

EDITORIAL

“Fiction (but also design and architecture) creates provisional realities for others to occupy. It conjures artifacts from our otherwise insular worlds to possibly be recognized by others as familiar.” (Durfee, *Made-Up: Design’s Fictions*, 2017, p.11)

Future has arrived before it was expected. The COVID-19 pandemic merged fiction and reality, introducing abrupt and radical changes in our daily lives, with implications in social interactions, in working and learning experiences, in connections between humans, technology and the natural world, not to mention basic living conditions. In this “Black Mirror” episode we are experiencing (along with the massive change it represents), tools for thought and discussion are particularly relevant.

Critical Design, Speculative Design and Design Fiction are expressions for a common approach which grasps design practice not as a problem-solving tool, but as a wider human activity which comprehends artifacts in societal contexts. They create a space for discussion while expanding existing realities and imagining alternative ones. By proposing fictional elements from other/ unreal landscapes (diegetic prototypes), Design Fiction is able to suspend the reader or observer’s disbelief about changes (Sterling, 2012) allowing him/her to experience, “test” and question alternative or possible futures.

The present issue opens with a paper that demonstrates precisely Design Fiction's ability to reflect on a future sociotechnical reality and on Artificial Intelligence itself. *Design (Non) Fiction: Deconstructing/Reconstructing the Definitional Dualism of AI* by Franziska Pilling, Joseph Lindley, Haider Ali Akmal and Paul Coulton convokes HAL9000, the archetypical robot from *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Kubrick, 1968) as a triggering diegetic devise.

HAL9000 embodies a certain western imaginary of technic that fed the belief of an eminent emancipation of machines or technical objects, against all the expected reliability between user and object. This uncontrollable and magical dimension of artificiality is boldly explored as speculative aesthetics in *Techno-animism or the Magical Existence of Technical Objects* by Manuel Bogalheiro.

In *Re-Entangling Design and Science Fiction: The Case of Daleko* Eduardo Harry explores Speculative Design and the technoscientific extrapolation inherent to science fiction, in order to propose viable models and scenarios of futurity. In *Daleko*, nine science fiction pieces address urgent issues such as climate and waste management politics, creating possible scenarios as part of a critical debate that considers the deconstruction of concepts such as waste, along with technological and material issues.

On a seemingly domestic context, the text *Othervisual : onto the audiovisual cooking*, by Inês Laranjeira and João A. Mota, convokes the kitchen as a discursive space where design finds a privileged domain to become critically aware of its own methodologies. Analysing the piece "Hands Correspondence" (2020) by Asako Iwama, Iris Lacoudre and Camille Sineau, a film first exhibited within the programme "Critical Cooking Show", Laranjeira and Mota address the complexity of gestures in the kitchen while establishing connections between the realms of the sensorial, intuitive and experimental features of critical design.

Intuition and intimacy are deepened in the last text. *Design-erly Modus of wandering and shared Film Creation in "Corpos Palimpsésicos" Artistic Creations in times of socio-affective contingencies*, explores a very particular form of personal experience: the mourning of a love relation turned into an artistic and design project. During the first pandemic lockdown, Flávio Almeida e Renata Ferraz took an interdisciplinary approach to rethink art fruition in several media. Through a continuous cycle of self-reflexions, actions and subsequent reconfigurations, this project evidences the relevance and richness of a speculative process in design.

The thematic and methodological plurality in this collection of papers enhances the broadness of Critical Design, Speculative Design and Design Fiction in terms of spheres of inquiry and intervention.

Several dimensions of life were critically addressed, nurturing connections between humans, humans and non-humans (technology included) and distinct realities and fields of knowledge. After all, as Tim Durfee suggests, connecting is inherent to all fiction. :)