



Future Technologies: Designing with vision

Future Design Tools

Designers are creative people, but we all need some help with our creativity at some times...

We've had computer-aided design, or CAD as we call it, since the 1950s, but even today CAD has problems at the creative end, the front end of design. It's too slow and cumbersome

What we need is something which is fast and not slow, we need something which is loose and not precise, we need something which is artistic and not mathematical.

.....and this system is intended to address that problem.

The 'Designing with Vision' project is part of a major design research programme at the Open University.

It's a collaboration with the University of Leeds and is funded by the Leverhulme Trust ... and I think what they liked about it was that it was innovative and ground-breaking

The project is founded on some earlier work where we enabled designers to isolate one of the shapes in their designs, put it in to the computer, and that generated variations on that shape.

But that was very time consuming ...

We thought to speed it up we could link the early work with eye-tracking

Eye-tracking is a relatively new technology, but it allows us to identify where people are looking ...

... that way, the computer can look at where you're looking, identify the shapes and then turn out new shapes in response to what you're looking at.

It's just like someone looking over your shoulder and drawing on the outside of your pad.

Of course, like humans the system's going to come up with good ideas, bad ideas and crazy ideas

It's not trying to tell you where you should go, it's offering you possibilities of where you could go ...

.... and the really exciting thing about this project is that potentially it could learn what your preferences are, it could become your design colleague who helps you, stimulates you, generates ideas with you and understand what it is that you're working on and what you want to see ...

... the implications are huge it could have a global effecton the design industries.

But the really amazing thing about the project is that we might be able to find a system and a tool which unlocks the creativity ability of everybody....