EXPERIMENTATION : A LABYRINTH / A MAZE

Phebe Valencia
Staf Pengajar Program Studi Desain Interior Universitas Pelita Harapan
phebe.valencia@uph.edu

ABSTRACT
In developing designs expertise we need collaboration in various fields of science, there is no design can exist in isolation. Design is always related, sometimes in very complex ways, to an entire constellation on influencing situations and attitudes. What we call a good design is one which achieves integrity – that is, unity or wholeness – in balanced relation to its environment. From collaboration we will know how to think differently, tackle matters from a new perspective and enhance knowledge. Therefore, to develop this design expertise, a collaborative project between fine arts and interior design is done, where the project aims to tell the meaning of a space by using illustration and installation. At the end, the expectations of this project can bring a deeper understanding of the meaningful space through a story

Keywords: design, collaboration, interior, installation, illustration.

ABSTRAK
Dalam mengembangkan keahlian mendesain dibutuhkan kerjasama dengan beberapa bidang keilmuan, karena tidak ada desain yang timbul dengan sendirinya. Desain selalu berkaitan, terkadang dengan cara yang kompleks yang mempengaruhi segala situasi dan sikap. Desain yang baik adalah desain yang dapat mencapai kesatuan atau keutuhan integritas, serta memiliki keseimbangan dalam lingkup desain. Perkembangan pola pikir, kemampuan menyelesaikan masalah, dan memahami lebih mendalam akan pengetahuan dapat dilakukan melalui kolaborasi. Oleh karenanya, untuk mengembangkan keahlian mendesain ini maka suatu projek kolaborasi antara fine arts dan desain interior dilakukan, dimana projek ini bertujuan untuk menceritakan makna suatu ruang dengan menggunakan ilustrasi dan instalasi. Hingga pada akhirnya, harapan dari projek ini dapat membawa pemahaman yang lebih mendalam akan ruang yang bermakna melalui suatu cerita.

Kata kunci: desain, kolaborasi, interior, instalasi, ilustrasi.

1. INTRODUCTION
1.1 Background
In developing designs expertise we need collaboration in various fields of science, as explained by George Nelson, “No design can exist in isolation. It is always related, sometimes in very complex ways, to an entire constellation of influencing situations & attitudes. What we call a good design is one which achieves integrity – that is, unity or wholeness – in balanced relation to its environment. (Nelson 2007) From collaboration we will know how our partners think, see and solve problems and from that we can learn how to think differently and tackle matters from a new perspective. Therefore, to design this project I collaborated with my classmate, which has experience in graphic design and fine arts. From this collaboration we will develop a deep understanding of our respective fields. For myself, I deepened my understanding of space, on how to use space, and how to create a meaningful space giving it a clear purpose.
1.2 Problem Statement
This project is to fuse the uses of space with illustration and installation, and the key question to shape our approach is:
- How to create a meaningful space?
- How can people be guided in the space and on the use of various materials and their relationship within a space?
- How to use a particular space effectively based on needs?
- How to create interaction space?

1.3 Objectives
Inspired by chaos in the world where we live and the desire to solve problems. From history we can see that many changes which aim to achieve good results the undeniable doubt is that the impact of these changes has brought chaos inside. Not all the changes are well received by everyone. For example an immense chaos has undertaken the world recently; from the revolutions that are happening to most of the Arab countries, to the catastrophic disasters which raised when Japan was hit by tsunami after a massive earthquake. However, this chaos is not something new that the human race has witnessed similar circumstances through the centuries. On a smaller scale, in which chaos occurs in our personal lives, for example the existing problems, how to be selected and the decision to be made, these are puzzles that need to be resolved. Caroline Adams says: "Your life is a sacred journey. And it is about change, growth, discovery, movement, transformation; continuously expanding your vision of what is possible, stretching your soul, learning to see clearly and deeply, listening to your intuition, taking courageous challenges at every step along the way. You are on the path... exactly where you are meant to be right now. And from here, you can only go forward, shaping your life story into a magnificent tale of triumph, of healing of courage, of beauty, of wisdom, of power, of dignity, and of love."

So, the chaos that is happening in this world lately has inspired my course mate & myself to collaborate on a project which is called: a Labyrinth/a Maze.

Picture 1. The Types of Labyrinth

2. THE PROJECT
The picture of the chaos in the world look like a labyrinth or a maze that have to be solved, and we are all on the path in this world and the labyrinth or a maze is a model of that path (http://www.lessons4living.com/labyrinth.htm, access May 2011).

A labyrinth and a maze, is in the form of a complex branching passage through which the solver must find a route. Both maze and labyrinth denote a complex and confusing series of pathways, but technically the maze is distinguished from the labyrinth, as the labyrinth has a single through-route with twists and turns but without branches, and is not designed to be as difficult to navigate. The pathways and walls in a maze or labyrinth are fixed (pre-determined) – puzzles where the walls and paths can change during the game are categorized as tour puzzles. The Cretan labyrinth is the
oldest known maze (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maze, access 2011). However, the labyrinth and the maze are much alike: they both indicate a path or a journey whether it's smooth with one way or includes many twists and turns, they both have "a goal to be reached, and a starting point to try to reach it from", and still the choice whether to enter or not to walk the path must be done with each of them. Thus, is similar to a real life journey which is divided into three stages; The Start, The Process, The End. Every individual would have experienced the three stages, and here we are all the same, but the only difference will be in the choices we take, and these choices will shape the patterns of our lives. Some may walk through their lives by just moving straight and not taking any risks, not making any judgments, and some may live their lives experiencing various options, through different choices, making mistakes and starting over till they reach to the finishing point. Of this, one of the major uses of the labyrinth / maze is as a problem solving device because it is based on the "threelfold path" (Artress, 2006) as it has a starting point / entrance, the process/path, and the end.

- **The entrance** is where we should pause and think of a problem that concern us; it is a starting point, an opening door for various opportunities, diverse challenges and enthusiasm.

- **The journey** is the most important stages of how human beings survive (happy and sad, relief and fear, etc.). These experiences will form the habits and patterns of every human life; it will be different and unique from one another. At this stage also describe about while we are walking the path we start thinking deeper about our problems, looking at it from all aspects, directions, going into the core, making judgments and conclusions coming to closed doors, turning and starting over.

- **The end** is a final stage that shows the relief, and success. Whatever is experienced by humans during his life, eventually they have to finish it. Until we finally find our way and reach the perfect solution.

### 2.1. Project Outline

**Project Name**: The Labyrinth/Maze  
**Theme**: Chaos in the World  
**Questions**: How to use a particular space effectively based on needs?  
How to create interaction space?  
**Materials**: Bamboos, Wires, White Balls, Fabric, Wood  
**Location**: Backyard of a house  
**The Aim**: Philosophic & Inspirational intention behind designing & establishing a labyrinth / maze was to create a hope especially for those who are in search for meaning and guidance.

### 2.2. Method

First of all we choose the theme, which is ‘Chaos in the World’. Chaos means:

- **Abyss/Gap, Empty Space, Freewill, Mass, Beginning/Starting, General**  
**Confusion, Formless, Unpredictability**,  
(http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/chaos, access May 2011)  
- **ABYSS**: the Space / location, Deep / Void, Collapse / Disaster / Catastrophe, Disagreement  
(https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/abyss, access May 2011)

A space that is not used and also does not attract attention, that's our choice. To highlight something chaotic, something that is confusing in our life and became our habit. For example, time and place.
MASS: Materials.
Mass (https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/mass, access May 2011)
A unified body of matter with no specific shape, a grouping of individual parts or elements that compose a unified body of unspecified size or quantity, by using Bamboos, Wires, Iron sticks, White Balls, and Fabrics. It symbolizes a mixed up world, and chaos that is in embodied in the selection of materials as well.

CONFUSION: the Labyrinth / maze
Create a chaos embodied in the labyrinth / maze, something that is irregular, confusing, a barrier, separating the demands actors to choose their own way to get out of his bewilderment.
2.3. The Process

First, "Design implies a plan, a conscious intent" (Faimon and Weigand, 2004) too much variety whether intentionally or not can create visually chaotic atmosphere. That's why the labyrinth/maze is an ensemble of dissimilar parts joined collectively. It is a composition of straight and curve lines combined together to offer a mood of exact rigid structure yet with a feeling of naturalness and flow.

The elements are so different from each other in a matter of shape, structure, texture, and even the components, but yet we succeeded in presenting a feeling of equality, as if they are all belong together in a way that shows an exact conscious intent, and it is a designer role to make sure the audience will read that intent. So, to provide the feeling of similarity and belonging was to surround and obtain those parts in a closed environment. Afterward is to employ design principles.

- **Repetition** (with variation): to create motion and avoid monotony. For example: the white balls were different in size.
- **Contrast**: to generate a feeling of chaos and confusion. For example: use opposing elements - bamboos, wires, white balls, fabric, wood, making horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines in order to suggest a contrast in direction. Lines in general can act as a symbolic language or it can communicate emotionally through its character and direction. Horizontal lines - create a sense of roundness or resolution, suggesting a feeling of rest. Vertical lines - create a sense of energy and excitement; they communicate a feeling of loftiness and spirituality. Diagonal lines - suggest a feeling of movement or direction and activity, being neither vertical nor horizontal, they are either about to fall, or are already in motion, also, they are used to indicate depth especially when overlapping. Both repetition and contrast bringing a sense of unity to the composition, and with unity comes balance and then the disposition of harmony can be sensed through the whole installation although it appears chaotic.
- **Proportions and scale**: to provide as simple as possible an explanation of the principles governing harmony and proportion in space, proportion within a geometrical figure, a musical scale, or indeed a mathematical sequence, can be said to be "a harmonious relationship between the parts, with and within the
whole." (Boyd-Brent, Harmony and Proportion', at http://www.aboutscotland.com/harmony/harmony.html, 9th May 2011). Therefore, the laying setting of the labyrinth elements regarding to the composition of the size, color, and quantity, for example, the placement of wires and white balls which is have big quantity almost in all the space while a small quantity of bamboos was placed in one part only. Another example is about using color in the iron sticks. These iron sticks were painted in white to make it function as a barrier in the labyrinth which is more clear, thus the size of the white balls and the short length of fabric as well as high and low iron sticks arranged at this place creates harmonious proportions. (Bluemoon Original Oil Paintings, ‘Lesson #7: The Principle of Proportion’, at http://www.bluemoonwebdesign.com/art-lessons-7.asp. 9th May 2011). And scale in this labyrinth was possible for people to go through where amount and the measurement of materials was putting in scale and suitable with the space size. Interaction assumptions occur when designers scale a design, and assume that the way people and other systems interact with the design will be the same at another level of scale. For example, the design of very tall buildings involves many possible interactions that do not exist for buildings of lesser size—problems of evacuation in the case of fire, people seeking to commit suicide or base-jump off the roof, a symbolic target for terrorist attacks. These kinds of interaction effects are usually an indirect consequence of the design, and therefore can be difficult to anticipate and manage (Lidwell and friends, 2010).

Second, we sketched how the labyrinth will look like and decided the use the materials. For creating the path used iron sticks and welded joint with strips iron to make it stand. The fabric was used at the joints between the iron sticks and the purpose is to create borders. Wires joint with white balls was hanging around other material as a wall.
Third, discussion about the start point and the end point and how those points will look like. We decided to create a closed box as a starting point where the goal is to not let people see the shape and form of the labyrinth first and letting curiosity build up in them. For the end point was could be everywhere depend on how people want to finish passing through the labyrinth.

Fourth, choosing white as the main color, the reason was making this labyrinth become obvious from surrounding, clean and clear.

Fifth, choose the time that the labyrinth can be used. Night time is the best time, suitable with the concept, and the deep and dark ambiance was created. Sixth, walk through the labyrinth. The interaction stage, how people feel when walking through the labyrinth and sharing their experience.
3. RESULT AND FINDINGS

The results that we want to accomplish here are an understanding of the journey of our life. How do we pass through problems and how we choose the path to get the problems out of lives, and this labyrinth is representatives from the chaos in the world. For myself, utilizing the space here adds my sensitivity in creating a place based on need. The size of the place is not a problem, for designers is how to utilize the place based on the requirement that the purpose and goals are reached. How to use a particular space effectively based on needs?

First of all, as a designer need to understand what are the needs and problems from space user. Then the designer will create solutions to solve problems and meet the needs of users. By thinking of the very high level emotional needs we expect space to help satisfy us. Most of us here being bored, and want some amusement or entertainment. We might see this as a need for stimulation, and we demand that the space around us should provide this. On the whole we also seek to avoid high levels of uncertainty and change, and we require a degree of stability and structure in our live. We might see this as a need for security, and so we require spaces to keep us secure (Lawson, 2001). Be aware that the existing space must be utilized effectively, to maintain an existing environment by not opening new lands but to maximize the space that exist today. A space will be valuable and used if the space can meet the needs of users. To take advantage of existing space we need to understand what drives us forward in life, and what our expectations and demands are from space. Then we shall explore how we see and understand the space (Lawson, 2001). How to create interaction space?

An interaction occurs when the space and the users dialogue with each another. As we know that dialogue is the interaction of two or more people who communicate their needs and understand each other. Similar to a space, if the space can meet the requirements of users and users can utilize the space well it means a dialogue between space and the user goes well. Then, by designing a labyrinth to make that space draw the attention of people around, for example this place tenants immediately wondered what it is and began to walk through and watch. It makes the place become a place visited and used.
4. SUMMARY

This collaboration project will open up our thinking, new things and how to see from different perspectives through how people from different disciplines to see and solved the problems. In addition, through this project I understood about how space can tell a story and designers creates the story through the inspiration and concept. From this story it gives the meaning to a space that will make space have an identity and it's valuable to users. Telling a story using space made the space as a language. And this is a universal language that can be read and used to have a dialogue in understanding about the function, purpose and objectives, to be achieved, and used optimally. And once again, through this project my knowledge increased about materials and provides a new challenge of applying these materials in interior design.

REFERENCES


