

ephemeral

CONCEPT INTRODUCTION

1

Information and content have become devalued goods. Through the excess of information its lost its value and therefore the engagement of the readers.

The internet landscape allows us seemingly countless abilities to present media, news, stories, etc. The simplicity of publishing online has led to digital pollution in which mass and speed are the norm. Most websites try to release as much content as fast as possible. The user has become attune to searching and jumping through content. So much information is jumped through that the value of that information has dropped. The online experience has dismissed interactivity and engagement to disperse information as fast as possible through as many channels as possible. I want to explore the possibilities of creating a valuable experience online. How can we regain an appreciation for an experience as apposed to simply throwing content out like the blog format we have all become accustomed too. Is this even possible online? This project aims to take a deeper look into this topic and try to create an online experience through narrative experiments.

The goal for the ephemeral project is to create value online through another form of narration. One that puts quality and experimentation as the focus. Trying to combine mixed media and user engagement to tell a story differently than what we know from traditional media. Using the power of the digital interface to uncover a new dimension in modern day narratives. Hopefully granting the user a well thought out and designed experience as apposed to the status quo on the web where the user decides when and what they want to consume.

In the following pages I will introduce you to some of the best examples of traditional media. Look at how they transfer their mediums online. Examine great examples of digital storytelling and narration. Summing it up with my thoughts on the digital medium and how narration and content can be made more engaging through interaction design with examples of some people making strides in the domain.

2

Today the internet has become the premier way we digest media of all types. News, TV, social interaction, Stories, etc. The internet is now on a multitude of devices from your TV to your phone.

The way we consume the media through the medium internet has changed how we consume the media and the value we place in it.

Years ago, the format vinyl defined music. It has a physical presence and could only carry a certain amount or length of music. Through this musicians crafted a piece of work and spent a lot of time creating a narrative that held value. Customers would gladly wait and purchase the piece of work. It held value and time was taken to appreciate and listen to the piece.

Online, music can be consumed through video's on youtube or on dedicated music apps/sites like soundcloud or spotify. Because its so readily available and there is such an abundance the value of the piece of work is lost. So much so that its a challenge for a user to sit through an entire song yet alone an album.

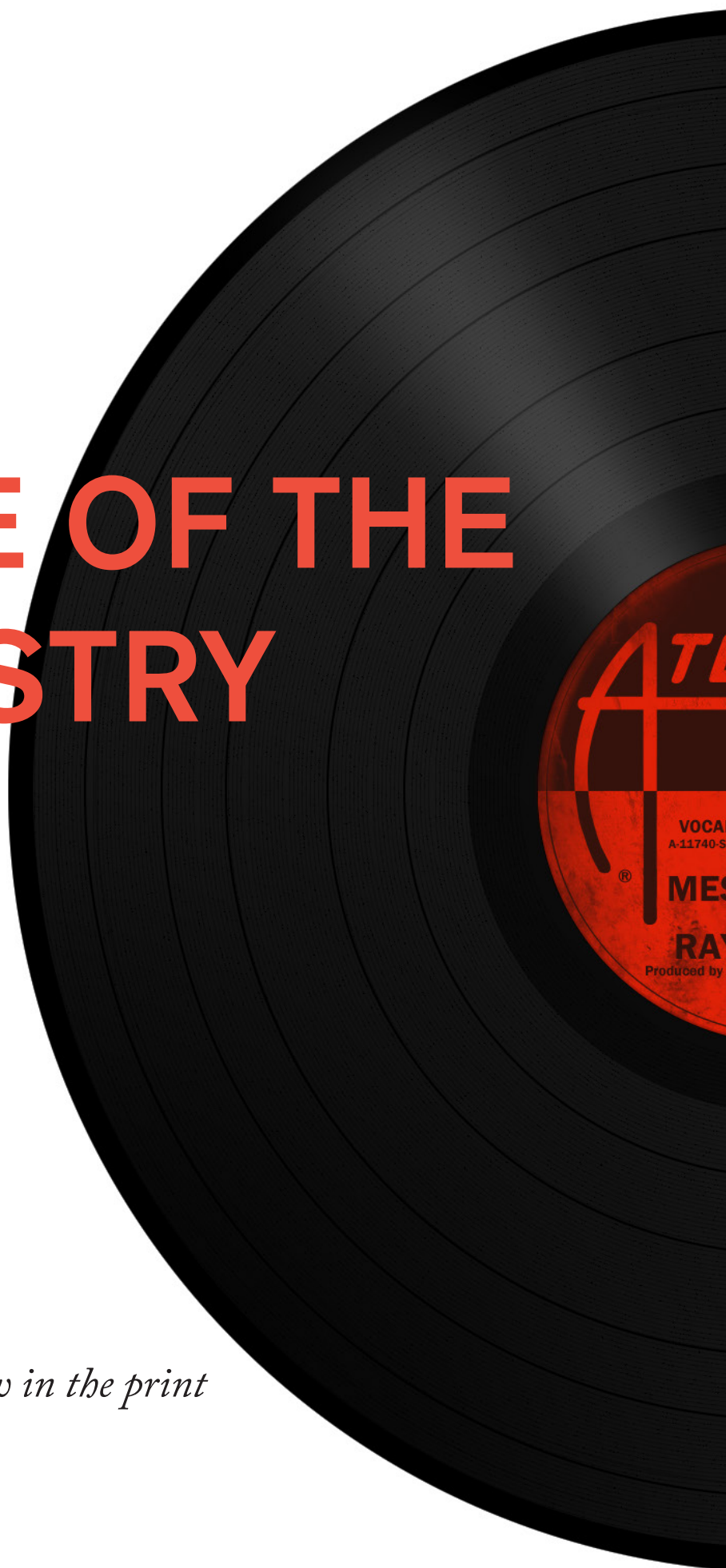
This same transition has morphed many industries into rethinking how to present their content online. The print industry is always re-thinking ways in which they can present content online. Lately the focus has been on tackling mobile users getting to content as fast as possible. This involves making the navigation as seamless and user friendly as possible and how to present the text and photo's in an efficient way. Surprisingly, the experience is left out of the conversation.

The media companies are stuck on the stigma that the online experience should be designed by the user. They decide where to navigate and what they want to read. A very different experience to the paging from left to right, the norm in print. Although the benefit of the internet is putting the user in control, there is value in creating an experience where the user trusts the editor to present them with information.

STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

*Whats happening now in the print
and online industry*

03
-
04



3

In this section there are examples of traditional media and what characteristics make them popular or good examples in their field. The following section should make clear why traditional media has remained so relevant and how they create value for their respective customers.

A deeper look into some examples of offline media

TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Gourmand

MEDIUM

ADRESS

ENGAGEMENT TIME

Magazine

<http://thegourmand.co.uk/>

1-2 hours

Gourmand is the 2012 winner of Magpies best new magazine award and a good way to assess what is deemed a good magazine in 2012. Here is how they describe themselves;

"A Gourmand is a person who takes pleasure and interest in food of all kinds and The Gourmand is a new food and culture journal that binds inspirational words, images and ideas with the humble and universal subject of food."

The magazine manages to engage readers because of the absence of advertisements and high quality illustrations and photos in the magazine. The paper is top notch making it a high quality object to touch and read.

CONTENT

Photo Interview - 14%

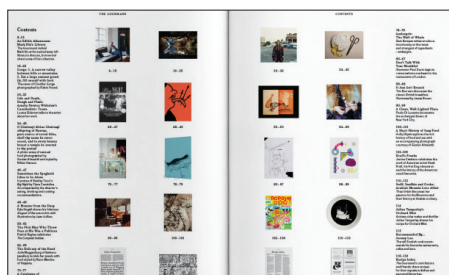
Interview - 12%

Photo Editorial - 35%

Illustration - 20%

Article - 19%

- + Very clear subject matter and target audience.
- + Adhere sharply to a grid based layout.
- Not very experimental with layouts and typography.
- + great photos and insightful articles



Purple Fashion

MEDIUM

ADRESS

ENGAGEMENT TIME

Magazine

<http://purple.fr/>

6 hours

Purple Fashion magazine is a french publication that has risen to be the best and most sought after fashion publication in the world. Olivier Zahm and his team have since branched out throughout the success of the magazine to open clubs, create creative collaborations and shoot for the fashion houses portrait in the magazine. To me the magazine is a success because its a unwavering view of the fashion world through one mans aesthetic. He does what he wants with the magazine and collaborates with those he deems fit. Something lacking in other magazines and online.

CONTENT

Photo Interview - 22%

Interview - 12%

Photo Editorial - 40%

Illustration - 0%

Article - 26%

- + tied to the vision of editor in chief Olivier Zahm.
- + team of photographers and stylists that are close friend with mr. Zahm.
- + forward thinking and raunchy thanks to Mr. Zahm.
- + great online presence through short films and a insightful blog labels simply as the "diary".
- + lots of advertising. a norm in the fashion industry so excusable.
- + comes with a small art zine magazine usually profiling a photographer or artist.
- + released twice a year.



Apartamento

MEDIUM	ADRESS	ENGAGEMENT TIME
Magazine	http://www.apartentomagazine.com/	3 hours

Apartamento is the poster child for the rebirth of magazines. By taking a different approach to the norm and creating a living space magazine that showed an honest way of how people where living they managed to find a cult following and gain more readers with each issue. The material is honest and once again has a clear vision. Each article is typically done in their style a laid back aesthetic and no fear to be playful have made this magazine very popular! Heres how they explain their concept;

“For too many people, being happy at home is pretty much an abstract idea, something they can’t know or imagine, until it appears on some taste maker’s must-have list, or in a magazine, or reposted on Tumblr. A home sweet home is not curated or produced by acquiring a perfect arrangement of chairs, lamps and friends. A real living space is made from living, not decorating. A bored materialist can’t understand that a house has to become a home. It happens, not through perfection but by participation.”

CONTENT

Photo Interview – 44%
Interview – 19%
Photo Editorial – 16%
Illustration – 12%
Article – 9%

+ simple format. small and easy to take wherever you go!
+ doesn't change. their first issue to their 10 all look and feel the same. readers know what to expect.
+ hardly any advertisements. And the ads that do make it share apartamento's ideals.



AMOK Album

MEDIUM	ADRESS	ENGAGEMENT TIME
Vinyl (Music)	http://atomsforpeace.info/amok/	1 Hour

The album artwork for the new AMOK cover shows the direction that labels are going whilst releasing an album. Because the medium they are selling is becoming less sought after as physical artifact they are creating a work of art essentially in the packaging. With expensive methods of printing and essentially an art piece on the cover the company hopes to create value and a collectors spirit urging music lovers to buy the vinyl.

- + *high quality print*
- + *art work as album cover by Stanley Donwood*

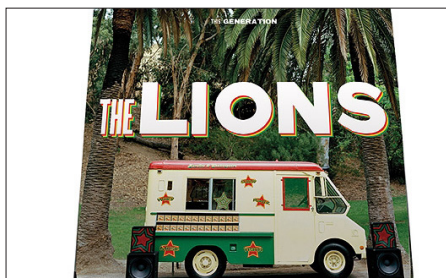


Stones Throw Records

MEDIUM	ADRESS	ENGAGEMENT TIME
Record Company	http://www.stonesthrow.com/	...

Stones Throw record companies is an anomoly in the record business. They are small and carry alot of Hip Hops most respected albeit more obscure artists. By always doing their own thing they have been able to stay relevant. Stones throw is a good example to look at because of the things they do to raise their customers attention. They released a cassette tape long after they became obsolete and create limited edition toys and lately even releasing an arduino powered drum machine that was sold out the morning it was released!

- + *forward thinking*
- + *work well with limited editions*
- + *release toys and cassettes! something no other record company does*



How traditional media vendors are moving content online

THE TRANSFER

This section aims to show how the traditional media industry has made the jump to the on-line realm and what's changed in the way they have presented their content. Also looking at how they are failing and what problems they face whilst experimenting with their respective online presence.

Newspapers, magazines, record companies etc have in essence made their online presence an analogy to their traditional media. Text and photos printed on a page are recreated online. As is music and film. Simply copied and presented just as it was in its traditional form.

4

In a nut shell traditional media companies create analogies of their content online. Which makes sense. The content they release as films, music, text, photos is taken and presented online. There is nothing wrong with that. But with the amount of media shown online in the same format these companies are losing their users interest and engagement. Because most websites look the same its difficult to capture a user long enough to share something valuable. People are taking content and sharing them on their own platforms. Most of the time not even going onto the website because we have a new breed of tools that take the content and present it in another way. See google reader, flipboard etc.

This I feel is a direct result of the fact that there is no experience linked to the content. So when a article is posted its in the same format as the rest of the web. Photo text and maybe an embedded song for good measure. There is no deeper interaction that would animate the user to go to the website of the provider and experience the content through the provider. Because the content is made up of something that easily shared. Purely text, sound, video and photo. There is no experience. It can be taken and shared.

This is where I see the problem. To create value in a website and thus have people visit it. It needs to provide an experience.

“Its tragic how everyone is trying to translate print onto digital format what we will see at some point is for someone to take the medium and do something thats appropriate and magical and enhances the experience.”

–Helen Walter

(Researcher at Doblin)

*“The most precious gift we can offer
anyone is our attention.”*

-Thich Nhat Hanh

4

5

iPad

EDITORS' CHOICE | NEWS

The New

Maoist Rebels Suspected as Indian Train Derails



BIKAS DAS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

By HEATHER TIMMONS

NEW DELHI — At least 65 people were killed and at least 200 injured on Friday after a high-speed train derailed in eastern India and was struck by a cargo train traveling on a nearby track.

Officials in West Bengal said they believe Maoist rebels sabotaged the tracks, causing the accident. Local television news channels showed footage of broken rail track, which appeared to have a foot-long section

Safety Rules

By ANDREW POLL

They are the high well-paid employees of American innovation in biotechnology edge can be a risk

The casualties Department science month in a coma the E. coli bacter

Oxford Tra

By SARAH LYALL

OXFORD, England simple yet devilish noun ("water," for that applicants h somehow to spin An admissions re

ONLINE

*A look at the most interesting ideas
and movements online*



5

Obviously with the millions of website online one cant generalize the web. But in the section are a collection of websites that portray an idea or concept particularly well. It seems that now is a time of experimentation online and thanks to certain design agencies the web is starting to look different very slowly. The trend now is to consolidate media and present it on a multitude of devices. This is seen used extensively in the news industry. Instead of creating different designs for each device an API with well structured content can disperse the content to multiple devices and take care of the design itself. Thus saving time and again making it easy and fast to get the content out there. What still to my amazement hasnt been apparent is no one is pushing the boundaries of high quality valuable content. There is too few experiences available. The following online mediums are pushing the envelope.

TECHNOLOGY

With the release of HTML 5 and CSS3 the possibilities are wide open. The animational prowess that was once why designers used flash is now possible to recreate with HTML. This opens the doors to create truly immersive mixed media websites. Its still a new technology and so it will unfold in the next year and we will continue to see interesting ways of mixing media.

In terms of storytelling and immersion the iPad has been the go to device for designers and developers. Using apples framework to create gestural applications there has been a huge surge in apps combating the same problem of presenting stories or news on the new device.

The most forward thinking in immersion mostly stories targeted towards children. The news industry more focused on using the new technology to make finding news or commenting on news easier as apposed to changing the experience of consuming news.

With all the new technology and the examples illustrated in the next section it obvious the time is right to experiment with the questions raised in the concept introduction.

The technology is up to the task its only a question about creativity and finding the correct solution to the problem of presenting the content.

Form Follows Function

MEDIUM	ADRESS	ENGAGEMENT TIME
Website	http://fff.cmiscm.com/#!/main	40 Minutes

Form Follows function is a small website that focuses on interactive experiments using “new” web technologies CSS3 & HTML 5. This is more of a resource and provides inspiration for how users can interact with different elements on a webpage.

- + *excellent seamless interaction*
- + *works on the ipad!*
- + *engaging*
- + *minimal navigation*
- *element of surprise*

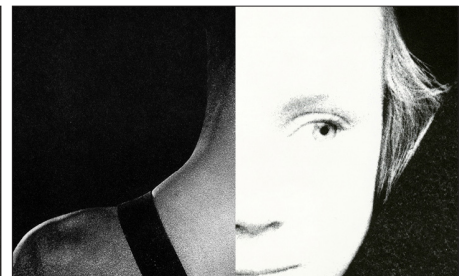
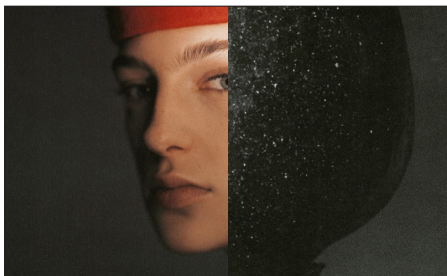


Moving Six

MEDIUM	ADDRESS	ENGAGEMENT TIME
IPad Application	Moving Six App (Itunes Store)	15 Minutes

Moving six is an application by comme de garçons. They took photos from a magazine they released in the 80's and re-used them in this application. This is the direction I think digital media should be going in. Its experimental and engaging. Allowing the user to play simply with media and create their own experience to a degree. Its a tight and engaging piece of work that uses the advantages of the ipad to show and present their media in a new way. Great work by Comme de Garçons!

- + *engaging*
- + *new ways to interact with content*
- + *very simple navigation*
- + *limiting the user to a few interactions per "chapter"*
- + *fine line between art and interaction*
- + *images still ooze quality although they are presented in a digital space*



Remembrance

MEDIUM

ADDRESS

ENGAGEMENT TIME

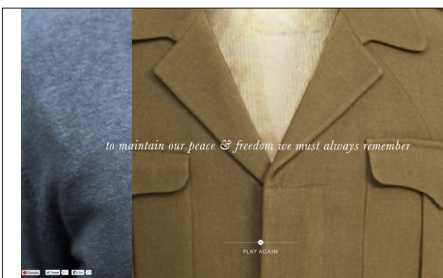
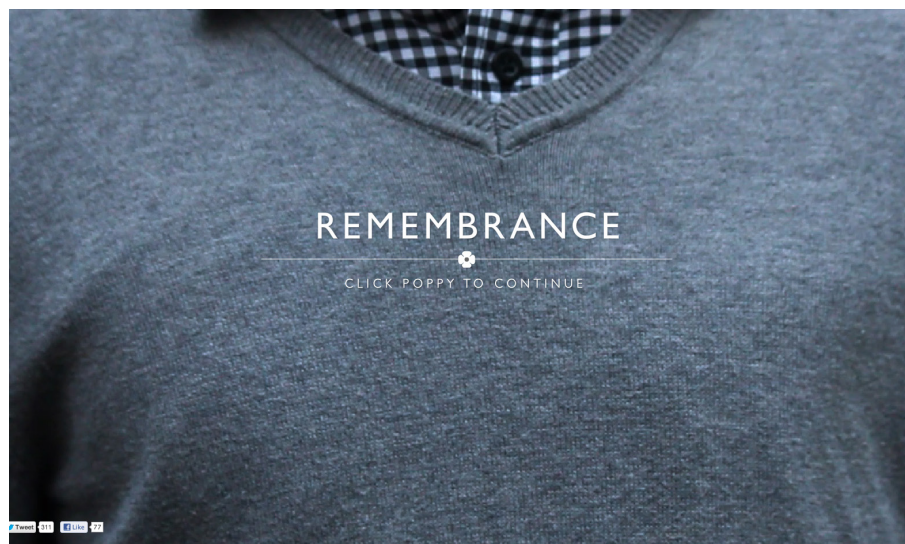
Website

<http://remembrance2012.co.uk/>

15 Minutes

Remembrance is a british site that reminds its visitors to remember the british soldiers that dies in world war. Through the poppy seed (which happens to be the sole navigation of the website) a clever full screen background video and interactive statistics tell the user a story about the war and soldiers lost. Its very engaging and a perfect example of giving the user an experience as apposed to letting users click through a bunch of links. Excellent small website!

- + one navigation button (the poppy seed)
- + full screen background video
- + uncluttered and interesting
- + an immersive experience

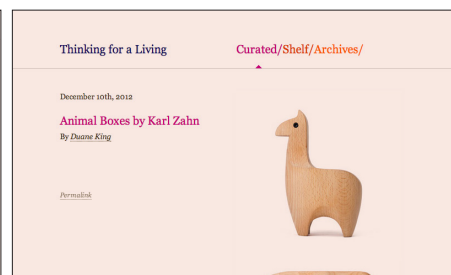
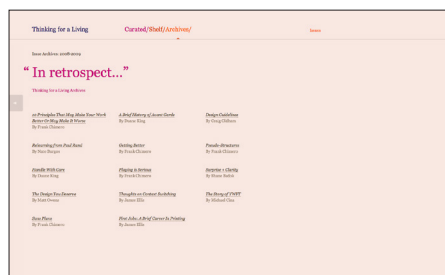
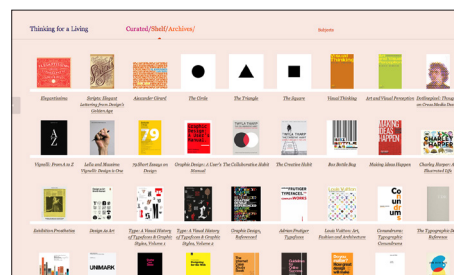
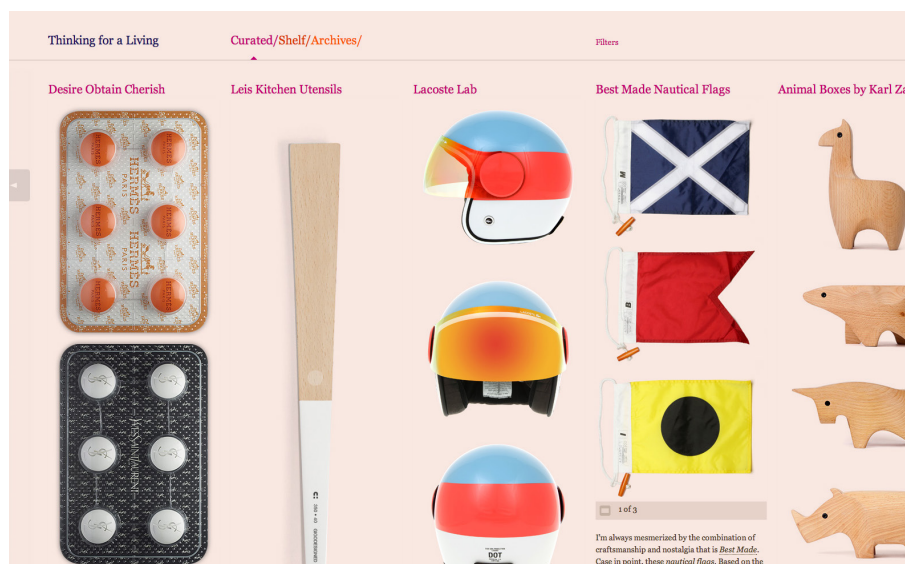


Thinking for a Living

MEDIUM	ADRESS	ENGAGEMENT TIME
Website	http://www.thinkingforaliving.org/	...

Thinking for a living is the result of some very interesting creatives from multiple fields coming together to create a website. The website takes the blog format and re-thinks it to create a intelligent website. The user can use their keyboard to navigate and they chose to use a vertical format as apposed to the horizontal up and down format that we have come to expect from blogs. Great website to play with and discover different ways to interact with a blog.

- + *Clean*
- + *Vertical blog format*
- + *grid based design*
- + *keyboard navigation*

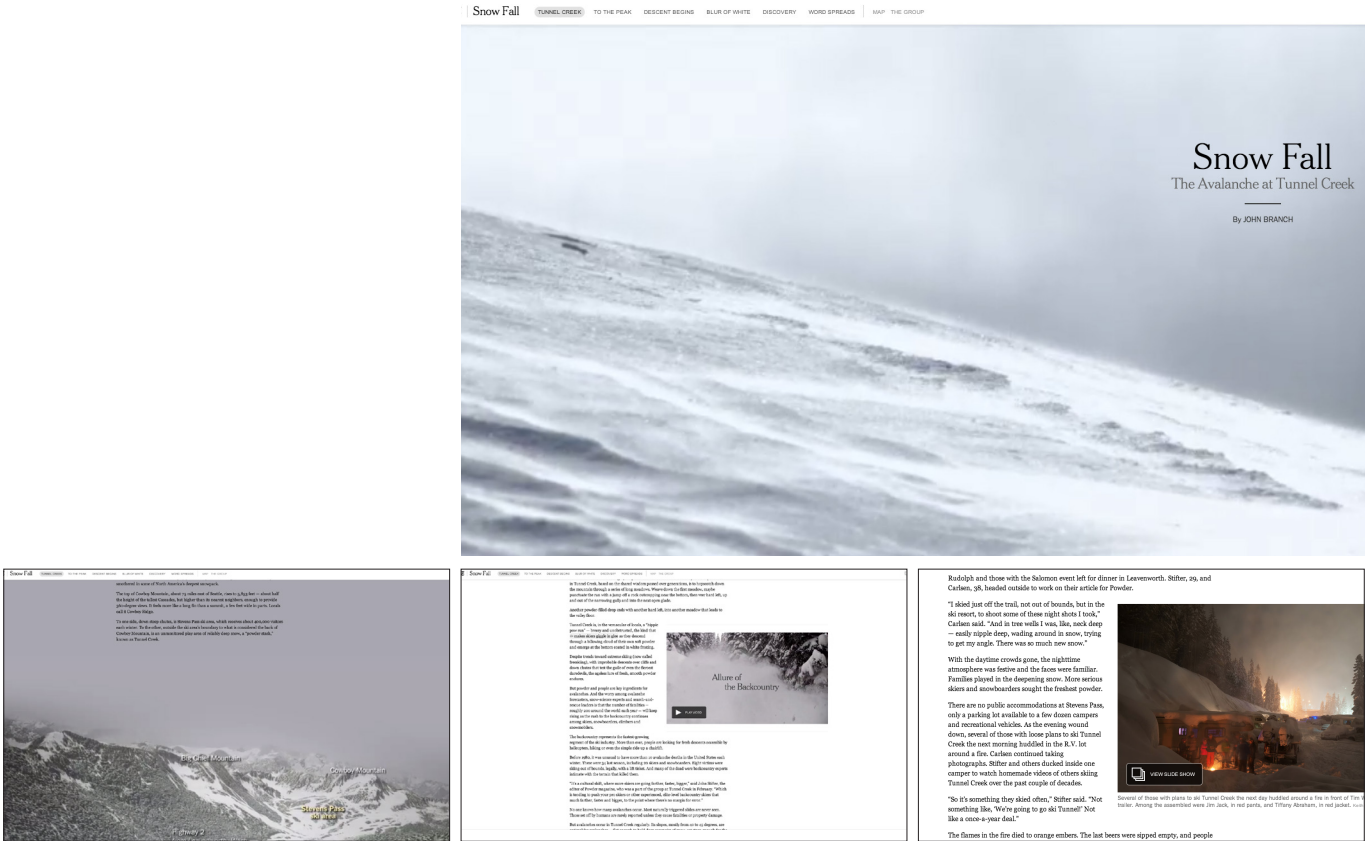


Snow Fall Article

MEDIUM	ADRESS	ENGAGEMENT TIME
Website	http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/#/?part=tunnel-creek	20 Minutes

The snowfall article by the new york times is what reading an article online should look like. The mixed media is shown here controlled by simple scrolling. Its more engaging and uses the simple nuances of new web design tricks to further engage the user and immerse them into the story.

- + *Scrolling as navigation*
- + *mixed media to tell story*
- + *dynamic article*
- + *auto play video's enhance article*



Connecting by Basset & Partners <https://vimeo.com/52861634>

Thinking for a Living by multiple authors <http://www.thinkingforaliving.org/>

Remembrance by Ed Harrison <http://remembrance2012.co.uk/>

Moving Six by Comme de Garçons itunes store

Form Follows Function by Jongmin Kim <http://fff.cmiscm.com/#!/main>

Apartamento by Omar Sosa <http://www.apartamentomagazine.com/>

Purple Fashion by Olivier Zahm <http://purple.fr/>

Gourmand by David Lane & Marina Tweed <http://thegourmand.co.uk/>

Amok by Thom Yorke & Amok <http://atomsforpeace.info/amok/>

Stones Throw by Stones Throw Records <http://stonesthrow.com>

Snow Fall Article by New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/#/?part=tunnel-creek>

SOURCES