

By: Desiree Ong You Ling

The Next Emergent Design Trend

The rise of the Fourth Industrial Revolution today promotes an unprecedented transformation across fields of art and science. I believe that the next five years will only continue to nurture disruptive designs that are not only experiences integrated without boundaries, but also interactive stories narrated through design forms. (Ong et al., 2019) Influenced by growing trends of social and environmental sustainability, one can only imagine emerging works of the next design generation to be defined by a user-centric sensibility that becomes one of the design principles that cater to these rising needs. ("Emerging trends impacting design, innovation and technology", 2019) Where the creative human mind fuses with the capabilities of artificial intelligence, future designs will no longer be contained within physical boundaries, but projectedly envisioned through 3d, 4d, and even possibly, 5d manifestations. With these in mind, I feel that the next design movement could be aptly named 'Modern Sentiment'. With reference to past design trends that come and go in cycles, our human sensibilities might start to seek out the sentimental in the midst of this new tech revolution, allowing a regression back to olden aesthetics with a modern digital influence to it.

In practice, I would like to pursue the field of visual communications, preferably in the branding and advertising design industry with the use of tech-informed skill sets. Based on observations from prior work experiences, it is not hard to notice that even within the field of graphic design, technology has changed the way people interact with brands and businesses. Be it through web, print collaterals or even physical activated spaces, design ideals that once took a more passive and informative stance has now changed its approach; it now seeks an exchange, a real-time engagement that tickles more than just the mental senses with abstract wordplay and aesthetics, to create new stimuli through newly found attempts to conjure interactions that leave users with nothing less than experience-driven brand memories. ("12 Service Design Innovation Trends for 2019", 2019)

Take for example, local advertising agency GoodStuph's interactive website, with the use of retro aesthetics executed onto a digital platform.



GoodStuph's interactive retro game inspired website, designed and modelled by Andre Wee

Unlike most agencies' portfolio sites that showcase its past works, awards and team credits in a linear manner, GoodStuph presents itself as a creative agency through an innovative interactive website that showcase a highly localised sense of humour. Instead of having users click through webpages of past client projects, viewers can now have a quick overview of the client brands by mousing over and dragging the cityscape, which consists of several brands re-interpreted as animated 3D models. The entire retro game aesthetic, design layout and humourous copywriting adds on to the website's visual narrative, making the entire viewing process feel more like a fun game that consistently engages the viewer with different interaction points. The technical integration of 3d modelling, animation and graphic design within this website is just one of the many examples of the design qualities for the upcoming design trend, where user engagement through interactivity, cross-disciplinary skill sets and creative collaborations become increasingly necessary.

Another interesting use of technology with design is the Tiger Beer and Singapore Tourism Board collaboration earlier this year designed and executed by Eugene Soh from dude studios. With 4 out of 20 Singapore themed beer bottles



consisting of hidden augmented reality features, users were able to view the '3D pop-up models' of the four locations when they scan the logo on the selected beer bottles with Facebook's in-app camera. In line with the tourism campaign theme rolled out earlier this year, this marketing activation was designed to encourage people to learn more about the different Singapore locations, inspiring them to experience the location site in real life.



Augmented Reality features, projections beyond the physical form

As shown in this example, design experiences no longer exist simply within the two-dimensional form, but extends beyond physical devices to actually engage and inspire real-life experiences. Appreciated not just for aesthetic sensibilities, the recognition for experience over visual design is also another ideal of the next emerging trend. Currently, as interactive design technology is still in the middle of its infancy stage, the suspension of disbelief may not be hyper-realistic for immersants who take on a conscious decision-making role in these participatory interactions. ("Tech Trends 2019 | frog", 2019) However, as technology continues to develop, one can expect future design experiences to be more effortlessly realistic, as tech take on a more intimate role in blurring boundaries between virtual and reality through bio-art applications. (Online & 2019, 2019)

With higher environmental awareness among generations today, there could also be a greater appreciation for eco-friendly artistry, resulting in innovative designs born out of unconventional materials that merge well with high tech applications. Emerging works may also take greater inspiration from social causes, resulting in the rise of socially empowered designs. With all these in mind, the next design movement will only

continue to evolve to be an increasingly important solution to our world, by tapping on the highly emotive experiences of users that bridge both virtual and reality.

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