Inspædia: Changing the Landscape of Cultural Reflection and Influence Through User Experience Design

Paulo Maldonado[1,2,3,4(✉)], Leonor Ferrão[1,2], and Pablo Ermida[1,3]

[1] Centro de Investigação em Território, Arquitetura e Design, (CITAD), Universidades Lusíada,
Rua da Junqueira, 188-198, 1349-001 Lisbon, Portugal
{paulomaldonado,pabloermida}@inspaedia.com,
lferrao@fa.ulisboa.pt

[2] Faculdade de Arquitetura, Centro de Investigação em Arquitetura,
Urbanismo e Design (CIAUD), Universidade de Lisboa, Rua Sá Nogueira, Polo Universitário,
Alto da Ajuda, 1349-055 Lisbon, Portugal

[3] Programa de Pós-Graduação em Design, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul,
Avenida Oswaldo Aranha, nº 99, 6º andar - sala 607, Porto Alegre, RS 90035-190, Brazil

[4] Departamento de Artes Visuais e Design, Escola de Artes, Antiga Fábrica Leões,
Universidade de Évora, Estrada dos Leões, 7000-208 Évora, Portugal

Abstract. This article presents and encourages use of Inspædia, the online platform for inspiring collaborative and interactive intelligence. Inspædia's launch will take place in Los Angeles and will have the *8th AHFE* as its backdrop. GET INSPIRED is the provocative and motivational call to action that appears when inspædiers (collaborative visual storytellers) access the online platform at www.inspaedia.com. This is the possible future that inspædiers, when using the platform, feed with new content, new relationships between content, collections of favorite things and navigation trails, helping to collaboratively generate (individual and collective) inspiration, as well as enriching new knowledge by proactively contributing to "BEING innovation".

Keywords: Inspiration · Design · Collaborative intelligence · Content curation · Inspædia · Inspædiers · www.inspaedia.com · Innovation · User experience design (UXD) · Interaction design (IxD)

1 Get Inspired

GET INSPIRED is the provocative and motivational motto that appears when inspædiers (collaborative visual storytellers) access the online platform at <www.inspaedia.com>.

Inspiration[1] means "encouragement, enthusiasm, genius, incentive, influence, insight,[2] motivation, revelation, vision, afflatus, animus, approach, arousal, awakening, brainchild, brainstorm, creativity, elevation, exaltation, fancy, flash, hunch, illumination, impulse, motive, muse, notion, rumble, spark, spur, stimulation, thought, whim, deep thing" [1]. The *Visual Thesaurus* relates *inspiration* to "idea, thought, stirring, divine guidance, intuition, brainchild, inhalation, breathing in, intake, aspiration" and *inspire* to "instigate, prompt, occasion, enliven, exalt, invigorate, animate, revolutionize, breathe in, inhale, cheer, exhort, pep up, root on, urge, urge on, barrack" (Fig. 1).
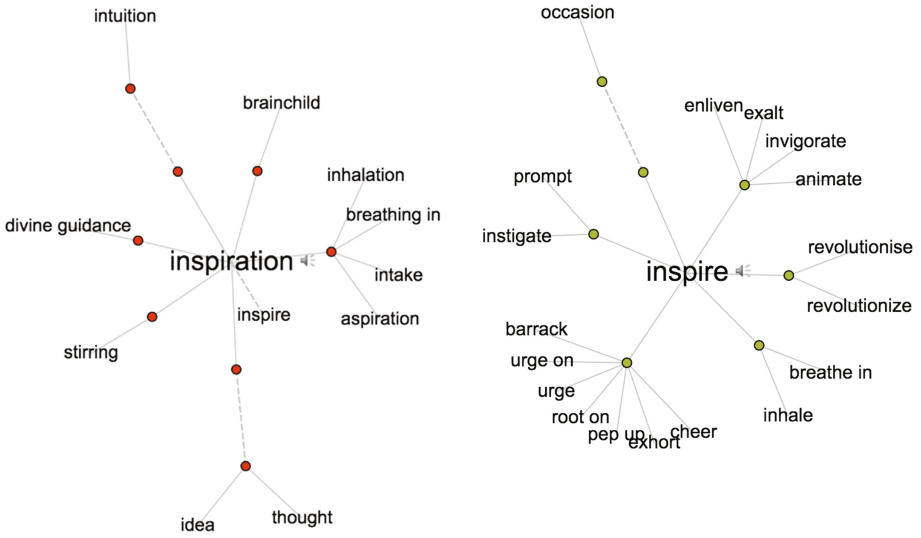

Fig. 1. INSPIRATION and INSPIRE, https://www.visualthesaurus.com/app/view.

The concept of *inspiration* makes up part of the word *inspædia* (**ins**piration + encyclo**paedia**). "In-Spiration originally meant receiving a breath of divinity. In modern parlance psychoanalysts refer to it as a 'moment of insight' and behaviorists 'an act of intuition'; most of us rely on the metaphoric 'bolt from the blue'" [2]. Designers know that inspiration comes from a lot of work. As for the "divine breath", the allusion comes from the action of the Muses, daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (personification

---

[1] Inspiration comes from the Latin noun *inspiratio* and from the verb *inspirare*. *Inspirare* is a compound term resulting from the Latin prefix *in* (inside, into) and the verb *spirare* (to breathe) [3].

[2] Herbert J. Walberg considered that the nature of insight in science or in art encouraged common cognitive skills: imagery, language and memory [4]. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and R. Keith Sawyer distinguished the creative processes in science from creative processes in art and they identified two types of creative insight – fast and slow [5] – which correspond to two different types of problems: insight problems, which encourage analogical thinking and are the most common in design [6, 7], and long time-frame processes, which mainly involve the reconceptualization resulting from combination and abstraction operations [8].

of memory and one of the six female Titans), over poets and musicians. However, none of them inspired the visual arts: Calliope inspired heroic poetry and rhetoric, Clio was the muse of history, Erato the muse of elegy, Euterpe the muse of music, Polyhymnia the muse of lyric poetry, Talia the muse of comedy and Terpsichore the muse of dance. For the Ancient Greeks, poetry was closer to music and dance than to painting, sculpture or architecture [9], i.e. they did not identify the creative act as such (in the same way, the term theory was meant to designate contemplation and research). Let us then think about poetry, music and dance. In dialogue with the rhapsode Ion, Socrates discusses "art" and "divine force", establishing a parallel between a magnet and the chain of inspiration.[3]

This *chain-of-inspiration* image is very suggestive for the Inspædia conceptual model, although we do not claim to raise the maximum level of inspiration – which for the Ancient Greeks was equivalent to madness (because "when it comes by a gift of the gods, it is a noble thing".[4] The analogy established by Plato (put in Socrates' mouth) is interesting, since the processes of innovation and design need *inspiration to "see" the future*. However, to shape the future, contrary to what the Greeks believed, it is not necessary to enter into a trance, or read the birds' flight or song.

Let us now focus on two other fundamental concepts for *inspiration*: *fantasy* and *imagination*. They are part of the metadiscourse of art, but in the disciplinary field of design they were used very sparingly until the mid-1970s. Let us start with the oldest concept, which is the first one (fantasy). Eustathius of Thessalonica (c. 1110-1198 AD) attributes the narratives that inspired the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to a woman named Fantasia, who was an Egyptian poet. According to the Latin translation of the Greek word (φαντασία), *phantasia* means "thing seen"; it is a human faculty that enables us to have a mental representation of an object in its absence, according to the definition by Quintilian (c. 35-c. 100 AD), equivalent to the definition of *imagination*, although

---

3 [533c] (…) I do observe it, Ion, and I am going to point out to you [533d] what I take it to mean. For, as I was saying just now, this is not an art in you, (…) but a divine power, which moves you like that in the stone which Euripides named a magnet (…). For this stone not only attracts iron rings, but also imparts to them a power whereby they in turn are able to do the very same thing as the stone, [533e] and attract other rings; (…). In the same manner also the Muse inspires men herself, and then by means of these inspired persons the inspiration spreads to others, and holds them in a connected chain. For all the good epic poets utter all those fine poems not from art, but as inspired and possessed, and the good lyric poets likewise; [534a] just as the Corybantian worshippers do not dance when in their senses, so the lyric poets do not indite those fine songs in their senses, but when they have started on the melody and rhythm they begin to be frantic, and it is under possession (…) that the soul of the lyric poets does the same thing, by their own report. For the poets tell us, I believe, that the songs they bring us are the sweets they cull from honey-dropping founts [10].

4 [244c] otherwise they would not have connected the very word mania with the noblest of arts, that which foretells the future, by calling it the manic art. No, they gave this name thinking that mania, when it comes by gift of the gods, is a noble thing, but nowadays people call prophecy the mantic art, tastelessly inserting a T in the word. So also, when they gave a name to the investigation of the future which rational persons conduct through observation of birds and by other signs, since they furnish mind (*nous*) [11].

that term is not used. The term *fantasy* comes from a verb that means "to bring forth", "to shine", "to appear before the soul"; the same verb is at the origin of the word *phantom*, which means "to have memories", "dreams", "hallucinations". The Greek term *fantasy* is equivalent to the Latin word *imagination*, which comes from *imaginem* (the accusative of *imago*).

It has the same root as *imitarii* (this is why it was synonymous with *imitation by images*). The image is not confused with the thing, even when it presents itself to the senses, but is a representation of the thing. Therefore, Plato devalued the image and, by extension, the imagination, because they mislead – the former because it is the lowest degree of the real; the latter because it is the lowest degree of knowledge. However, it makes it possible to produce representations and, as such, it is an activity of the spirit, i.e. it reproduces what is absent and produces new combinations. To combine means mixing, eliminating, adding and reducing, but also establishing associations and analogies. Imagining can be synonymous with guessing, conjecturing, presuming, speculating.

Brann says that "imagination occurs probably most often in the language of literary criticism, where I. A. Richardson […] distinguishes the following six connotations. The imagination is a capacity for the production of a vivid, usually visual, image; for the employment of figurative language; for empathy; for inventiveness; and for the ordering of disparate experiences in art and in science. Finally, it is […] [the] capacity for unifying, intensifying, and idealizing the appearances. One might add as a seventh meaning that of sensibility" [13].

The association between the terms *imagination* and *imitation* has left behind a trace of faithfulness to the real, while *fantasy* has become an activity of the spirit that is further from the real, so it is not surprising that it is used in this disciplinary context much more sparingly. The word *fantasy* designates a type of composition for key instruments in the baroque, classical and romantic periods (harpsichord, clavichord, celesta, organ, pianoforte and piano) and for other instruments in the contemporary era [14]. It involves *improvisation* (which in baroque music is synonymous with ornamentation and variation within the same main melody). In this context, it is synonymous with ability to invent, applicable both to the musical composition itself and to how it is played. Extrapolating, it can be a *way of overinterpreting* [15] and, in this sense, it is useful for design thinking.

Let us look using a short memory and wander as nomads instead of delving into history, as Deleuze and Guattari [16] suggested, i.e. avoiding sequential and systematic ordering and favoring erratic paths, making the most of the absence of pre-defined contexts.

2 Changing the Landscape of Cultural Reflection and Influence

Inspædia constitutes a kind of revolution in perception, because it enables a new kind of viewing and use of related content, as well as providing a new kind of interface and interaction. It promotes non-linear thought, productive thought (high creativity) and inspiration – a memorable and playful user experience.

The Inspædia landing page explains the use that one may expect to make of Inspædia, in a two-way perspective of productive collaboration. Scrolling through the landing page reveals a narrative that characterizes a new digital environment to stimulate reflection and cultural influence, which includes the content and the relationships established among the pieces of content, among all the inspædiers, their trails and their collections of favorite things.

Each inspædier proactively contributes to extraordinary curatorship by using Inspædia to establish new improbable relationships with existing content (at least unlikely for other inspædiers), or by creating new ones from which new possibilities for cross-pollination of ideas, cultural reflection, contamination and enlightened influence can occur. At the origin of the Inspædia user experience design (UXD) and interaction design (IxD) concepts were, as sources of inspiration and among many other references [17–23, 25, 27], the *ten laws* and the *three keys of simplicity* [28], the aphorism *form follows function* [29], *the ten principles for good design* [30] and the aphorism *form follows emotion* [31], which can be summarized as *simplicity*, *playfulness* and *inspiration* [32]. Also for this reason, the landing page chromatically spans the (visible) solar spectrum without fixing on any specific color, inviting the community to participate, collaborate and contribute with their knowledge to build a network of collaborative and interactive intelligence.

"(…) Inspiring experiences 'to be innovation together' is the Inspædia ethos. (…) Welcome to the world of possible dreams. For the Ones who are intellectually curious. Discover infinite possibilities to update and refine your **imagination** and build new **insights** and foresights. Inspire yourself. (…) Be inspired by a memorable experience in a new **landscape of cultural reflection and influence**. For the Ones who have a passion for being connected to the unexpected. Explore and share improbable relationships between things and people to reach a new level of experience(s). Inspire others. (…) For the Ones who are shaping the future. Some of the Ones are content curators. They are selected experts from different cultural areas that constantly feed Inspædia with new related, meaningful content for the delight of the Inspædier community. Inspædiers are collaborative storytellers who are always looking for the next productive spark. Be One of the Ones. Be an inspædier. (…) Your next move to take part in a meaningful and playful inspiration experience. Join Inspædia" [33]. We hope you will and look forward to your input.

References

1. Inspiration. Roget's 21st Century Thesaurus, 3rd edn. http://www.thesaurus.com/browse/inspiration?s=t (2013). Accessed 8 Mar 2017
2. Fletcher, A.: The Art of Looking Sideways, p. 74. Phaidon Press, Phaidon (2001)
3. Inspiration. On line Etymology Dictionary. http://www.dictionary.com/browse/inspiration (2019). Accessed 8 Mar 2017
4. Sternberg, R.J. (ed.): The Nature of Creativity. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (1988)
5. Sternberg, R.J., Davidson, J.E. (eds.): The Nature of Insight. The MIT Press, Cambridge (1995)
6. Cross, N.: Designerly Ways of Knowing. Birkhäuser Verlag, London (2007)
7. Cross, N.: Design Thinking: Understanding How Designers Think and Work. Berg Publishers, Oxford (2011)
8. Welling, H.: Four mental operations in creative cognition: the importance of abstraction. Creat. Res. J. **2–3**, 163–177 (2007)
9. Tatarkiewicz, W.: History of Six Ideas: An Essay in Aesthetics. Martinus Nijhoff, Leiden (1980)
10. Plato: Ion. http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0180:text=Ion. Accessed 1 Mar 2017
11. Plato: Phaedrus. http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0174%3Atext%3DPhaedrus. Accessed 28 Feb 2017
12. Gendler, T.: Imagination. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2016). https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/imagination/. Accessed 9 Mar 2017
13. Brann, E.T.H.: The World of the Imagination: Sum and Substance, p. 20. Rowman & Littlefield, Savage (1991)
14. Sadie, S. (ed.): The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd edn. Grove, Oxford (2001)
15. Eco, U., et al.: Interpretazione e sovrainterpretazione (Interpretation and Overinterpretation). Bompiani, Milano (1995)
16. Deleuze, G., Guattari, F.: Rhizome. Éditions de Minuit, Paris (1976)
17. Buurman, G.M.: Total Interaction: Theory and Practice of a New Paradigm for the Design Disciplines. Birkhäuser, Basel (2005)
18. Sterling, B.: Shaping Things. MIT Press, Cambridge (2005)
19. Chaoui, C.: Encyclopedia of Human Computer Interaction. Idea Group Reference, Hershey (2006)
20. Tapscott, D., Williams, A.D.: Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything. Portfolio, New York (2006)
21. Tidwell, J.: Designing Interfaces. O'Reilly, Sebastopol (2006)
22. Buxton, B.: Sketching User Experiences: Getting the Design Right and the Right Design. Morgan Kaufmann, San Francisco (2007)
23. Anderson, S.: Seductive Interaction Design: Creating Playful, Fun and Effective User Experience. New Riders, Berkeley (2011)
24. Hoekman, R.: Designing the Obvious: A Common Sense Approach to Web and Mobile Application Design. New Riders, Berkeley (2011)
25. Mathis, L.: Designed for Use: Create Usable Interfaces for Applications and the Web. The Pragmatic Bookshelf, Raleigh (2011)
26. Weinschenk, S.: 100 Things Every Designer Needs to Know About People. New Riders, Berkeley (2011)

27. Lima, M.: Visual Complexity: Mapping Patterns of Information. Princeton Architectural Press, New York (2013)
28. Maeda, J.: The Laws of Simplicity. MIT Press, Cambridge (2006)
29. Sullivan, L.H.: The tall office building artistically considered. Lippincott's Mag. 403–409 (1896)
30. Rams, D.: Ten principles for good design (2016). https://www.vitsoe.com/eu/about/good-design. Accessed 2 Mar 2017
31. Esslinger, H.: Design and emotion (2006). http://www.design-emotion.com/2006/08/15/getting-emotional-with-hartmut-esslinger/. Accessed 3 Mar 2017
32. Maldonado, P., et al.: Inspædia: [almost] everything about simplicity, playfulness and inspiration. In: Soares, M., et al. (eds.) Advances in Ergonomics Modeling, Usability & Special Populations, Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing, vol. 486, pp. 231–243. Springer, Heidelberg (2016). doi:10.1007/978-3-319-41685-4_21
33. Inspaedia. https://www.inspaedia.com/#welcome (2016). Accessed 5 Mar 2017