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Slow Design relacionado aos outros conceitos de design na história da arte



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Resumo Este artigo tem como base trabalhar em cima do Slow Design e como ele se relaciona com outros conceitos de design, sendo eles: Arts & Crafts, Design for Sustainability, Eco Design e Design for the real world, dentro da História da Arte. Como um design sustentável, veremos semelhanças entre todos os conceitos, mas também diferenças, que irão proporcionar uma nova visão sobre o que é um design sustentável. Foi adotada uma metodologia de análise bibliográfica, revisão da questão com base em autores que se debruçaram sobre o tema. E, assim, foi concluído que o papel do Slow Design vem mudando a maneira de produzir novos objetos.

Palavras-chave Slow Design; História da Arte; Conceitos de Design; História do Design.

w Design in relation to other design concepts in art history

Abstract *This research aims to work on the development of Slow Design and how it relates to other design concepts within Art History, such as: Arts & Crafts, Design for Sustainability, Eco Design and Design for the real world. As a sustainable design, we will observe similarities between all concepts, but also differences which will provide a new vision of what sustainable design is. A methodology of bibliographic analysis was adopted, reviewing the issue based on authors who have studied the subject. Thus, it was concluded that the role of Slow Design has been changing the way of producing new objects.*

Keywords *Slow Design; Art History; Design's Concepts; Design History.*

El Viaje de las Princesas Disney: un análisis narrativo y arquetípico

Resumen *Este artículo se basa en el trabajo sobre Slow Design y su relación con otros conceptos de diseño, a saber: Arts & Crafts, Diseño para la Sostenibilidad, Eco Diseño y Diseño para el mundo real, dentro de la Historia del Arte. Como diseño sostenible, veremos similitudes entre todos los conceptos, pero también diferencias, lo que aportará una nueva visión sobre lo que es el diseño sostenible. Se adoptó una metodología de análisis bibliográfico, revisando la cuestión con base en autores que han estudiado el tema. Y así, se concluyó que el papel del Slow Design ha sido cambiar la forma de producir nuevos objetos.*

Palabras clave *Slow Design; Historia del Arte; Conceptos de diseño; Historia del diseño.*

Introduction

This research aims to understand how the ideology of Slow Design, a concept which the stages of production and the choices of sustainable raw materials are more conscious, was formed. Afterwards, we will present comparisons between Slow Design and other concepts of sustainable design.

With the growth of the Slow Movement, which contrasts the fast way of life, it is noticeable that a way of fulfilling the needs of a better quality of life was being sought after. From such desires, new concepts emerged: Slow Food, Slow Fashion, Slow Art, and the main object of this research, the Slow Design. These ideologies are stronger mainly in Europe, where this cultural movement was originated. That said, the search for more humane conditions of work and both internal and external life are being embraced in other countries as well.

This research could provide a collaboration for a historical comprehension of Slow Design within Art History, seeking comparisons of other concepts of sustainable design – for instance, the book “Design for the real world”, by Victor Papanek, in the 1970s. The study of sustainability, therefore, will be included in the field of Art History field.

This article aims to briefly present the Slow Movement, explaining what it is; introducing the definition of Slow Design, its goals and premises. Afterwards, we will discuss the relations between Slow Design, Arts & Crafts, Design for Sustainability, Eco Design and Design for the real world; that is, the intention is to historicize this phenomenon within Art History and Design History.

Methodology

Initially, the adopted methodology of choice is a bibliographic analysis comprising of a revision of authors that studied the theme. The methodology consists of the base reading from the book “In praise of Slow: How a worldwide movement is challenging the cult of speed”, from Carl Honoré, and academic articles selected to comprehend the Slow Movement.

For the study of the concept of Slow Design, the base reading consisted of the articles “Slow Design a paradigm shift in design philosophy?” and “Slow Theory a paradigm for living sustainable?”, from author Alastair Fuad-Luke, who created the concept. The majority of the references were of the English language, mainly due to the fact that few Brazilian works and books exist concerning the subject.

This research was part of a Scientific Initiation Program, which also became the Master’s course conclusion work in the Art History course at Unifesp. This study also included a moment of interviews with two Slow Brazilian brands, for a better understanding of how Slow Design brands develop in Brazilian practice.

Results

Slow Movement

The Slow Movement is about conscious choices for a better quality of life for everyone. It seeks to question the need to always be in a hurry, harming not only ourselves, but everything around us. This includes the environment in which we live, nature itself. The Slow Movement is based on balance, making it possible to choose to go slowly or speed up at certain moments in your life.

The movement began in Rome with Slow Food, created by the Italian writer Carlo Petrini, in 1986. In order directly compete with the new McDonald's branch in the Italian city, the movement defends: fresh and seasonal products from the region itself; recipes passed down from generation to generation; Sustainable Agriculture; artisanal production; and eco gastronomy: the idea of eating well must be in accordance with the protection of the environment (HONORÈ, 2005: 75,76).

Present in different areas, the Slow Movement has its own characteristics in each respective field, however it will still be based on sustainable aspects and the peaceful way of producing or living, dictated by Slow Food.

Slow Design

The term Slow Design was first used by designer, writer and professor Alastair Fuad-Luke, in 2002. Fuad-Luke believes that increased knowledge of sustainable issues encourages the design community to act on changes to the environment and towards greater social responsibility (LUPO: s/d, 46). The connection between slow and design happens precisely in the relationship of the Slow Movement, which is taking a path towards sustainability; and design that focuses on local production, using an ecological environment.

Slow Design is a new way of slowing down current production processes, where people and nature are not respected. (AUTOR: 2022, 108) He also encourages his artists to opt for a more ecological choice, such as using recyclable materials or reusing parts/materials from other productions that would otherwise be discarded, such as Upcycling.

Another interesting point of Slow Design, in addition to the search for better ways in production, is the rescue of traditional techniques, in a similar way to what happens with Slow Food. Slow Design works with three pillars: environmental, human and economic.

Chart 1: Slow Design Goals.

Source: The Author, 2024.



Besides supporting small producers and smaller-scale production, another essential feature of the concept is the fair treatment that slow companies give to their employees. As the movement values human well-being, employees are treated correctly, with guaranteed rights and fair wages.

According to Voronovicz and Zagar, in their article “Slow Design and the premises for a Sustainable Design”, the concept will have four premises:

Chart 2: Slow Design Premises.

Source: Priscila Voronovicz and Cláudia Regina Hasegawa Zacar, 2011.

1	Move towards a new model of society, valuing individual and global well-being, encouraging design with a focus on sustainability and encouraging consumers to be conscious and critical individuals in their choices;
2	Consider the dissociation of current economic, technological and political thoughts and predict that these must follow models that contemplate the assumptions of Slow Design;
3	Adoption of slowing social metabolism, that is, reducing the flows of human, economic and industrial transformations;
4	Considering that the decoupling of current consumption models represents an opportunity to explore the durability of design.

The main characteristic of these “slow” objects is minimalism. Carlo Petrini mentions that the slow approach means thinking and creating products that are good, “clean” and ethical. These characteristics of simplicity have a purpose, that of timelessness. A timeless product is a product that will not be affected by fashion. With this characteristic, one of the greatest advantages that these objects have is related to the reduction in consumption, and consequently, with the excessive disposal of products in the environment.

Slow Design x Arts & Crafts

“Slow Design, despite being a unique movement within the History of Design, also has similarities with other movements [...] One of them is Arts & Crafts, from the mid-19th century, which went against the industrial thinking of the time and sought the return of manual and artistic making.” (AUTOR: 2022, 109)

The preservation of manual craftsmanship, the opposite path to industrial production and a greater meaning for everyday objects are some examples of similar characteristics of the two design concepts. However, there are also differences between the models, the main one being the use of machines by Slow Design and the absence of them in Arts & Crafts.

Chart 3: Arts & Crafts x Slow Design.
Source: The Author, 2019.

Arts & Crafts	Slow Design
England	England and Italy
Second Half of the 19s	2002
William Morris	Alastair Fuad-Luke
Based on the ideas of A.W.N. Pugin e John Ruskin	Based on the ideals of Slow Movement
Response to the Industrial Revolution and its mass production	Response to the acceleration of current industrial production processes
The return of artisanal production and artisans and designing art objects for everyday use	It seeks to restore the value of artisanal processes with a more environmental and sustainable vision
Movement with socialist ideals	Part of a global and social movement
Men should rule over the machines	The use of machines should happen consciously and when necessary
Quality > Quantity	Quality > Quantity
High value products	High value products
Nature as inspiration and use of natural and regional materials	Natural and regional raw materials
Originality	Beyond marketing aesthetics

Slow Design x Design for Sustainability

Sustainable Design is a production niche that seeks what is economically viable, ecologically beneficial and socially equitable (PAZMINO, 2007: 7) In Sustainable Design it is possible to find different models, including Slow Design, Eco Design and Design for the real world, concepts covered within this article.

Design for Sustainability refers to a concept linked to Sustainable Development, a term originated in 1987 by the UN World Environment Commission, which is defined as “one that satisfies the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (CAVALCANTE et al, 2012: 253)

Sustainable Design is the search for a more sustainable development for design, that is, a common ground shared with Slow Design. Its

concern with what is best for the environment, the choice of more ecological options and what is socially beneficial, makes the two concepts interact with each other. Therefore, we can confirm the idea of Slow Design as one of the concepts belonging to Sustainable Design.

Slow Design x Eco Design

The origins of Eco Design begin at the end of the 60s, with the popularization of environmental movements. However, his first approach was in 1974 with the Des-In group at the Offenbach School of Design, in Germany, with the reuse of used tires to build a sofa. (NAIME ASHTON and HUPFFER, 2012: 1514). Here, we can notice one of its main characteristics: the reuse of used materials.

The main name in Eco Design is Victor Papanek, author of the Design for the real world concept. It is he who will provide definitions for the first phase of the model, until the beginning of the 1980s, in which Eco Design was synonymous with boycotting industries and criticizing modern consumerism (CARDOSO, 2008: 246). The second phase begins in the 1980s, characterized by an increase in ecological practices such as: the beginning of consumption of Eco Design products, combating waste, reusing products and recycling materials. Thus forming what Eco Design is today: a concept that seeks to bring an ecologically correct and beneficial design, which is economically viable (PAZMINO, 2007: 5).

Eco Design has some aspects similarly shared with Slow Design. However, it is not possible to completely equate the two, mainly because the first still participates in the current economic and productive model, one of the items criticized by Slow Design and its mother movement. For Slow Design, it is correct to encompass these three aspects: ecologically beneficial, economically viable and socially equitable. However, Eco Design only encompasses the first two and does not encompass social well-being, an essential point for the Slow Movement and its ramifications.

Chart 4: Eco Design VS Slow Design.

Source: adapted from the work of Ana Verónica Pazmino, 2019.

Eco Design	Slow Design
Large scale of production	Small scale of production
Local and global market	Local market
Clean Technology	Clean Technology
Market oriented	Virtuous market oriented
3Rs: Recycling, Reuse, Reutilization	3Rs and the appreciation of manual crafts and the use of sustainable materials
Medium and High cost	Medium and High cost

Diminish the impact on the environment throughout the product life cycle	Diminish the impact on the environment throughout the product's life cycle and contribute to fair production and trade
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Slow Design x Design for the real world

In the 1970s, designer Victor Papanek published his book *Design for the real world* (1971) as a way of changing the face of design at that time. For the author, design was having its functions changed by fashion and true human needs were being put aside.

In his book, the designer plays an essential role in building a product. The author tells how this position lost its true purpose due to the desire of big brands to produce more and more without an effective meaning.

Papanek sees the role of the artist beyond simply designing objects, he gives life to different possibilities in human experience, that is, he acts directly in solving basic needs. He has moral and social responsibilities (PAPANEK, 1985: s/p).

Regarding design, Papanek created one whose main objective is to support human needs, but he also presented in his book different design proposals that work on social problems. This point is interesting because the writer wanted to bring up the possibility of ordinary people being their own designers. The ideal product is one that relates to social and environmental issues, that is, something that brings together social design and ecological design in a single artifact, thus giving rise to a design for the real world. (PAPANEK, 1985: s/p)

The design proposed by Papanek served as a theoretical basis for the creation of Slow Design. Alastair Fuad-Luke, when writing for the first time about “slow design”, compared two previous models: Design for Sustainability and Design for the real world. However, Fuad-Luke believed Papanek’s vision was imaginative. In his words “[...] it is hard to see the influences of his doctrine in everyday design” (FUAD-LUKE, 2002: 3). Despite having a concern for environmental and human well-being, criticizing the culture of consumption and waste, reestablishing the importance of the designer’s role, a reading of the book clearly establishes that what Papanek proposed was a design that went beyond everyday life. An utopian design that, if established, would not keep up with current life. Although Slow Design and the Slow Movement criticize the rush of today’s world, they believe in changing habits and practical actions for today.

Conclusion

With the aim of bringing the concept of Slow Design closer to the History of Art and the History of Design, we saw that despite being a new model of design, twenty two years since its creation, it has been changing

the way of producing new objects, based on two fronts: the first is sustained within an international social movement, which preaches new models for living in an increasingly fast-paced and meaningless world; and the second that is formed from different design models over the years, to be able to materialize and become something achievable for our time.

Slow Design is a new model, characterized by a conscious and sustainable profile, which goes beyond simply making objects. It is more complex, but at the same time simple. It brings us not only new artifacts but also creates new consciousness and perceptions about what it is to be human.

In conclusion, it is possible to consider that Slow Design is a concept that identifies with many other models found within the History of Design, but one that has its own essence and brings a new path to the production of artifacts today.

Chart 5: Slow Design Characteristics.
Source: The Author, 2019.

Durable and timeless products
Fair chain of work
Considers the post-use life of the object
Prioritize a conscious consumption
Appreciation of artisanal and traditional processes
Quality above quantity
Harmony between man and nature

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