

# Integration of Architectural Education in Teaching Interactive Media Design

## *A Course for Space Composition*

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### Introduction

In accordance with our design knowledge, the users' expectations and the level of the technology reached, show us that interactive media design is not only an interactive environment which depends on two dimensional typographic composition any more. Spatial data has an important role in the formation of interactive media design (TUFTE 1995 p.38). From this point of view, the main factors of this issue are:

- (1) design of the storyboards, especially for game-design, that are made up of spatial perception,
- (2) the spatial organisations in which info-kiosks take place in public environment,
- (3) the relation between the screen and the organisation of space in interactive exhibition design.

When we consider the matter above, we understand that throughout the process of the curriculum of interactive media design for undergraduate education, only the traditional communication design and programming education is not sufficient enough, but architectural education must also take a part of this education in some degree.

In this paper, as the theme of the considerations above, it is examined what kind of basic problems is to be faced in the integration of architectural education to that of the interactive media design and also the solution propositions formed for these problems.

### Difficulties of Teaching Architecture in a Different Design Education Discipline

When preparing the structure of Space Composition Course under above circumstances, the most basic problem we are faced with is that how architecture, as a discipline being extremely extensive, will be given inside the interactive media design education in only 16-week course schedule.

To be able to cope with this problem, we have set out first of all by distributing into diverse courses the basic concepts to be taught inside the Architectural education. By considering that 'Space Composition' course will take place in the fifth semester, we have supplied the students with the preparatory theoretical background in the courses they will take in the previous semesters before taking this course. With this point of view, we have tried to give the students the basic design theory and definitions of architecture inside the following courses [FIGURE 1]:

1. Design Theory(2<sup>nd</sup> Semester): This course teaches general principles and methods of 2 and 3 dimensional design. Throughout the course, the students are introduced to the way of thinking of the industrial design and architectural design as well as graphical design. The students also analyses the methods of 2 and 3 dimensional from different disciplines.
2. Basic Design(2<sup>nd</sup> Semester): In this course, students, together with students of other design education, make various exercises on three dimensional spatial structures throughout three

Figure 1. Architecture Related Course in Interactive Media Design Undergraduate Curriculum

Semesters	Studio Experience	Design Practice	Design Theory	Technical Skills
1 & 2	Basic Design	Picture Composition	Design History	Computer Skills
3	Basic Typography	Sound Design	Interactive Design Theory	Basic Programming
4	Identity Design	Illustration		Programming
5	e-Learning Design	2-D Animation	Film Readings	Advanced Programming
6	e-Shopping Design	3-D Animation		
7	Game Design	Space Composition		
8	Info-Kiosk Design			Electives

weeks. In this way of studying, students could grasp the importance of structural construction and the dimension of design in establishing a space

3. Design History(3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> semester): In this course where is described the design history after Industrial Revolution, the place of architecture through the development of design is shown to the students by familiarising them with the examples of modern architecture beside other design disciplines. Students give a seminar in this course, each one investigating what sorts of products have been produced in different trends. In these seminars, the students become familiarised with some famous architectures as

Le Corbusier, Alver Alto, Charles Emes, Frank Garry, and are expected to realise that architectural design idea in essence has grown integrated with other art and design fields, by seeing that besides their architectural works these architects produced products in industrial design, furniture design and other arts as well.

4. Film Reading(4<sup>th</sup> Semester): In this course, students fundamentally analyse on some examples those aspects of cinema art that could be a reference to interactive media. Besides Colour, Light, Camera Action, Picture Composition, it is illustrated from the architectural point of view how such masters as Greenaway, Coppola, Scola, Bertoluci dealt with spatial design in cinema. (Penz 1997; Katz 1991).

Having been given the preliminary knowledge about space concept from architectural design point of view in above courses, the course SPACE COMPOSITION teaches students how physical space design can be accomplished by interactive media.

### Basic Strategies Defined in Space Composition Course:

As a communication design discipline, interactive media design has the closest relationship with architectural design in terms of “spatial exhibitions” (Hall 1997; Rattenbury 1971).

With this point of view, the course aims to teach how interactive media is displayed as an object in physical space. At the beginning of the course-design, students were first thought to be given some types of exhibition spaces as museum and galleries, convention and trade centres and public places, and some basic space planning principles related with them. (Lawson 2000). But later, we concluded that it would be more suitable to introduce the common basic principles of all exhibition spaces thinking that teaching students such kind of knowledge which architects should know is unnecessary. In the direction of this developing view, it is decided to classify the course into 2 groups such as “general theory” and “basic practice”.

In theoretical part, it is specified to introduce basic principles and approaches in different exhibition spaces in terms of

- analyses of human factors in proportions and perceptions
- spatial use of light, colour, and texture
- specification of style which will be adopted to the space by means of the exhibition theme. with examples.

In the practise part, it is decided to make exercises about which points to take care of, in the settlement of interactive displays that are exhibited in stands situated in different places in a space. This is especially the most basic difference teaching “space design” in architecture and communication design.

Moreover, it has been considered that by organising a stand, the student will work much more freely in the direction of the permission given by the exhibition hall and the human eye’s perception limits, going away from the standards which are not directly related with the communication design education, but which concern mostly architectural ergonomic standards such as door, window, ceiling height, etc.

From this perspective, it will be required of the students to work on 6 different situations from all closed case to all free case of a stand model based on Palladio’s cross plan used in most design theories in the past (Holberton 1991), [FIGURE 2]. For the display’s concept and the orientation of the spectators, it is expected from the students, according to this situation, to develop proposals about

- situation of interactive displays
- vertical partitions
- horizontal partitions
- manipulations on levels
- light, colour, and texture
- information design of the stand

At this point, the basic problem that occurred into mind is what kind of a method will be applied in order to make the students develop and introduce their designs [FIGURE 3].

As we all know, as in all other space types, in developing exhibition space composition and aesthetics, three kinds of visualisation methods are used:

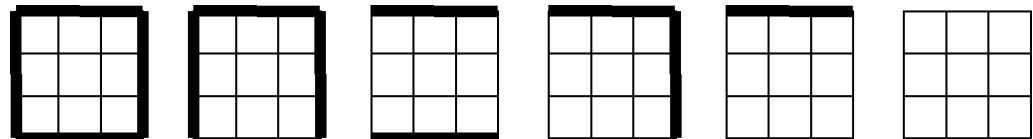


Figure 2. Stand Situation Alternatives depending on Palladio’s cross plan

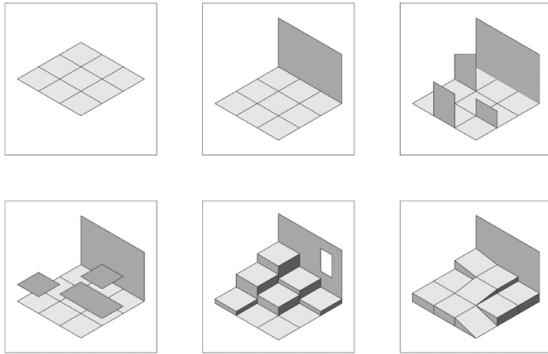


Figure 3. Third Dimensional Studies on Palladio's Cross Plan

- (1) studying on orthographical drawing,
- (2) studying with models,
- (3) studying with a dimensional model observing from specified camera viewpoint in digital platform.

Although an architectural student can easily use those three methods above, the communication design student will not be able to use orthographic drawing method since he/she is not familiar with it. For this reason, for students taking communication design education, it will be much more easy to use 3-D modelling technique. With that technique, it may be possible to say that both planning and designing a three dimensional composition, and also light, colour, texture and human eye perception tests can be done more easily.

### Conclusion:

Of course each of the students taking communication design education is not expected to make spatial planning and put forth space aesthetics like an architectural student. Also it is not possible for us to consider that person taking this education to take the role of an architect. However it is good for the communication designer to know in what way an architect works and to what criteria he/she pays attention. This will enable the communication design student after his/her graduation to form a healthy group work with an architect without being any stranger to the architect's approach if he/she will work with an architect in a project related with the display

of the interactive media in physical space. Furthermore, it is clear that the care not shown to the architect and architecture as we have encountered in most places will be obtained between the two disciplines which are so close to each other, and this will bring forth results of a higher quality in applications.

Beside this, it is required to know that communication design is not only a two-dimensional one, but it must be observed that the student be familiar with the three-dimensional and spatial solution methods, especially this is extremely important in applications of developing interactive media technologies.

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