

ANTWERP DESIGN SEMINARS & LECTURES

'The Antwerp Design Seminars & Lectures' – ADSL - is an international event that takes place each year at the Department of Design Sciences at the Artesis University College Antwerp.

Its aim is to stimulate cross-boundary thinking in design and to familiarize students with an interdisciplinary approach towards design problems.

ADSL provides an international forum for faculty and student exchange.

Simultaneously, it's an informal platform to discuss current problems related to the education in design.

TRANSFORMER

In his book *Aesthetics and Architecture* Edward Winters points on *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928) by Vladimir Propp, a Russian formalist scholar, in which the notion of 'transformation' is introduced. Winters notices certain constants in the folktales under review: that there is a landscape, that there is a setting, that there are characters and so forth. However, in the individual folktale these constants undergo a transformation so that in *this* tale the character wears *this* form of dress, the setting is in *this* house within a particular landscape and so on. In short, Winters notices a unifying structure in the tales and see that this structure is transformed in each particular tale by its local character.

(Edward Winters, *Aesthetics and Architecture*, Continuum, 2007, page 66)

As a word 'transformer' is widely known, but as an object it is always understood in a different way regarding the proper entourage. For some people it is the title of the Lou Reed album from 1972 while for the youngest it is the mechanical plastic toy by which strange person can be transformed into mechanic object. In the architectural world it is related to the project Rem Koolhaas developed for Prada; for the technical persons it stands for the box that transforms high voltage electric energy out of the plant into domestic power supplies, still visually present in the American and Japanese urban context.

As there is a so-called unifying meaning in the idea of transformer, we can argue that even by relating it into the world of architecture, a physical as well a mental or psychological concept can be given.

While today debate and critics are becoming very important in design processes, from the regional and the generic to the original versus the reference, it becomes interesting to fill in the contemporary needs for new concepts creating other subject-object relations in each project.

ADSL 2012 will explore the references on the theme of Transformer and aims to investigate the 'power' of a variety of images and thoughts in landscape, architecture, engineering, interior design, monument care, through a poetic and personal intuition in order to reach beyond the specific discipline.