

Reform: research and teaching group designing the shape of change

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Abstract

One of the challenges teaching interaction design in computer science departments is often a lack of focus on design in various contexts and across levels of scale. Our newly created research and teaching platform at the Aarhus School of Architecture provides design courses that address this challenge. This presentation reviews examples from the design courses we teach at the IT Product Design Bachelor and Master programs at the Aarhus University's Department of Computer Science. These courses focus on interaction work that takes place away from the traditional screen and keyboard, and into the lives of people interacting in the physical world. The courses highlight the focus on the physical form, social interaction, attention to various levels of scale and solution sets that may include a mix of physical form, digital tools, and/or services. In this talk, examples are provided showing how sketching and prototyping early and throughout the process can open the design space when designing for people in the contemporary urban context. More details about the research platform can be found on the platform website: <http://reform.aarch.dk>

Keywords: Reform, Urban Intervention, Shape Changing Interfaces

Author Bio: Tim Merritt is assistant professor at the Aarhus School of Architecture, and holds a Ph.D. from the National University of Singapore. He has been involved with the design and research of various technologies including social and physical interaction, cooperative games, tools for creativity and work contexts, biological media, and interactive art installations.

Recognizing that the rapid advances in materials research, digital technology, and manufacturing processes could dramatically change the way we live, work, and play, his research focuses on possible futures through design experiments to invite discussion and critical reflection. His current work involves exploring shape-changing interfaces, technology as tools for design and creativity, and investigations into social responses to technology.

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