the viewer gets the chance to unfold a story by either following a link or by using their own imagination or both. I am exploring if this ambiguous lack of information in the physical world can create engagement to trigger the user to find out more about the missing information online. In treasure hunt experiences ambiguity is a valuable design quality to be used and reinforces the hunt (challenges) for more valuable information or novelty to pursue to the next treasure or level. Secretly leaked information can often make the curiosity level rise and make the player eager to be the first to discover it. This can be related to the Pier-project mentioned later in the inspirational project section. When it was completed, information about the hidden room was being leaked first on forums and by word of mouth for those who happened to get it before the big media burst. I want to explore whether giving a hint about a secret could make people to want to further explore an ambiguous universe, such as the ‘Grannyverse’. By using the gestalt law of good continuation to attract attention to an artefact, the viewers are thought to be using their imagination and raising a question in their minds about the continuation. But by breaking the good continuation law I am instead trying to use ambiguity and the lack of information to push the user to want to find out more about something.

Whenever research mentions experience design, the word curiosity is rarely mentioned, nor the hidden aspect of a user experience. When looking closer at research on curiosity, we find that it is important when describing human behaviour and the ‘feel good’ experience. I therefore aim to look at what evokes curiosity. Garris et al (2002) states that curiosity is triggered by novelty, surprise, and complexity. On the other hand it can be triggered by uncertainty and individual interpretation. In relation to hiding information, firstly I am looking at ambiguity from a visual perspective were it is functioning as a way to make people curious to find out about something
Fig 14. http://webrap.net/10-street-advertising-impact-guerilla-marketing-13768
that is hidden behind something else. Ambiguous ways of visual interpretation when only parts of information is visible, is nicely illustrated in (Fig14). An effective way of using the gestalt law of good continuation was used in this advert by playing with the users' visual interpretation to make one curious of what is hidden on the other side of the closed doors. Bizarre and doubtful, uncertain visual information that at first sight makes you believe it is real, but the closer you get it unfolds in front of the viewer and its perceived in a new way to make the person curious and make their own assumptions of what is hidden behind the closed doors. It is a very effective marketing strategy to trigger curiosity and reveal the hidden information. I will investigate how this strategy can also be applied to a cross media platform outdoors. What if the information revealed is also of an ambiguous character in order to create a dramaturgical experience where the story unfolds over various medias?

APPLYING VARIOUS DESIGN STRATEGIES TO ARTEFACTS

Hidden design strategies can be applied to an artefact in many various ways. Like I have just mentioned, working with surprise in an ambiguous obscure way to evoke curiosity in relation to hiddenness could be one way. An appropriate strategy when using liquid sensitive materials would be to play with phrases or invitations of forbiddance such as: do not spill water/beer on this spot (Fig26, p.57). A sign or a text of forbiddance gets a different response depending on its context and where it is found. Here I look at it in situations when it is of a more misleading and tempting character. A "Do not push" button found in an elevator does generally not lead to curiosity in our culture. Here the temptation to push the button is not so strong if not done by a child or a person from a different culture, to whom this is all new. The latter can relate to the film ‘Granny's Dancing on the Table,’ where the main character is unaware of the hidden codes in our society and what the effects of pressing the button has. Presumably she would be amazed to press it out of curiosity. I am here looking at trespassing or forbidden information added to a context were the temptation to break it is higher than in an elevator and that there will be no serious harm or consequences in breaking the rules. In an art installation context, the following examples (Fig15) would most certainly make the user more curious to break these social rules.

Studio Total played with this on their website, given a choice of either clicking on the ‘Don’t
knock’ or clicking on their company name. Assuming most people would click on the ‘don’t knock’, bringing out the rebellious child in us, it is not a coincidence that it is Studio Total that is playing this trick on the user. This is according to their rule book; to be thought provocative and make one think about one’s actions and the consequences. A sign found placed on a public park with ‘do not touch because it can harm the art’, or ‘be aware of invisibility’ written on it, could be a way of making people curious about something and question: who left it here? Is it for real or just a joke?

This method of luring the user to forbidden territories is used a lot in game play, like in the game called ‘The Path’. The player is told to stay on the path all the time during the game, but features are added purely to make the player tempted break it and wander off into the forest.

Another good example of this issue of temptation of forbiddance was addressed in the Installation in the Energy Gallery at the Science Museum London, 2004.

“The Installation is part of an exhibition along the theme energy. A five meter tall stainless steel pole is standing in the centre of a huge warning sign on the gallery floor telling the visitor “do not touch”. It creates a conflict by tempting the visitor to do precisely what he is warned not to do. This conflict, when resolved through disobedience results in a jolting physical experience. Whenever somebody decides to ignore the warning by touching the pole he receives a significant electric shock amplified by sound”

In the installation one gets a small electric shock, in a way a punishment for trespassing. I, on the other hand, am exploring how the user can get tempted to find out about something using qualities of forbiddance and uncertainty to gain more knowledge about something, to get rewarded rather than getting punished. The electricity probably comes as a surprise, but a very unpleasant one in this case. Not a bad thing as a slightly unpleasant experience can sometimes change into an unforgettable memory, such as when one gets frightened watching a scary

Fig15.

movie or when the adrenaline is pumping jumping of a cliff. **Surprise** is a very relevant design quality when discussing artefacts in the field of experience design. The lack of information I mentioned could fit closely with an element of surprise when interacting with an artefact. The unexpected might be a trigger to find out more; wanting more information to find out what it was all about or hoping for more unexpected exciting experiences. Using a strategy of "doing the unexpected" can relate to surprise when the viewer is confronted with information that is out of order, when the phrase ‘this can’t be right?’ enters one’s mind and the user wants to find out if it is for real and start to search online for more clues. Another example is when a film or commercial changes direction, like in this advert for dirt devil\(^\text{16}\). We become aroused with the unexpected and not knowing what to expect intrigues us. These cleverly executed inflatable street art creations (Fig16)\(^\text{17}\) are more related to the urban setting. The more exploratory and observant people stop out of curiosity when these sculptures materialise from being garbage on the street to inflatable sculptures in the form of polar bears or the Loch Ness monster. This happens when the air blows into them from below.

![Inflatable Street Art](http://jetcomx.com/2008/12/06/joshua-allen-harris-and-his-amazing-inflatable-garbage-bag-street-art/)

Most people become very aroused with the unexpected and the notion of ‘not knowing what to expect’ intrigues us. Not only the surprise, but the total sensational experience with intriguing cleverness, makes people pass on the information to others. Something that at first sight was seen as some trash on the street, the next minute became a artefact that brought

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\(^{16}\) [http://vimeo.com/22984504](http://vimeo.com/22984504)

\(^{17}\) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH6xCT2aTSo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH6xCT2aTSo)

on a happy ‘feel good experience’. A misplaced item in a wrong setting can create all kinds of thoughts, and build up a story line in a persons mind:

**what is it doing here?  where did it come from?  who put it here?  and  why is it here?**

**Obscurity** and the unknown intrigues us and makes us want to know more about it, which relates to how Lowenstein (1994) explains curiosity as feeling a gap in ones knowledge, and is often used when solving puzzles, moving from one clue of different mysteries to the next. Like in a TV series or a puzzle to be solved over many different channels such as websites, TV commercials and online games. It can take a user to a different state of mind and create an out-of-this-world experience, where it seems time has stopped. To draw a parallel to disappearing into another world where time and place do not seem to exist can relate to Immersion, mentioned earlier. Going back to obscurity and the oddity of objects or notes found in the street are investigated further later. The aim is to make them seem a bit misplaced or even out of order. A street artist that plays with the mystery and the bizarre is Mark Jenkins\(^{19}\). His art draws attention, and he plays with a few of the qualities mentioned in this section. His very realistic sculptures of people without faces makes you scared, surprised and curious all at the same time. He is also very considerate about where he puts his art pieces. It is almost like a story unfolds in your head and you get attached by the questions just mentioned (p.42).

The **emplacement** of an object is relevant as well as its context. An object that feels out of place brings more obscurity to it and grabs a person’s attention compared to if it is placed where it belongs, all depending on its context and surroundings. A strange object hidden in a tree in a park might never be discovered, whereas it might be found in another more reachable setting: placed inside a half hidden box in an art gallery or on a bench in the city, where people are more relaxed and have time for exploration.

To design an artefact using metaphors to make a user relate to it is a useful design quality within experience design. On the other hand, metaphors can also fool the user when an artefact that is familiar to us and supposed to be used in a certain way or for a certain purpose, turns out to function differently. For example, in a very interesting and delightful way and for a totally different purpose than we thought. This relates to a quality called **affordance**, a quality commonly used among designers. Gaver (1991) has given affordance a significant approach, or ‘false affordance’ as he calls it. It is when the user can get fooled by being presented with an artefact

\(^{19}\) Mark Jenkins > [http://www.xmarkjenkinsx.com/outside.html](http://www.xmarkjenkinsx.com/outside.html).
that normally works in a certain way, but in this case it does not. Another he calls ‘Hidden affordance’. For example, if a wall that looked solid was made of a material that was possible to walk through, but because of how its perceived, this secret would just be revealed by accident. Or camouflaging a doorway and giving it a different appearance, like a secret doors covered by graffiti or art that is barely visible to the eye. I try to bridge the gap between the hidden and the visible for a user to get interested in exploring it. A good example would be something like this (Fig17), where there is an indication of a hidden place (door) to the right, and a pattern that could contain content of secret clues.

“A door can have the affordance of ‘openability’ (its affordance relative to the actor) but can be hidden, camouflaged or likewise (the information specifying its affordance are not available to the actor). On the other hand, when both the affordance (the door can be opened by the actor) and the information in the environment that specifies the affordance (the door is visible, has a handle etc.) are present, a state of direct perception is reached”.

Mads Soegaard mention that the concept of affordance was first applied by the perceptual psychologist James J. Gibson in his seminal book ‘The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception’. Donald Norman introduces the word to the HCI field in his book ‘The Psychology of Everyday Things’ and explains that in design, affordance is suggesting how an object should be used, for example a key that is for locking doors or cupboards is supposed to be turned.

“When affordances are taken advantage of, the user knows what to do just by looking: no picture, label, or instruction needed.”

Norman (1990) suggests that there is more to affordance than that. It also includes the structure, the material, the shape of an object, together with how it is perceived. Gibson, on the other hand, does not suggest that the person has to perceive it in a certain way, more that the object
invites one to interact with it in its set environment. (McGrenere and Ho, 2000).

Going back to Gaver’s approach, he divides affordances into three categories:

**Perceptible, Hidden and False** (Fig18) where hidden is my focus, as well as false (in order to trick the user).

**REVERSED AFFORDANCE**

On one hand can affordance be used as quality of forbiddance, when being attracted to a familiar shape that one knows could be dangerous, but our temptation takes over in certain circumstances. The desired action becomes stronger. On the other hand this quality can be used in reverse to trick the user, as Gaver calls ‘false affordance’, by suggesting something, but changing how it is supposed to be used or faking the action. An example could be a button not to be pressed but instead screwed – will the user explore it and then find out the hidden action? The user experience will be stronger with a reward, a ‘feel good experience’, when the user finally has to find out what to do. This kind of misleading affordance goes a bit against the usability experts, who proclaim clear and easy accessible design. But what about the feel good experience? What if opening a door could be done differently in a more enjoyable way. What if there was something slightly hidden on the side of the door and opening it in a different, unusual manner created a more fun and engaging experience than the traditional way of opening a door? Something to be to be remembered rather than the affordance in the sense of Donald Norman, which will easily be forgotten and pass away. The frustration of not knowing how to, when in a hurry for example, might just make the experience uneasy and annoying. Therefore it has to be carefully planned and considered in what context a related affordance might apply. Perhaps more in a game-like setting, for people to enter into another universe, where things are allowed to be a bit surreal.
Inspirational projects.

*Human beings have an inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise their capacities, to explore, and to learn.*

Edward Deci
To get a broader understanding of the world of transmedia, street art and urban game play I am looking for strategies used in projects which are connected to the issues addressed in this paper. Information that grabs the spectator’s attention at the same time as being mysterious, out of place, secret or hidden. Using people's curiosity to attract attention and engage people in something that is secret or hidden can depend on the parameters mentioned here: double hidden meaning, secretly leaked information, ambiguity, gestalt psychology, emplacement, obscurity, affordance and forbiddance.

Here I mention two projects using a double meaning in regards to visibility:

German street art collective Mentalgassi have collaborated with the Brothers and Sisters creative team to create a series of unique art installations for Amnesty International. This campaign is not purely about hiding an image of a person on death row – it has so much more to it. The images of a face seen in (Fig19) are playing with the invisible on a few levels. Firstly, is the image visible from only one angle, therefore of interest to me in my investigation on hidden and partly hidden information and street art? The artwork features an image of a person that Amnesty wants to highlight, make visible from being invisible, in a sense. The message here is very strong and straightforward. If then going beyond the hidden, the positioning of the image is very well executed on a fence of bars, a metaphor for the prison bars that this man for so long has been stuck behind. A sign with the words: ‘Making the invisible visible’ just beside the image tells the observer what the message is and that Amnesty International is behind this campaign. This is just one of many tools to highlight this case. By moving from the streets into the online world, a petition, website and a video can be found for this specific campaign, i.e., a cross media strategy. This demonstrates that what is half hidden on the street can draws us into a cross media world. Our curiosity makes some of us want to find out more about this face that was found on the street. The cleverness of the double meaning, the execution on the bars leaves the viewer with a question mark, if he/she is not already aware of who the person is. Some people reflect and takes notice and hopefully get home to look for more clues or information about it. Ambiguity and gestalt psychology are both present here. Information is missing and one would like to know more (ambiguity) and it also plays with our visual perception where the sum of the individual parts makes up the whole (gestalt psychology) both from a visual, on the street, perspective as well as a holistic one, with all the cross media platforms.

Another example of making hiddenness present and creating a double meaning, is in the project:‘Neglected Children are made to feel invisible’. (Fig20). Here they are also playing with

22. Neglected Children are made to feel invisible >http://osocio.org/message/neglected_children_are_made_to_feel_invisible/
visual perception and making an issue more visible and brought to the surface, by both hiding and not hiding at the same time.

A transmedia strategy of a more guerilla campaign character is ‘The Mystery of the Flying Kicks project’, (Fig20) where the mystery and placement play major roles. Its not so much about hiddenness but I would like to relate it to my project in terms of mystery and curiosity in a transmedia setting. Hidden in the sense that they are hanging above our heads and hard to reach and with a mysteriously hidden history to foster creativity and imagination. The obscurity of objects hanging above your head from power lines creates curiosity. The project I also see as relevant for this thesis in terms of the different platforms its moving across, i.e., a transmedia experience. From finding wooden and real sneakers ‘an urban symbol’ on the street) or seeing them hanging on telephone and power lines around the world, to taking footage, videos or telling their stories over the phone, and then sending it back to the campaigners and filmmakers. A documentary entirely made from sent in materials, a true worldwide collaboration between the film-makers and the public. By letting the participants make up their own stories about the sneakers (and giving them a new meaning) and forwarding it to the makers of the film, they all took part in the narrative of the film, making it a very transmedial phenomena.

Another project with a very similar feel is the Year Zero project (Fig21) by Nine Inch Nails (NIN), where hidden information was found in mysterious ways. Here they wanted the participants to take part in an art project both emotionally and visually. I believe it was based on the ‘Resistance Movement’, but here more as an art movement to be experienced over multiple media channels. The project was a marketing campaign for the album named ‘Year Zero’. Hidden messages were found on t-shirts, mysterious usb-memory sticks lying around the city, stickers and other urban artefacts, all with a hidden meaning about society and about a collapse and the creators want the audience to be emotionally engaged in this mystery and collapse. There was a close integration between the music and the alternate reality experience that was extended into the album packaging, the cd itself, music videos and other NIN products. When the audience discovered it, they not only experienced it for themselves, but they became an integral part of it (42entertainment). The transmedia description of immersion, participation and experiences (p.30) fits perfectly in here. The unity of them becomes clear and the transmedia experience takes on a game-like character, with clues delivered via usb-sticks, mobile phones, street art and local resistance meetings.

23. Guerilla Marketing: “The objective of guerrilla marketing is to create a unique, engaging and thought-provoking concept to generate buzz, and consequently turn viral”. > http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerilla_marketing
A campaign using hiddenness in more straightforward ambiguous way, in an urban style, is in the project, ‘Hidden music’ by the Hong Kong indie record store: Zoo Records. (Fig25-26). In this project QR-Codes are half hidden in black animal shapes, within an urban environment. It’s not until you get closer that you find out that they are made up of QR-Codes. Here they have used shapes of animals to attract a person to them, to then find secretly hidden codes in the shapes. By scanning the codes one is rewarded with new materials from different indie artists. The bands’ music sold out within weeks and the campaign was much talked about on facebook, twitter and personal blogs. The hiddenness here made a very big impact on the sales. Once talked about online people tend to get curious and try things out for themselves. The attraction is not only in the shapes but also about leaked information online and by word of mouth. The curiosity spans over many platforms.

The last two examples lead me to art installation projects hidden to the public, such as ‘The Pier’ (Fig23) and ‘The underbelly project’ (Fig24). These are installations that were built underground. Both under the surface and being of underground character, but still received lots of publicity once the information about them was leaked out. The Pier was a Malmö based project by the two Swedes, Erik Vestman and Nils Petter Løfstedt who stumbled upon an undiscovered hollow which they, over six months, transformed into a secretly hidden living room/gallery with white walls and a parquet floor.

The underbelly project is a NYC initiative, in similar style to the Pier and it took 18 months to create this enormous arts place in an underground tunnel which displays work from over a hundred leading (street) art figures, but is not open to the public. This secrecy and forbiddance makes it more interesting and for the most eager ones curiosity builds up. Unfortunately these members have now been taken to court for illegally trespassing in these tunnels, but thankfully it is all kept under surveillances unlike the Pier, which was destroyed shortly after it was discovered.

27. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwURImYOK1Q
The Design Process.

“Empiricism cannot see that we need to know what we are looking for, otherwise we would not be looking for it, and intellectualism (rationalism) fails to see that we need to be ignorant of what we are looking for, or equally again we should not be searching.”

Maurice Merleau-Ponty
MEETING

RELATED PROJECTS

BRAIN-STORMS

GENERATING IDEAS

FRAMING

PROTOTYPING

DESIGNING

APPROVAL

PRINTing

Mentioned in this section
PRINTING

TECHNOLOGY

SOLVING

EXPERIMENTATION

REFLECTIONS

REFRAME

PROBLEM SOLVING
METHODOLOGY

The design process is based on a concept of ‘designing by doing’ and a ‘reflection in action’ methodology, where intuition and my past design knowledge play a major role. The process does not follow any restricted set of methods, but is instead added to the process as the work progresses. As mentioned in Lab, Field, Gallery, and Beyond (Kosinen, Binde, Redström 2001) there has been a growing interest among researchers to incorporate design experiments in their studies. The methods (programmes) which have been given the names “Lab” and ‘Gallery’, have inspired me in this research, but with modifications to suit this project. I have placed the experiment in an urban and public environment, (actually one in the entrance to an art gallery) using real life experimentation. The purpose of placing experiments in these situations is to study the interactions and test the design ‘in the real world’, to later go back and critically analyse the results based on the collected feedback and thereafter incorporate it to the (final) ideas or artefacts. Following is a list of the techniques used in this project:

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<th>Experiments</th>
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<td>Mood board</td>
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<td>Brainstorming</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
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<td>Prototypes</td>
<td>Interview</td>
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<td>Scenario</td>
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</table>

THE PROCESS

I will here briefly guide you through my design journey step by step. The design process evolved firstly from me knowing that I wanted to explore hidden information using QR -Codes and different patterns and materials to a second phase were I decided to investigate curiosity and hiddenness by using design qualities to attract a user to an artefact to finally ending up with a final solution to my design problem. Frequently during my journey I’ve had sessions with the game company Ozma, mainly Bobbi when we brainstormed ideas together and when I received feedback on ideas or visuals for my experiments. I was first introduced to Ozma by one of my tutors Erling Björgvinsson in February 2011, after deciding that I was interested to collaborate with them on their transmedia project ‘Granny’s Dancing on the Table’, mentioned earlier. In the first meeting we mainly introduced our projects to each other to find out if there was any interest from their part for a collaboration.
MEETINGS & BRAINSTORMING

Meeting with Ozma #1
Karin, Bobbi, Erling and Myself

I was introduced to the Granny Project and the games that Ozma works on in connection to the film, about the earthquake of Messina which took place in Italy in 1908. I also briefly presented them with my project about hidden information and we agreed that I should make a presentation of all my findings divided into chapters. (Named: “when the invisible became visible”, (appendix). A selection of the more relevant projects from my findings are also included in the related projects section.

Objects Relation Theory
Thereafter we briefly discussed the past and the unconscious. Melani Klein was mentioned with her Kleinian object relations theory that can be described like this.

“Klein termed the psychological aspect of instinct, unconscious phantasy. Phantasy is a given of psychic life which moves outward towards the world”.

Questions and Ideas:
The following ideas and questions was raised at this first meeting: What would the user do after revealing or discovering the secret message? What will happen if the information is too hidden? Will my project be part of the game or a teaser before an event, game or film release? A possibility would be to use metaphorical technology effects, such as shaking the phone or dancing to stop or trigger an earthquake. Another idea that came up was to add a text like ‘Don’t pour water (beer, if in a bar) here!’ near a liquid sensitive material. (Fig27) and using other exhortations of forbiddance, with different smart materials.

Fig27. Liquid sensitive ‘smart’ materials, Solid poetry and Underful tablecloth.

Meeting with ozma #2

Karin, Bobbi, Kristina and Myself

In our second meeting we talked broadly about existing ARG\(^{33}\) projects to look at; Sanningen about Marika, Sics.se, Johan Hernstolf and Power to the Pixel were mentioned. Treasure Hunt games were common back in the early 21st century, but similar ideas have now been brought to the marketing world. One example that I mentioned was Jay-Z’s “Decoded”, in which a scavenger game was created for his book release\(^{34}\).

How do we make people curious?

The ideas about using sentences like ‘don’t pour water on me’ as mentioned in our first session was expanded on further. To make the viewers curious of an artefacts with hidden information on them, they could be presented with small sentences of invitation, for example ‘this is not a game’ on or beside them, this could then be compared with similar artefacts without any sentences, to find out if it makes people more interested in exploring them. In relation to these Bobbi mentioned a campaign by the Swedish male magazine ‘King’. They created mysterious notes with phrases like: ‘You who sat here yesterday...’ The purpose of the campaign was to leave a mark and create a mystery and make the next person curious about who left it there and who had been in this spot and hopefully to check up who King is. Mysterious and emotionally strong messages are effective, especially those that makes you think and create a story in your head.

QR-Codes, do people scan them?

Thereafter we discussed the issues regarding the user and the concerns using QR-Codes on the artefacts with hidden information. What if we find out that not many people scan the codes? Maybe the user should also be presented with other options such as an sms or a url. It would be good to be able to measure the hits using web statistics.

Where could I place my experiments?

We talked about various places around the city and agreed that ‘Klubb Kristallen’ would be a good place for these kinds of experiments as it will attract the right kind of crowd and these visitors tend to be more open for exploration.

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33. ARG = Alternative Reality Games
34. Decoded >http://bing.decodejay-z.com/?fbid=g9IEExMlZIanyl8om=false
A COLLECTION OF INSPIRATIONAL PROJECTS

In my first meeting with Ozma I presented them a collection of interesting projects and visuals related to the area of research. I then was asked to make it into a presentation. I therefore decided to create it into an online and a physical booklet (Fig 28). It's a collection of examples of both physical and digital materials that can be useful when wanting to hide information. Some examples of visuals with patterns with information hidden in it and also a few more technical ways to explore and reveal information that is not visible at first sight. There is also some interesting examples of using QR-codes to make up a whole image from its parts (in this case QR-codes, like mentioned in the the Gestalt psychology section p.37. Below is some examples of using heat to reveal an image or an color on a heat sensitive material also known as ‘thermochromic’ (Fig. 29-30)35, 36, something that would be of interest when playing with ‘phrases of invitation’ to make people more curious, mentioned on the previous page and something I would like to explore in a future project. Additionally I also mention the scratch card technique that was used in the hidden love song project (Fig 31)37.

35. Yuans S >http://www.core77.com/blog/object_culture/shi_yuans_reactive_paint_projects_18863.asp
PROBLEM FRAMING

The areas I am exploring, as the model (Fig31) is illustrating are: curiosity, Urban, Hidden and Different Design Qualities. Due to limited time and resources I am mentioning just a few qualities here in detail and there are much more to be explored further ahead, as the green areas in my model are trying to explain. I want to explore different qualities and the issues involved when trying to foster curiosity by apply them to hidden experiments with hidden information. My aim is to find out if the user will explore them further, both physically and virtually, first offline and then online using QR-Codes, and to identify some of the issues dealing with this, related to theories of curiosity and visual perception.

TARGET AUDIENCE/PERSONA

I identified my persona based on the information given to me by the Granny's Dancing on the Table team below. With the limited time frame I could not do a big investigation:

"With this project we are targeting those who enjoy TV-series like Twin Peaks and Flash Forward, books like Kafka on the Shore and movies like Pan’s Labyrinth where existential questions play a important part in the story."

The target audience have an big appreciation for the aesthetics and the more indie scene of arts: performance, poetry literature, film and games. The people I interviewed or who I asked to fill in an online questionnaire, are mainly within this group. i.e., creative people or people working in the media field, either as writers, game designers, design students, designers or art directors, with a genuine interest in alternative film, performance art and games. I am generalising, as there are for sure (for example) musicians and queer people and others in other fields, that have an big appreciation for the more sub indie art culture as well. Its often impossible to divide people into a community purely based on the professions that they hold.
PERSONAS (target audience)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER: Female &amp; Male</th>
<th>TYPE: Hipsters/Bohemia/Queer/Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE: 25-45</td>
<td>JOB: Freelancer/Film makers/Designers Poets/Authors/Architects/Photographers/Media People/Musicians/Actors/And all others interested in Culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERESTS: Film, Art, Design &amp; Music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATUS: Everyone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig32.

DESIGNING BY DOING

Based on my meetings and brainstorming session with Ozma I started generating ideas for the main experiments, the previous ones was more small pre-experiment, taking the opportunity to join Ozma a few days at their temporary office at the ‘Malmö Library’ and to see what results these experiments could generate to take with me to my next set of experiments. Firstly I quickly generated ideas by not only using a similar style to the scribble-say-slap technique, but also finding inspiration online, in books, magazines and in my surroundings.

DOORS OF PERCEPTION

To use closed doors with information hidden behind, came to me intuitonally when brainstorming for ideas for the next coming experiments. As doors hold a lot of symbolism, It works very well with the Granny’s Dancing On The table Project, that touches very existential questions. Doors are often used in films, dramas, poetry and other literature to create sensations of curiosity and surprise. Doors have a mysterious symbolism – we do not know what we will find behind them. When investing curiosity it feels like doors naturally invite the user to open them to find out what lurks behind them. One example were it is used is in the children story, Narnia, where a whole story builds up behind the doors of a walkthrough closet. Similar stories can build up in ones mind even before opening the doors, depending on the context. Another story with a door that also relates to the Granny project is ‘Coraline’, which is an animated film (where everything is made by hand) about a girl who finds a closed door that takes her to a imaginary family next door. A new better life, she imagines, awaits by closing one door behind and opening a new, better one. Another notion can be illustrated with the phrase ‘Do you dare to open closed doors?’ (Fig32) which was used in one of my design ideas that i didn't develop into a real working artefact, where I am using double meaning and the doors act as a metaphor for ‘opening up yourself’, i.e., unlocking the secrets to your inner emotional life.
MOODBOARD AND STYLE

To set the mood of the experiment I decided to create a mood board (Fig33). Before the main idea generations images, are a reflection on the information I was given by Granny’s Dancing on the Tables and their conceptual first sketches. I took, for example, inspiration from a collage of images that they had made during some of their scrapbook sessions and also from their web and facebook site. This being not just a theoretical but also conceptual interaction design project, I wanted to take advantage of bringing in some of the techniques from my past experiences into the conceptualisation process, i.e., mood boards, brainstorming, etc. Thereafter I made some sketches and a few prototypes of the designs. During the process with Ozma we selected together a few ideas that I later developed into more real designs, but these are still experiments to test on people to analyse their responses and feedback. I decided to use more high quality prototypes because I wanted to test it it outside in the real world and not in workshops. The Interaction Design world seems to be full of digitally created graphics, and the more handcrafted style of work is overshadowed by 3D computer graphics and special effects. The more hand-sawn and experimental style is slowly moving into this field as well. Prototypes are made by hand but not the more final designs. The handmade graphic style was the natural choice to be used for this project – a more artistic and organic style was appropriate for the Granny project. I therefore decided to experiment with natural materials and old fashioned techniques. For the poster designs I decided to use yarn(Fig34-35) and cut paper stripes as the base and mix it with photographs and manipulate the final images in photoshop. Instead of photographing the yarn I decided to lay it out (in this case the shoes and legs (fig 36.) on a flat-bed scanner i.e., ‘illustrating with a scanner.’ This technique by itself was an experiment to give
it a more handmade look and feel and it is also time effective when having to create multiple copies to be placed around the city.

FROM SKETCH TO FINAL ARTEFACT

I had several meetings with Ozma during the design process to discuss my ideas (sketches), prototypes (Fig36) and final designs and how I was progressing. The meetings were about an hour long, every other two weeks where we together decided what experiment I was going to do and which ones not to proceed with. They gave me very valuable feedback and the final experiments which are now up and running on their community site. Hanna (the director of the film) wanted to use my visuals as the press image for ‘Granny’s facebook. (Fig66).

The experiments were going to be hanged outdoors on walls and in cafés around Möllan, and due to weather conditions and being a real life experiment for a stakeholder, I decided to print the copies at a printers on a paper that would not easily fall apart. The printed copies needed some manual post production done to them. I was cutting out the feet and the doors one by one and thereafter sticking the two pieces together; front and inside part. See the last image (Fig37) for the final result.
PHRASE ONE: URBAN LOCATIONS

By discussing with Ozma about different locations it was then easier for me to decide where to add my experiments. I wanted to place the main experiments in a club (event) called 'Kristallen', in Malmö, after suggestions from Ozma and my own investigations. But due to resources, no convenient date for the club night and not being very urban, I then decided instead to carry out the experiments around Möllan and also at the Library and the Art Centre (KonstHallen), both outdoors and indoors. The locations are indicated by the dots on the map (Fig.38, google maps).
EXPERIMENT SECOND PHRASE

After scanning a QR-Code with a smartphone, using an application to scan it with, the user is presented with the page seen in (Fig 42, 43). The idea here is that the user gets a choice of either helping the Granny team and myself to spin further on by following the ambiguous half-finished question: ‘Imagine being a lost soul in a pair of lost shoes, where would they take you if you were...’ The user gets a choice of either being directed to facebook when clicking on the arrow that has facebook written on it or to click on a text that says ‘don’t go here’, which uses the quality forbiddance. This will be outlined in more detail in the section ‘Experiments’ on p.77.
Imagine being a lost soul in a pair of lost shoes. Where would they take you if you were...

DON'T GO THERE!

...in a big city for the first time and not used to our civilization?

Please share your thoughts and stories with us! If you like to send pictures of your ideas, send them to: pictures@grannysdancing.com and we'll make you something nice with it.

Thank you/Theese and the granny team.
I told you ;) Just help me cut for a minute, please!!!

QUESTIONNAIRE:

* Required

Where did you find the code?

What made you scan the QR-code?

Do you always enter forbidden areas such as 'Don't go here', and why?

Gender *

- Female
- Male

Profession or Occupation *

Age *

Email

Please leave your email if its ok for me to contact you regarding a personal interview or gatherings.

Submit

Powered by Google Docs

Report Abuse - Terms of Service - Additional Terms
In the process I had to deal with a few technological issues. Because of my limited coding ability, I got some assistance from Axel, who was also doing his thesis at Ozma during the same period as me. He kindly helped me with the programming for the landing page (Fig43) that appears on the user’s mobile after scanning the QR-Code. He also advised me on the different phone and i-pad dimensions that I had to fit my designs to.

Due to time constraints and limited assistance with coding for the second bigger experiment, I was struggling to get the buttons to work properly, and after a few trials and errors I decided to change the strategy slightly. Instead of a landing page, the viewer was directed to the Granny’s Dancing on the Table diary page (created for this experiment) (Fig47) straight away. This involved me having to change the codes on all the printed posters (Fig 48). In the end I mainly used this experiment for my observation and shadowing studies. As I could avoid creating different Facebook ‘diary’ pages, I had to find a way to create unique codes for one and the same url. This wasn’t an easy task, but I figured out that ‘Google Url shortener’ was the best shortcut for this (in case you only need them for a short period of time because they might be deleted) and by adding a number after the unique url it is possible to create multiple codes. This is valuable knowledge if you want to add one url to different medias, but still have multiple codes to be able to track which code was scanned at what location and at what time or day.
Experiments.

Everytime something is done on the street there is a level of interaction involved. Maybe it's not the interaction we hoped for or expected, but every project is an invitation to respond. Even if the response is someone taking down what has been offered up...

Kidpele, Street Art Writer
EXPERIMENT: CUBES

In my search for the answer to my challenging question I have done a few experiment mentioned below:

During the period 23rd-25th February 2011, a small experiment of mine took place at the Malmö library in Sweden. I placed four different small wooden cubes with a magnet on one side (Fig 50-53) in different locations around the library. Each cube was different from the other. One had an ambiguous message saying; ‘Turn me around if you dare!’ (Fig51) on another it was written: ‘Do not touch me!’ (Fig50). The third one was blank. The last had a straight away visible QR-Code on it and was fixed on a wall at eye level. Whereas the others were spread out in the library and easily removed or misplaced. The backsides of these three cubes had a QR-Code, all with different codes, each linked to a separate website, but with the same message: an image with two quotes about hiddenness. (Fig49). The QR-Codes were created with http://Ly.bit were it is possible to track how many hits they receive, i.e., it allowed me to see how many people that scanned the code and which ones and at what time the different cubes were scanned using a QR-reader application, which the users already had installed in their mobile phones.

Results:
As I could have figured out, a few went missing, either they were taken or placed elsewhere in the library. Others were turned so that both the message and the QR-Code were visible at the same time. This gave me some interesting and valuable feedback. These findings indicate that some people like to ruin the game by spoiling it for me and for others. The the main point of the cube-experiment was to find out if people would interact with the cube, without knowing straight away what was hidden on the other side. Within the gaming community these are called ‘spoilers’, and there are people that like to tell others what to do to end a game. To draw parallels to the film world, the spoilers like to tell everyone how a film ends. These people want exclusivity and to be the first with certain knowledge and then destroy the experience for the rest of us. Regarding the missing cubes, these were the ones that were not fixed on a wall at eye level, and therefore easier to remove and place elsewhere, which I am hoping was the case.
here. The reason why I hope that the cubes were misplaced rather than taken, is because in my research I look at people's level of engagement and their curiosity. If placed elsewhere in the library this meant that people were engaging themselves in a play. I am playing with their mind in a sense, by telling them not to touch the cube and thereafter giving them a scannable code as a reward for their responses. If misplaced they are also playing with me as a response. This adds a bit of extra tension to the experiment, having me to and go and look for them in a different location.

The cube placed near the Granny’s Dancing on the Table ‘temporary office’ at the library had most hits. It was the most straightforward, without any text and with the code visible straight away, fixed at eye level. There seems to have been no temptation to move it and no advice to
do so was added to it either. In this case there was no need to put it in one’s palm or on a surface to take a picture of the code with their smart phones.

The target audience here is people with QR-Code readers in their smart phones. Not to mentions people with new media, game play and transmedia culture interests. These people were most certainly circulating more in this part of the library during these three days, when Granny’s Dancing on the Table had their open office there. A lecture in new media was also taking place during this period. The outcomes from this experiment were interesting and valuable information to be taken into consideration when creating the next coming and final experiment or design concept.

EXPERIMENT: CARDS

Another experiment I did was to place three images on a tread with laundry clips and a forth turned (just blank) with a QR-Code (Fig55) on the back side. There were not many people noticing these, I therefore decided to add a very visible note with the text: Turn me around if you dare! Then one person turned it back around, but on the following day I found that someone had turned it around so that the QR-Code was visible to everyone (Fig55) instead of displaying the side with the orange note.

Valuable knowledge
What can be learnt from this last experiment (cards) is that a paper on a wall next to lots of other merchandising is diminished among all other information within a library.
The cubes (Fig50-53) on the other hand are not something usually found in a library and stand out from the rest of the interior. I added a bit of colour to the cubes on the last day, but that did not have any effect the results. The fact that some of the cubes went missing did not come as a surprise.

What I have learnt here is that people like be the first and then spoil it for the next person and also for the one that places the artefact there. This is worth thinking about for the next experiment: should people be able to take it home or should I have an excessive amount of artefacts and will it be ok with some spoiling wastage? This enables me to get the target group more under my control; those who do not spoil for others. The question is if any of this can be translated into the Granny world.

In game design there is a way to breed healthy creatures by not rescuing or taking care of the ill and weak. It’s a tactic to breed healthy strong ones. This can be used when trying to grab a specific audience’s attention, neglecting the fact that there might be thefts and instead letting the people take. Will it be easier to reach out to the non-spoilers by the use of this tactic of quantity? The neglected creatures can on one hand connect to the film ‘Granny’s Dancing on the Table’ where the main character is a girl that has been left alone in the woods by her controlling father. On the other hand it connects to the project: ‘Neglected children are made to feel invisible’ mentioned in the Related work section (Fig20, p.47)
THE LIBRARY GAME

When working from the library with the Granny team I participated briefly in a game called the Library game, created by Ozma. See my pictures from it below (Fig56).

The first part was to open a letter or to find it on a few places around the library. It asked you to look for a tree and you had found the tree on it. There was another note telling you to turn around and watch out for something red, above (were we had our open office that week on the next floor in the library). Out of sight two Swedish red clogs were hanging on a rope with a note telling (Fig56) you to find a three different book codes and thereafter tell the codes to the librarians at the service point in order to make progress in the game.

Fig56.
Fig 57.

Fig 58.

Fig 59.

Fig 60.

HJÄLP OSS MED FORTSÄTTNINGEN...
THE MAIN EXPERIMENT: SHOES

The third and the fourth experiments are the bigger experiments, and were explained in more detail in the previous section. I used bad (good) continuation from the gestalt theory and ambiguity, to test if the viewer is curious to find out what is hidden behind the closed doors. On a poster there are two feet with shoes sticking out off the edge of the poster, hidden behind two doors.

Here I am questioning if the feet can make people attracted to the poster, to find out what is hiding behind them. Will people open the gate to be faced with a surprise of not getting the answer they probably were imagining (if at all) instead by a half finished image and a text that says: Help us with the continuation! What continuation? I am hoping for them to ask themselves to find out what this is all about.

Will this ambiguity engage people to find out more?
A QR-Code reader is necessary to find out more, what are the chances of people becoming so interested that they scan the code or install an app to be able to scan it. Will this eliminate the research result?
Once the QR-Code has been scanned it takes the user(s) to a landing page on their mobile with the message ‘Imagine being a lost soul in a pair of lost shoes, where would they take you....?’

The last part of the question will be revealed by clicking on a link to the ‘Granny’s Dancing on the Table’ facebook where they are asked to write about where these shoes would take them if they were new to this civilisation. They are also asked to send in their own ideas & images if they wish.

They would also have a choice of clicking another arrow ‘Don’t go here!’ which takes them to a simple questionnaire. (Fig45).
Fig61.

Fig62.

Fig63.

Fig64.
EXPERIMENT YARN

In this experiment I am playing with the temptation of wanting to find out what the continuation of the story is and who the sender of this information is. What is written on the doors to be opened is as follows: ‘Follow us on facebook and share your thoughts with us, Regards…’ By opening the gate one is revealing a story line with text taken from Granny’s Dancing on the Table’s blog, made into the shape of a knitting ball together with a QR-Code. Can this mystery trigger people’s curiosity to find out more about the sender of this message and therefore scan the QR-Code?

Like in the previous experiment, when the QR-Code is scanned the user is entering a page on the mobile phone with two options. Either to follow the link to Granny’s Dancing on the Table’s facebook where he/she will take part in an exercise by answering the question:

Tell us! What would you do with a knitting ball if you didn’t know what it was?
And if he/she would like to, telling a story and sending in pictures that would be used for making something nice with.

The responses given on the last part were from a person who is already a follower of Granny’s facebook page:

“- play ball, put it inside my hair with a branch through, deal it in to balls and make my breast nicer, or roll it in the snow and make a huge snowman to be my friend”

“- fasten to my bed … then walk, holding my ball, knowing I can find my base…”
TELL US ON FACEBOOK WHAT YOU WOULD DO WITH A KNITTING BALL, IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS?

DON'T GO THERE!

The knitting yarn
by Granny's Dancing on the Table on Tuesday, May 3, 2011 at 10:36pm

What would you do?

Tell us! What would you do with a knitting ball, if you didn't know what it was?

Please share your thoughts and stories with us! If you like to send pictures of your ideas, send them to: pictures@grandydsdancing.com and we'll make you something nice with it.

Thank you! /Therese and the granny team

Like, Comment, Share
SCENARIOUS:

Due to several days of trying to sort out the technicality without any good solution I decided to reframe it, also because the results that were earlier generated from the previous experiment were not getting any good responses from the landing page with the ‘don’t go here’ button or the facebook link. Perhaps those buttons were not very obviously clickable or making people curious enough to proceed to the facebook page or the questionnaire.

☐ in a good universe
☐ in a not so good universe

Inside the top right square, I have written: ‘Break it’. One person took my experiment down and destroyed it less than two hours after placing it next to the public park near ‘Möllan’, on a wall for posters and information. I didn’t manage to catch the vandal, but I assume the person got upset with it somehow. Maybe because it took him/her to a facebook page.
Re framing.
new experiment strategy

Fig 68.
By reflecting on my designs and the little response I got from the last experiment I decided to reform it and make a new action plan with some of the material that I had already made for the previous test. I decided to simplify the first part, by making small, more feasible artefacts that I could put up almost anywhere in an urban landscape. (Fig.68). Here I try to use ambiguity to foster curiosity to make people wonder who is lost and what help this person needs or wants. I also look at the cityscape as a dynamic and ambivalent and changeable place where different people in different situations, doing everything from rushing through the streets without noticing a thing to relaxing on a bench with a good book.

Their mindsets all depend on the different situations they are in and also on their different personalities.

So far this experiment has generated a few more hits (Fig.29) shown in the diagram (statistics from Bit.ly) than the previous experiment, even though it is smaller. I added more of them and they were easier to put in more odd and obscure places, but some of them were caught by the wind on the first day. They were then only fixed with magnetic-tape. The following day I therefore fixed them with tape to stop them falling off. I eventually made some better ones like stickers. Because I was able to spread them out in various places around Möllan, these gained better results. Their size is also easier to work with and can be placed in all kinds of odd places (Fig.69) compared to the bigger experiment. Additionally they lasted longer, rather than being destroyed or taken like few of the others.
Interviews.

WHERE:
Wednesday 26/4 2011 at 17.30
Café SIMPAN
Simrishamngatan, Malmö, Sweden

WHO:
Male    Single
XXX Nilsson  30
Graphic Designer    Malmö
The purpose for this Interview is not just to find out what makes people curious about hidden information in the city but also to help me to shape the concept for later experiments and concepts. I purposely created a mix of open and closed format questions, to get some open and some more to the point answers. I interviewed three people and five people answered an online questionnaire with the same questions. In total I received seven people's answers.

**Curiosity**

What could make you curious in the city?

**What do you think of unclear and strange messages you find in the street, in a city?**

- Exciting. Grab peoples attention,
  - An interesting example that I saw a few years ago, done by a theatre. Placing rather big signs around the city with messages like:
  - When was the last time you beat your wife?
  - An then in very small text: see our play.....

**What would make you stop to explore something closer?**

- For example if its a poster with a band that I know and is interested in or a strange thing without a sender.

**What makes you look at stickers, posters and flyers?**

- Something I recognize or like. Very good design that stands out, nice unusual typography.
- Nicely mad rock posters
- A different shape make me more interested definitely, breaking the norm.

**Does it happen that you look for odd things when you are walking or sitting somewhere in the city and in what situations more than others?**

- Sometimes I stop if I have time. When I'm less stressed
Under what circumstances do you think you would have more time and think it would be fun to be engaged in some game-like experience..for example when waiting for the bus.

At work online when a film is rendering and I can’t do any work on the computer. Maybe at a train, but very suspicious as I think it might be a marketing campaign.

Would you call or sms a number on a banknote or a on a found note, just for fun?

Please give me some example of what you think it could be written on it, to make you curious to find out what it’s all about.

Yes if it obvious its a private person, and maybe with a text: sms me when you have received this note/banknote

What would you likely be interested in exploring in the city: Half finished messages or pictures

☐ yes
☒ maybe
☐ no
☐ Other: if they are well made, interesting

Secret withholding information (the end of a story is untold)

☐ yes
☒ maybe
☐ no
☐ Other: low budget, no commercial look

Mysterious & misplaced objects on the street

☒ yes
☐ maybe
☐ no
☐ Other: emplacement important, make you feel special
Half hidden art

☐ yes
☐ maybe
☐ no
☐ Other: 

To visit a secret statue known by information you found on a flyer/map not so far from it.

☐ yes
☐ maybe
☐ no
☐ Other: If in the right mind set

Figure and ground art, like these:
http://blog.danakanso.com/post/75358414/figure-ground-relation

☐ yes
☐ maybe
☐ no
☐ Other: 

Do you have an QR-code reader application installed on your mobile phone
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/QR_code

☐ yes
☐ no

Would you be interested in installing one and scanning QR-codes that you saw around the city?
if no, what would it take you to get involved in such interaction?

☐ yes
☐ maybe
☐ no
☐ Other: 

Do you have any fun ideas of what would make you very curious?

QR codes are new and interesting
Hidden art is interesting
Good design, clever ideas.
Observations.

Tuesday 10/5 2011,
Around Möllan/Folketspark
Accompanied with Katarina Arndt

Tuesday 30/5 2011,
Café Simrishamnsgatan
I added the experiment ‘Yarn’ on a wall for posters outside the club/restaurant Debaser, in Malmö, among lots of other posters. After just 10 minutes three people stopped and started exploring it. Afterwards I asked them what made them stop to look at it?

I asked Kurt (from Canada, 30 years old and a researcher) why he stopped and looked at it. He told me it grabbed his attention because it was more 3D than the other posters and that he had never seen an artefact like that before. -It was nice and I know just a little about QR-Codes and if it didn’t cost money I would have scanned the code to find out more, he added. The others, Joel (also 25 and a researcher) as well as another friend, first got curious about it after their friend had pointed it out to him (I noticed by shadowing them). One of the things pointed out by a Mark in my questionnaire was that when visiting other places or countries, people tend to have a different mindset and be more alert and curious about things that they come across on the street.

After just a few minutes another a male in his twenties stopped and looked at it briefly, and said he stopped to look at it while looking at other things. It stood out and the lack of information made him curious about what it was about. He did not own a smart phone, but would have scanned the code out of curiosity if he had one. About two hour later the artefact was destroyed, and I could only find the doors. Someone perhaps got upset with it, as it is sometimes frustrating with ambiguity, as the usability experts suggest.

In this place it competes with all the other posters on the wall, but at the same time it apparently stands out from the rest. It receives some help from being on a message or information board, where people tend to stop and find out what is happening in the city. When placing one a bit further down on the same walkway just one person briefly looked at it quickly, the place seeming to be just a passage on the path and not a place to stand and appreciate something visual or to look for information. I also added the experiment outside Glassfabriken and no one looked at it while we were observing and later I also found that at Simpan (Café Simrishamnsgatan) people had taken another collaborative approach that I found very interesting. The text inside says: ‘Help us with the continuation’ and people had drawn on it and someone added a heart on one of the doors, symbolising that someone likes the idea or simply a decoration of the door or perhaps suggesting it is an outdoor toilette, ‘privy’ with a wooden door as it was added to a wall just above the toilet in the café.
Results & Findings.
from the experiment interviews and observations
RESULTS & LEARNINGS FROM MY EXPERIMENTS

Here is a summary what I learnt from my experiments and interviews and what can be learnt from them within my area of research, i.e., how people perceive and relate to the artefacts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Some people like to be the first to encounter and then destroy the pleasure for the people to follow, ‘SPOILERS’</td>
<td>competitive behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A few users want to collect the artefacts if possible, others are not so morally concerned if they are allowed to or not.</td>
<td>collectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Others misplaced found artefacts, to play a game with the creator of them</td>
<td>willing to play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>By adding many small artefacts around the cityscape more people are likely to find them if they grab people’s attention.</td>
<td>curious &amp; in search for missing information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>An artefact is likely to get lost among all other information, if not standing out.</td>
<td>explorative behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>To be explored more often, if in the right situation/context where the target people circulate</td>
<td>interests &amp; culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A misplaced object is more interesting than those that are usually found in a certain place (things that stand out)</td>
<td>obscurity &amp; emplacement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Something that is of interest to a particular individual</td>
<td>interests &amp; personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Known to the user already: a film, famous person, a brand, or an artist etc</td>
<td>familiarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The user likes to be creative, when in the right mood and in the right context and atmosphere (like in the café/bar (Simpan).)</td>
<td>state of mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>People are more open for exploration when in a new place</td>
<td>novelty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Early Concepts.
Quickly generated ideas - scribble, say, slap brainstorming

When teased with a small bit of interesting information people will want to know more.  Stephen Anderson
CONCEPTUALISATION

Jumping Jack
Make an artefact that changes when pulling the string, changing the shape to get a hint by the merging of two shapes or revealing a text or codes. The artefact might also have a pop-up element that becomes visible when the viewer pulls the string.

A sculpture or a 3-D artefact
One idea is to create sculptures or faces (masks) with physical hidden paper tickets with secret messages on them, inside the mouth, which gives a clue to where to go next; to a website or facebook page. Here the notes give the user plenty of freedom to write their own messages as well.

To find out about the sculptures if not stumble up on them, would be a message on another small physical artefact or note saying: ‘Kiss the sculpture’ or similar. There will be a map on which it is pointed out where to find the masks within the specific area, giving the person a choice of where to go. If using this concept the metaphor for ticketing would be good to spin further on.

An artefact where augmented reality is used to reveal secret hidden information
A image or a sculpture has a secret message within it or behind it which can only be revealed with the help of using an augmented reality application. There will be hints for the user to be able to get information about the application. When the user finds the information he then knows where to find the info to proceed.

Another idea is to use a combination of augmented reality together with fuzziness, by shaking the phone it becomes clearer like when developing a polaroid image

Hidden pattern game
Posters with patterns with hidden removable parts within it – once the part is removed there will be a mystical message that takes the viewer to the next thing by giving a hint were it is. In the next artefact there is pattern with hidden codes or url’s within it.

Curiosity Cabinet
Made of cardboard, old curvy-shaped illustration style where hidden message can be revealed & explored, using different materials and hiding techniques.

Using Phrases like:
Don't pour water on me! This is not a game!
Outcome.
Perception and human behaviour

*Human beings have an inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise their capacities, to explore, and to learn.*

Edward Deci
he Issues related to my hypothesis of using various design qualities to foster engagement and making the user explore an artefact further will be discussed here. From my research i acknowledge that there are various design issues to deal with to make people aware of the existence of a hidden design and making people interested in exploring it. There seems to be a few missing bits in my design to make people hooked to follow through to collaborate with 'Granny’s Dancing on the Table' and myself, or to simply respond to my questions.

According to the book ‘The semantic turn’ (Krippendorff 2006) to be aware of the human factor is very important when designing an artefact. Based on my findings I would like to suggest what triggers a person’s curiosity and how they respond to a specific artefact relies a lot on the following factors:

- **Personal Interest**
- **Situation/Context**
- **Mood**
- **Associations, past experiences**
- **(QR-Technology Awareness)**

**Interpretation/ Meanings/Sense making**

- **Personality**
- **Familiarity/Relation**
- **Culture/Community**

**VISUAL PERCEPTION VS SOCIAL & HUMAN BEHAVIOUR**

We can assume that the design qualities and people's perceptions are not enough to make people want to take another step and explore an artefact in more detail or to click through many steps to finally engage themselves with the artefacts/tasks for more than a few moments before the curiosity disappears.

I suggest that the visual perceptual design qualities of an artefact that was explored in this project is only one side of the coin to be aware of when looking to foster curiosity by hiding information in an urban/public environment. Krippendorff (2006) mentions that the aesthetics in recognition is a minor phrase in the use of artefacts. On the other hand a holistic aesthetic view should be taken into account and brought to the surface when talking about experience design like Peter Merholz, President and Co-founder of Adaptive Path mentions in his talk on p29. Krippendorff (2006) goes on talking about human-centred design and the meanings different users create in relation to an artefact. I suggest we look at the design qualities I used and reflect on my problem from different perspectives to form aesthetic whole. Thus the human-centred design is of great importance when designing experiences, one person’s experience differs from
another person’s experience depending on many factors: mood, individual interpretations and taste, past experiences (novelty or non novelty), expectations, interests, new place. Additionally, in what context and settings an object is placed affect the surprises, obscurity, forbiddance and affordance. Krippendorff (2006) mentions that ‘affordance’ can “help people to explore unfamiliar artefacts and constructs their own UCMs”, but it does not exist without a perceiver. Gibson(1979) on the other hand, did not include the human factor when describing perceptonal affordance and these factor are of importance in the field of experience design.

Krippendorff (2006) goes on saying that affordance is a perceptual fit between making sense, engagement, anticipated sense and the external world, illustrated here (Fig70) where I have divided his external world into two: ‘environment and context and also culture’.

Culture can mean not only the culture one grows up in but also the culture or social group that is based on one’s interests, in this case an alternative indie game, art/design, media and film community. On the other hand, I will also go back to what I mentioned earlier on, that the placement of an artefact, in what environment it is placed and in what context, for example, cubes placed out of place in a library, affect and change the artefact’s meanings and the way people behave.

When to design for the urban landscape there are more factors to be aware of also. Its a big hiding place, it tend to be dissolved in fragments of daily life, stress, urban planning the weather, time of the day or year and if one is new to a place or not. The emplacement therefore play a major part in hiding something in the city.
I have used an the classic “iceberg metaphor” (Fig 71) approach when describing this dilemma, as it illustrates very well what I want to discuss next. At the top of the iceberg are the factors that are relevant when placing ‘visible’ artefacts around the city and the more partial visible or hidden are under the surface of the water. The factors in the middle are the ones I decided are more relevant to this project, both in terms of visible and hidden – even though all of them apply to both.

My dilemma is to get people to explore the hidden. In my model above there are many issues to be aware of in the visible world and I will now try to utilise them to the more hidden world, where words like secrets, hints, surprise, clues, mysterious and explorative are used. From being hidden to becoming visible can be done in various ways. Letting some people know, surprise by giving clues, like in my earlier concepts of a Jumping Jack, when pulling a string something that is hidden becomes visible. One of the more obvious areas within interaction design one thinks about when hiding objects or information in an urban environment is scavenger hunts and pervasive games i.e., games related to treasure hunts were the players are out to find hidden treasures or information. Often the hidden objects are found with the help of a map, compass or clues given on display, chat or by phone calls (Montola, Stenros and Waern 2009), but here the players are mostly aware of that they are taking part in a game. All the factors above

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**Visible**

- familiarity/recognisable
- taste
- personality
- culture/community
- mood
- situation/context
- interests
- standing out
- context
- surprise
- emplacement
- clever/thought provacatve

**Hidden**

- explorers
- visibility
- clues
- secret & hints

Fig 71.
(Fig 72) can be applied to these games. People taking part are usually explorers and visibility is often a factor, when hiding treasures. They are having fun and the players collect information and clues from other people, objects or notes in the environment which applies to secrets and hints mentioned in the illustration.

Another way to apply hiddenness is to not let people know about it, for example with hidden messages, obscure objects, as mentioned earlier in the Year Zero project for example. Why not create an area that has a hidden mystery built in to it, like the apartment that was going to be renovated were the design team built in mysteries, puzzles for the children living there, to solve (Mystery on Fifth Avenue, p.91, Montola, Stenros & Waern).

Clues on an mysterious note or on a bench, for example, make some users stop and think: what is this about? Who was here before me? Clues that are not known to people have to be considerably placed in the right context and for a specific target audience. Here the cleverness comes in. How to attract the viewer to a specific place and make him/her think it is worth checking out. Based on all the theories, my experiments, interviews and also knowledge gained from meetings with Ozma and the Granny team I believe that it is a dilemma to design with hiddenness in mind. To create a tension from something that at firstglance not being very ap-
proachable or attention grabbing, to something that is energized and creates curiosity, needs a lot of imagination. One way to tackle it is to take inspiration and learn from other designers and artists, but develop their ideas to create new and exciting things.

I would therefore for future experiments use the idea from existing artists. One solution for a strategy would be to play with someone else’s concept in order to find out more about the users and take this research one step ahead. It is (Fig73) not totally hidden to the eye, but I think it works very well to grab people’s attention, with very simple means. It also has great potential to get people to be explorative to try to find out if it actually works, and if there will be any sound. What if we fool the user and create a more intriguing experience, by using affordances and surprise. Not to forget that what follows thereafter should be of great interest to the target audience. To extend this idea further and drag the viewer into a different universe would be a great challenge for an interaction designer. What first looks like just black tape (Fig73)38, could have something hidden within it (inside the stairs). Perhaps a note with a clue for the next step in a small game-like experience. Another idea to spin further on is the hidden bench, inside of what at first look is a normal electrical box on the street. But surprise! There is a bench hidden inside it (Fig74)39.
Concept & Conclusion.
This paradox of trying to make people eager to explore hidden obscure objects based on visual perception and human behaviour, from an interaction design perspective, gave me many insights. Not only are we individuals with our own perceptions, who have our own ways to look at and interpret things. Moreover are we a product of our environment. How we make up meanings and draw associations to things in our surroundings deals with many other issues than simply visual perception. It is based on our past experiences, interests, culture and/or the community we are part of and what state we are in at a given moment in time.

Another dilemma was exploring hiddenness, the visibility of things, the placement or information not visible to the eye, such as hidden information in barcodes and QR-Codes, or even secrets or the uncertain.

I would like to conclude that qualities such as Ambiguity, Affordance, Forbiddance, Secrecy, Obscurity and more, applied to an object are not always enough to make people curious to engage in an artefact. There are many individual factors to take into consideration, as the curiosity psychologists suggest. When looking to design for people there are vast amounts of parameters to be aware of. What one person perceives might not be what the other perceives, and what we perceive in one state we don’t perceive at another time. When wanting to hide an object on a huge canvas, such as in a cityscape, there are a lot more factors to look at. As a conclusion I want to say that from this small field study and exploration I found that perceptual qualities work in connection to an environment. Experience design is all about holism. I would like to conclude that yes, design qualities applied to an object can work, but when wanting to get people extra interested and get feelings of immersion to enter into a different universe, the gestalt psychologists describes it well: “the sum is greater than the individual parts”. With this I mean that the synergy between the qualities, the community (or social group) and the content has to work in harmony and applied to a context, in order to gain the greatest effect once an artefact has been discovered. The individual parts make up the whole experience on a holistic psychological level. You have to be at the right place at the right time with the right kind of artefact. Play on peoples emotions, make it simple and clever!

Based on this conclusion I have created a set of guidelines that I would like to develop further into a playful strategic tool, to be used by people who are looking to grab people’s attention when utilising a hidden language.
Be thought provocative

Hide in the right places

Let them keep it

Let them be creative

Surprise them

Play with visibility
• These cards can be used for the conceptual stage of a design process.
• To extend this idea I would like to create a game but also a gallery of examples of projects that uses one or more of these, as a secondary guidance for people.
• Let them co-create as well and let the users/viewers also hide things.
Thank you!
I would first of all like to thank Ozma (Bobbi, Karin and Christina), Erling and Mikael for some great and valuable feedback and support in my struggle to write this paper. I also want to thank Axel for being very kind to help me with the technicality in the most stressful times. Katrina was also extremely kind and helpful and gave me an extra hand when I needed her. I am very happy and fortunate to have been able to work with such nice people on a very interesting project. Hanna and Andrea big thanks for being so soft and kind, and great people to collaborate with.

A big big thank you to the people that spent some valuable time on filling in the questionnaire and especially to Anna, Linus, Graham who let me interview them in their hectic life and for the support that have given me. Big hugs to Nicola, Mark, Roberta and Daniel for answering questions.

I want to thank my family and friends for being so understanding, when locking myself away for such a long period of time. Thanks to Anna and Pauline who took me out for walks to get some fresh air and Lisa, who I spent a fantastic week abroad with to get some extra strength for the final part of this project.

I also want to thank the Hostel at Råkulle (Österlen) and the people staying there (and the most cuddly cat ever with her three kittens) for bringing me some peace and tranquillity during my last week writing this report.

Thank you Xun and Katrina and the Medea crew for the chit chats and our inspirational talks. For extra inspiration and energy I also want to thank the street artist in my neighbourhood and also all fantastic artists around the globe whose work i have been able to view on Street Art Upia, also a big thanks to Ted.com for your existence :)

Warm regards to all the genius street artists and artists out there, what would I do without you? To mention a few: The french artist JR with the film: Inside out, Blu, Slinkachu and Oakoak, Liu Bolin and Mark Jenkins

Big thanks to Mikael, Mette, Jonas, Per and once again to Erling for giving such great lectures in ‘Interaction Design’ and for your nice feedback. I have learnt a lot during this year and I do not regret for a minute that I decided to do this Master’s.

Thank you!
References.


Buxton B. (2007). Sketching the User Experiences, getting the design right and the right design. San Fransisco: Morgan Kaufmann Publisher.


Decoded Viewed on 13th Aug 2011 > http://bing.decodejay-z.com/?fbid=g9IExMZLFy&wom=false


Granny’s dancing on the table > www.facebook.com/grannysdancing?sk=info


Nguyen P and Mackenzie S. (2010). *Beyond the Street*, Berlin: Gestalten


Appendix.
When the invisible became visible

“A curiosity, guerilla art & technology study”

A booklet with more inspirational project (available from me as an Pdf)
WAYS OF REVEALING HIDDEN INFORMATION (Materials)

PHYSICAL

SMART MATERIALS
- Light sensitive
- Heat sensitive
- Liquid sensitive
- Movement

PAPER
INK/FOLIO
CAMOUFLAGE
SHADOWS
TEXTURE
GLUE/STICKY MATERIAL

DIGITAL

QR-CODE
AUGMENTED REALITY
CLICKING
COVERED
LED/LIGHT
VIBRATE
DIGITAL/CRIPTIC

SHAKING
BLOWING
BLURRY/FUZZY
Based on Anderson, Stephen (2009)