The Intersection of Community and Design
Models of interaction between community and design
Research sources summary

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National identity and Memorial sites:

1. The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation
Summery from http://www.renewnyc.com/

The LMDC was created in the aftermath of September 11, 2001. It was created by Governor Pataki and then-Mayor Giuliani to help plan and coordinate the rebuilding and revitalization of Lower Manhattan...LMDC is committed to an open, inclusive, and transparent planning process in which the public has a central role in shaping the future of Lower Manhattan and the surrounding communities.

Several Advisory Councils representing a broad spectrum of groups affected by the World Trade Center attacks – including victims’ families, business owners and downtown residents - regularly consult with the LMDC on issues of concern to their respective constituencies. LMDC also conducts public hearings, participates in Community Board meetings, and continuously meets with community groups, civic organizations and public officials to ensure the opinions of those who were affected by this tragedy are taken into account.

Since its inception, LMDC has worked to design and implement projects to stimulate widespread and long-term economic, cultural, and commercial growth in areas of Lower Manhattan south of Houston Street.

LMDC has recognized the importance of involving the public in the rebuilding process. They publicize their efforts and soliciting input and feedback from the public at each stage of the planning process. LMDC events like the Listening to the City town hall forum engages the public in an ongoing redevelopment dialogue and challenges, enriches and allows LMDC to formulate and refine its overall planning goals for the World Trade Center site and for Lower Manhattan. The immediate impact of this open and inclusive planning process became clear with the launching of an international search for Innovative Designers to develop new strategies for rebuilding the World Trade Center site. After the release of nine plans in December 2002, LMDC set out again on an extensive public outreach campaign that included an exhibit of the plans at the Winter Garden, two large-scale public hearings, and the posting of the plans on this website. Our efforts resulted in over 12,000 thoughtful comments from all over the City, the nation and the world.
Beyond the site, LMDC’s aims to link the revitalization of various Lower Manhattan neighborhoods with the World Trade Center redevelopment as a focal point for new and enhanced development.

Other sources: http://www.wtc2002.com/

2. A Design That Heals
Vietnam Veterans Memorial

On July 1, 1980, President Jimmy Carter signed the bill that allotted two acres of land, located under the gaze of Abraham Lincoln, to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF). The VVMF decided that the best way to find the appropriate design will be by announcing a nationwide design competition, judged by a panel of architects and artists. The VVMF hoped to design a memorial that could help people heal their emotional wounds from the war. The design challenge was to create a site that could honor the over two million Americans who served, and help the millions of family members and loved ones of the more than 58,000 dead and missing soldiers, begin to heal.

The design criteria were that the design designs: the design must be reflective and contemplative, it must be harmonious with the site, it must be inscribed with the names of the dead and missing, and it must make no political statement about war. 1,026 designers submitted their designs unanimously.

"I thought about what death is, what a loss is," remembered Lin. "A sharp pain that lessens with time, but can never quite heal over. The idea occurred to me there on the site. I had an impulse to cut open the earth. The grass would grow back, but the cut would remain." Back at Yale, it took her only three weeks to complete her design.

Since it's dedication, millions have visited "the Wall". Some come and make rubbings of names, some leave special mementos at the memorial, some simply touch the black granite and whisper a name. But perhaps most important is what the memorial has come to mean. As the design jury noted, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was, and continues to be, "a place of quiet reflection, and a tribute to those who served their nation in difficult times. All who come here can find it a place of healing." Maya Ying Lin, through her simple yet haunting design, found a way to help this nation begin to heal.

http://www.nps.gov/vive/memorial/design.htm#design

3. National identity by design
"Celebrating Australia: identity by design"
2001-11-08 until 2001-12-04
Australian Consulate-General
New York, NY, USA United States of America

Developed as part of Australia’s Centenary of Federation celebrations, the exhibition explores the symbols used to promote Australia's national identity in the 20th century. Celebrating Australia: identity by design includes familiar symbols like the kangaroo and Sydney Opera House, but also new and surprising cultural iconography such as David Lancashire’s Peace Roo poster and Mambo’s Mambo faith posters of the late 1990s, says Anne-Marie Van de Ven, curator of the exhibition.

The exhibition looks at how our national cultural identity has been promoted through graphic design and incorporated into posters, artworks, magazines, photography and film from the 1930s to now. The exhibition is structured into seven major themes: Australia’s unique environment; Indigenous contribution to Australian identity; selling significant sites; cosmopolitan part of the world; festivals and celebrations; enduring popular identities; and towards the future.

Celebrating Australia is a particularly important exhibition as it showcases the contribution Indigenous art and culture has made to Australia’s national identity, says Dr Kevin Fewster, Director of the Powerhouse Museum. It also reveals the impact iconic symbols, such as the crescent shape of the Australian continent, motifs drawn from our natural environment, the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Southern Cross constellation, Australia's beach culture and the country's most important national emblem, the Australian flag, have had in shaping our national and international image.


On line Communities:

1. Boxes and Arrows
(An example for a design community and an online community)

Boxes and Arrows is a peer-written journal. It is written by and for information, interaction and interface designers and architects dedicated to discussing, improving and promoting the work of the community, through the sharing of exemplary technique, innovation and informed opinion.

The Boxes and Arrows community use a wiki for its community collaboration. A wiki is the ultimate collaboration tool on the web. Wiki’s pages can be changed and instantly published in the web browser (no programming required). Pages are automatically created and linked to each other.
2. Kioken Design
(An example for a design firm that does not work with the community. Kioken used to work from NY, the NY firm URL does not exist. Kioken can be found in the UK. At http://www.kiokenuk.com/)

Kioken Design, Top New York Web design firm sports a killer game culture and a client list to die for: "Most studios assume that the average user is an idiot," says Davis, "and they design in a way that everyone remains an idiot. We try to design sites that at least educate the user."

Their best-known site these days is an image project for Puff Daddy's Badboy Records (U.S). "We tried to think of how to go beyond the limits of page-to-page information and create sequences of information," says Na. "It starts out much like a credit sequence and then you're in." The site has even created a new word in the Web community. "Having your Badboy" now means to have the perfect client who lets you create a project that really shows off the strengths of your firm.

But the best trick of the firm, actually, is hiring — and retaining — top talent. "This office is a playpen," says Kang, "and I wouldn't have it any other way."

Written By Joe Shepter Adobe Web Centre - Gallery - Kioken Design
http://www.adobe.co.uk/web/gallery/kioken/main.html

Gene Na (co-founder of Kioken): "We had to fire Sony the other week. They weren't listening to us, so we let them go. We actually had to get rid of Bad Boy [Entertainment] in the beginning, but they straightened up and came back. So did Sony. What the client sometimes doesn't understand is the less they talk to us, the better it is. We know what's best."

Let the celebrity death match begin. Gentlemen, I expect a good clean fight. Come out with your hands up, and may the best web paradigm win.

Written by Curt Cloninger in “A List Apart: Usability vs. Design (Mars vs. Venus)”
http://www.alistapart.com/stories/marsvenus/

3. Online Communities

Email lists, weblogs, hosting strategies, ecommerce elements, webcams, and networked games are all considered web communities. Online communities usually start around a common interest. Some companies think they can generate content or make their site attractive by having a web community as part of it, but the fact is that it will not work unless people are interested enough to participate and the benefit from participating is
valuable enough for the individuals. Web communities need investment in time and resources too. It takes monitoring of some sort or it can miss its point. Some communities monitor themselves and some need a moderator. Successful online communities are not designed, they grow to become what they are. Designers create the appropriate tools needed to make the community gather and to help appropriating existing tools for specific community.

“community is like love: hard to find, impossible to engineer, and priceless.”

Seven sites that were doing it right by Derek M. Powazek in the end of 2001
http://designforcommunity.com/essay5.html

1. **Commerce:** Amazon.com
   Amazon is the market-leader in using community functionality in a commerce environment. From wish lists to friends and favorites to trusted book reviewers to good old fashioned discussion boards, Amazon totally leads the pack.

2. **Art:** Fray.com http://fray.com/
   - Is it wrong to plug my own site? If so, sorry. Still, no one else does quite what {fray} does – using the power of personal storytelling to form community, online and off. But this feels sleazy, so I'll stop.

3. **Culture:** Kuro5hin.org http://www.kuro5hin.org/
   - Of all the Slashdot clones out there, only K5 has managed to take the flamefest format and turn it into something that's consistently thoughtful, friendly, and above all smart! Visit this site with your brain on, and be prepared for high octane conversations about technology and culture.

4. **Gaming:** Geocaching.com http://www.geocaching.com/
   - Geocaching has created a community, even though all the action takes place offline. The site merely enables the game: geeks place caches of loot out in the world somewhere, and then post the GPS coordinates to the site. The site facilitates getting those coordinates to players nearby, and the fun ensues. Then, after participants have found the cache, the come back to the site to talk all about it.

5. **Alternative:** FilePile.org http://www.filepile.org/
   - FilePile is like Napster coupled with a chaos engine. Users upload a file to a pile (movies, text, pictures, or mp3s). Each time a file gets added to the top of a pile, one gets deleted from the bottom. But that's not the point – the point is how the community chews through the files, digests them, and reposts them. Members make remixed images from things others have posted and in-jokes abound. This is the only place online where I've seen conversations take place in pixels.

   - A giant chat world made in Macromedia Flash, Habbo Hotel is visual chat done right. Create an avatar and wander around and you'll see. You've got to get close to people to talk to them, overcoming the "everyone talking at once" problem of
most chat rooms. You can even make a room of your own, and decorate it to your liking, but be warned – virtual furniture costs real money.

   CitizenX was the ultimate marriage of webcams and chat (It is closed today). The idea is simple, really. You get to look at the person you're chatting with, and they get to look back at you. But this site does it so well, they make it look so easy, and it's put together with so much love, they've blown all their competitors away.

http://www.designforcommunity.com/
http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/10.02/streetcred.html?pg=4

**Developers and Designers:**

1. **Theory.org.uk**

**Theory.org.uk – Art Lab**
The Art Lab uses creative and artistic activities as research tools to gain an insight into people's relationships with contemporary media culture. These approaches get participants doing things as a different way of getting information and understanding their relationships to a particular topic in addition to talking to them.

Examples of current projects are:

A) **Celebrities & Aspirations** Art project, building on Tate Liverpool pilot. Young people are invited to make collages and drawings about celebrities and stars, allowing an exploration of the lifestyles and aspirations that are associated with celebrity. Also considers changing perceptions of gender identities.

B) **My Favourite Things** Photography project, developed by Paul Inman as part of Bournemouth Media School's Widening Participation programme. Young people create photographs of, and reflect upon, their 'favourite things'. Exhibition and website follows soon.

C) **Mobile Art Lab** Art project. A mobile 'Art Lab' will visit a range of locations, where members of the public will be invited to make a poster for an imagined exhibition or event which they would like to see. The project explores people's fantasies and aspirations in relation to media culture.

http://www.artlab.org.uk/projects.htm

The Art Lab is directed by David Gauntlett, Professor of Media and Audiences at Bournemouth Media School.

http://www.theory.org.uk/
2. **ULab, Participatory Design Associates** helps web, software, and consumer product developers learn from their users, design with users and better understand their users so they can build better products.

ULab/PDA uses conventional user research that includes contextual inquiry by observation, interviews and usability testing; Participatory design methods that make users active part of the design team; and mobile research labs and video equipment for user research.

http://www.participatorydesign.com/

3. **MetaDesign**

MetaDesign is one of the world’s largest and most influential design consultancies. Its work is characterized by innovative use of current technologies and high-quality design, which is recognized around the world.

“When I first thought of looking for partners to start a design studio, my aim was very simple: I wanted to hang out with bright people, do cool work for demanding clients, and have a good time doing so…We have hired more for attitude than portfolios, and I like to think that we all have a pretty good idea what Meta is all about…Our work can change a client’s culture…” *Erik Spiekermann*

MetaDesign has demonstrated that the most powerful and enduring graphic communication must be built on intellectual foundations. “Design is an intellectual activity before it is a visual one” *Erik Spiekermann*

“MetaDesign, Design from the World Up” by *Fay Sweet*

**Public Art:**

1. **Reciprocal University for the Arts Project (RUAP)**

In the wake of years of youth violence in Salinas, parents, educators and law enforcement have been looking for ways to help curb the problem. The Reciprocal University for the Arts Project and RUAP Community Partner Second Chance Youth Services have teamed up to take an unusual approach to the problem.

Dynamic images about “Education? Incarceration?” for a 12-by-24 foot billboard in downtown Salinas, for kiosks at Northridge Mall and for the Monterey-Salinas Transit bus system have been created by A.C.T. To Prevent Violence, a collaboration between California State University, Monterey Bay’s Institute for Visual and Public Art students and at-risk youth from Second Chance.

http://ruap.csumb.edu/billb.html

2. "Acts of Reclamation: Communities and Artists in Partnership"
Funded by the Nathan Cummings Foundation, is a specialized grant project that pairs practicing artists with community members and organizations to create collaborative public artworks that reclaim their environment.

"Acts of Reclamation" will employ prominent visual and performing artists-in-residence to work reciprocally in established community-university partnerships to create new community based art works that emphasize collaborative narratives, authentic community participation, and an aesthetically relevant and complimentary community-artist connection.

http://ruap.csumb.edu/reclamation/

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Thanks
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