

# Pop-up city : the city as multimedia interface

a research project investigating multimediality in the city space, the role of the graphic/screen designer in this space, and the characteristics of screen versus paper.

## INTRODUCTION

Futuristic images of animated billboards, talking cereal boxes and holographic objects have appeared in science-fiction films already for decades. Now they have become part of our daily reality. Developments in the field of information technology have reached the point that such phenomena are no longer only fiction.

*Where once the lightshow of Times Square in New York was a rare example of media presence, nowadays most metropolises have their centres wrapped in electronic screens of all sorts. The senses of the average person are continuously triggered, stimulated and enhanced.*

Mediapolis: Popular Culture and the city, Alex de Jong and Marc Schuilenberg

In many Chinese cities this is no different:

giant screens throughout the streets advertise various products and services, in the bus and subway smaller screens inform, entertain and sell. Ticket vending machines require our touch, and as everyone is transported to work, school, shoppingmall etcetera, their eyes are glued to the screens of their mobile phone as they send or read messages, play games, or check their email. Standing in the shaking train, handheld Sony playstations help the time pass quicker.

In the Guangzhou subway I rarely see books or papers being read...at least half of the commuters are holding some type of screen, or staring at one of the tv's in the train.

*At every corner of the street digital messages are beaming the latest denim frenzy of Levi's, the thirst quenching promise of Coca-Cola and the cool-chic of D&G. Blown-up TV-screens and message boards inform us non-stop about news and weather forecasts. (...). These are all digital signs. There are also analogue images: slogans, stickers, graffiti and posters on every possible surfaces of the city battle for our attention. The city is now a collection of media that have merged into each other.*

Mediapolis: Popular Culture and the city, Alex de Jong and Marc Schuilenberg

How does this affect the practice of designers?

*Analog and digital media, personal and mass communication, messy everyday culture and rigorous formal construction - future designers will need to work with all these elements, not as contradictions, but as fields of productive tension.*

Snake Rituals and Switching Circuits - the blurring lines between mass and personal communication, 'old' and 'new' media, Florian Cramer

## ASSIGNMENT

### PART I - RESEARCH

- I A > Make an overview of the features of print, and of the features of the screen. What do screens and paper have in common, and in what ways do they differ?  
> format: put this information in a doc, pdf or ppt document.
- I B > Make a photographic essay\* of the use of multimedia in the public and private space of Guangzhou. Look both at personal and mass communication (i.e. cellphones and jumbotrons)  
\* 论文 lùnwén  
> format: you're free to choose either for print or the screen (pdf, ppt, swf, avi, mov)

### PART II - MAKE

- II A Design a multimedial "poster" (or posters) taking into account the characteristics that you listed in I A. This is NOT a print poster, but a screen poster. Ensure that your poster is NOT just a moving version of a print poster. How could image and text (and sound?) behave in a screen poster?
- II B Context  
Choose a location somewhere in Guangzhou where you would ideally like to place your poster. Make a demo, model or simulation of your poster in this space. This demo can be either in print (for example in the form of a collage) or an animation, 3D-rendering or any other digital form.

## PLANNING

- 10 december - mutual introduction, introduction of assignment  
11 december - students show and discuss the results of I A,  
li ye gives introduction of her own work  
17 december - students show and discuss the progress of I B  
18 december - students show and discuss the results of I B  
21 december - students show first sketches and ideas for II A  
22 december - students show first sketches and ideas for II A  
28 december - students show and discuss the results for II A and make a start on II B  
29 december - final presentation of II B

## PRACTICAL INFO

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