

arts and humanities

Normal

memory, invisibility and meaning on the objects

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Abstract

In 2006, Naoto Fukasawa and Jasper Morrison creates the *Super Normal* exhibition, in which ordinary objects are exposed questioning the increasingly elitist role of design and suggesting an alternative vision. The choice of objects not only expressed their individual views, but also the approach of all the authors exposed, serving as a basis for the expansion of the concept of *Super Normal* for a concept of *normality*. More comprehensive, built based on the concepts of each author mentioned, the idea of *normal* isolates the reactions to special, systematizes them on criteria of time and space, and seeks to absorb the work of many other authors and critics who discuss the product of similar points of view.

The past decades have been characterized by an increasing blurring of the design, which reflecting a day-by-day increasingly complex, can no longer be regarded as closed activity in the project and finished product. Its scope has increased and dispersed in smaller markets, extending their reach and their importance, turning it into quantitative and inflationary term. The growing attention that dramatized its relationship with consumption, noise on the shelves and the shallowness of the generalization of a project perspective focused on new media, validating a narcissistic approach, and proceedings released from dialogue with industry, made it synonymous with special.

This work seeks to confirm and reflect on the existence of a universe of concrete products and approaches that consciously share this notion of the current context in the first place, suggesting alternate routes and reactions resulting from the practice and discourse. Secondly seeks to examine whether such a reaction can be considered as a movement. Starting from a literature review, and from the reflection on an universe of products of everyday life, thirdly searches to interpret and organize the various strategies of rejection of the concept of special design. Opposing approaches to the demand of special, results a base idea of normal, normal without banality as expressed in the exhibition *Super Normal*. The extension to a larger universe of products, feedback and authors, results the idea of normal as a broader concept, still composed of smaller, more specific and concrete concepts. The Organization and interpretation of these approaches result in a triangle of concepts that build the notion of normal on the demand of *evolution*, *invisibility* and *freedom*. *Evolution* is built by the use of memory and knowledge, based on the improvement of the things we already have and on the experiences we built around them, on objects familiarity. Also exploring Carl Jung's concept of *Archetype* and James Gibson's idea of *Affordance*, it bases the design, redesign and reuse on culture and accumulated knowledge. *Invisibility* is suggested by integration and dilution of product and project in everyday life in a natural, non-invasive, way. The idea is explored by blurring products into background, projecting things as part of landscape, hiding the objects in the panorama, neutralizing them as well as the visibility of the authors work, of the design involved. *Freedom* appears as a connection between ideas so far considered contradictory, the evolutionary and memory values inherited from post-modernist approach, with different, modernist, invisible and reduction based aesthetics.

The resulting work and book reflects an approach in an era, and not the whole panorama. The systematization of the concept of normal from the segmentation in smaller, more concrete ideas and identifiable products, seeks to provide organized consultation of reactions to the current dominant context, the idea of special, but more than establish rules, seeks to provide a discussion to visit, in whole or in part, during the act of designing.

Conclusion

Confirmed and systematized the existence of a set of reactions to special design, it becomes fundamental the need of defense of alternative values, culture and memory rather than invention, invisibility and integration instead of highlight and exhibitionism, humanity and imperfection as an alternative to indifference and coldness.

References

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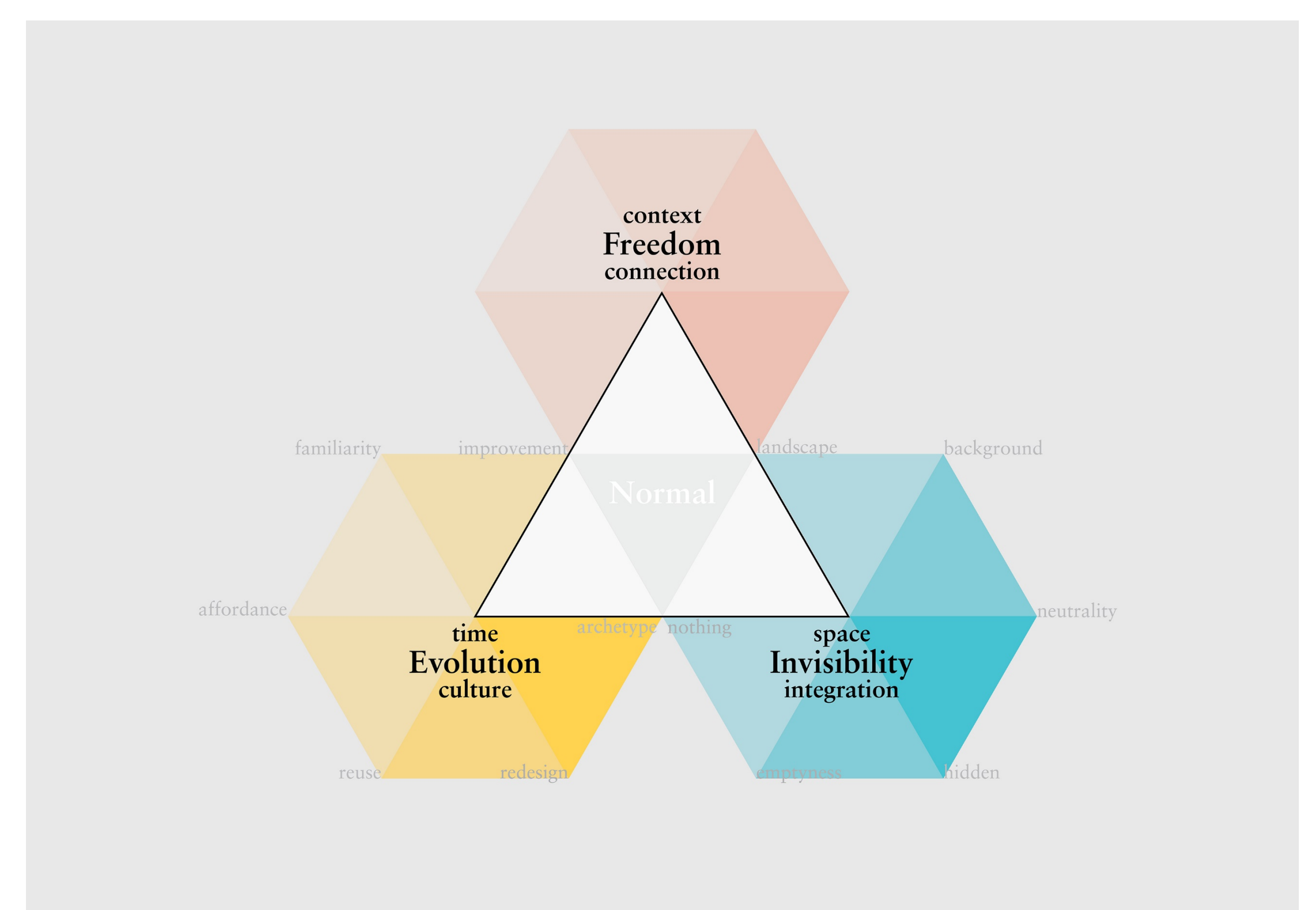
Water Kettle, Sori Yanagi, 1953-1994, Gateway Japan



TMA-7, KiBiSi, 2009, Aiaiai.



Chair_One, Konstantin Grcic, 2003, Magis.



Normal triangle
Pictures by Lara Jacinto