

Sentient Design

Tapping the Deeper Meaning of Pattern, Color and Words

By Louise M. Russell

The current exhibition “Talk to Me: Design and the Communication Between People and Objects” at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (on view through November 7) illustrates well how objects speak to us both actively and in subliminal ways. They energize our intellect, bodily functions and emotions. By embracing the original, timeless roots of elements such as pattern, color and words, designers – particularly in the health-care arena – can access richer meaning that goes deeper than functionality.

The collective history of art, archaeology and architecture can be tapped into through vibration by our morphogenic fields. Researchers believe that beauty can be appreciated and understood without one’s conscious recognition; simply experiencing it opens a doorway as we connect with an unseen dimension of information passed down through generations. Many things we interact with daily are symbolic representations of ideas, principles or forms that resonate with their early origins. Therefore, design elements can be calibrated to vibrationally illicit physiological and psychological changes within our bodies’ energy systems, much like the opening of meridians via acupuncture.

Pattern

Not simply a two-dimensional design upon an object, pattern is experienced spatially and vibrationally. A placement of objects such as furniture within a three-dimensional space induces receptive states of consciousness. Just as ants use antennae to experience patterns in nature within their environment, our energetic field is the sensory tool we employ to become aware of our surroundings. Chinese feng shui and Indian Vastu Shastra, for example, encompass optimizing subtle energy through balance and flow (i.e., patterns) within a space to enhance our connectivity.

Color

Color is a vibrational frequency affecting the human energy field, directly influencing moods and behaviors. The spectrum of visible light holds the rainbow of colors that surround us. Each color’s frequency works to realign our autonomic nervous systems to keep us healthy. It has long been understood that warmer colors energize us, while cooler ones are more sedative and relaxing. How our bodies absorb and respond to the varied frequencies of color creates physiological and psychological shifts within us, either moving toward a state of homeostasis or negative overstimulation, similar to listening to music that is too loud.

Exposure to color can be more than visual; it is additionally experienced through direct contact with a surface, such as fabric. Studies have shown that both blind and sighted people are affected by the energetic frequencies that color emits to the eye’s visual field and the body’s auric field.

Words

Japanese scientist Dr. Masaru Emoto has studied the effects that words have on water as an example of energy transference on the molecular level. His book *Messages from Water* displays arresting photographs of frozen water molecules shaped by words both spoken and written. High-powered microscopes revealed the reactionary effects: Water exposed to positive stimuli, such as the word “love,” expressed beautiful, flawlessly formed crystals, while water exposed to negative stimuli generated ugly, deformed crystals. Since our bodies are made up of 70 percent water, such studies might offer implications for potential change personally and globally through a harnessing of words. Additional research supports the theory that our DNA composition is programmable by language and thoughts, merely from their frequencies. And holistic doctors, spiritual teachers and healers have long prescribed affirmations (i.e., healing

words) to their patients to great effect.

Opening ourselves to understanding design beyond statistical analysis and technical specifications is paramount to reaching a higher ground of sentient design. Understanding principles of subtle energy within objects can allow us to create textiles, furniture, lighting and products that wed interconnectedness and metaphysical interaction to build environments that enrich our well-being. FC

Louise M. Russell, principal of Interior Elixir, is a textile designer who studies the spiritual aspects and recuperative therapies of subtle energies. A proponent of vibrational wellness, Russell focuses on merging the worlds of design and healing. She was responsible for originating Carnegie’s Philosophy division, which, for the first time in textiles, aims its focus on fabrics that resonate toward affirming wellness. Through her studies with some of the world’s most renowned experts, Russell has concentrated her research on sound, color, light and homeopathy.

