

**MUO-E0105 Research
and Inspire 6 cr
Welcome!**

Who's talking?

heidi.paavilainen@aalto.fi

Väre, room O201

Languages: 🇫🇮 🇬🇧

👍 All slides and notes
will be in MyCourses



Heidi has MA in Textile Design (TaiK). MA thesis about how trend foresight can be a platform for collaborative knowledge creation.

PhD in Industrial Design (Aalto). DA thesis about living with industrially produced designed objects, what makes design meaningful, and how living with designed products is facilitated and managed. (Paavilainen 2013, 2017)

Both relate to long-term interest in change: What makes people change their ideas about what they should be doing and consuming? How does a collective change of mind begin and proceed?

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Given my interest in change, for over a decade, I taught a Master's degree course on trend foresight. This Research and Inspire is a direct continuum, but the focus is on the trends, not foresight, because foresight is impossible (has always been), but if we understand how trends behave, we can bet on the future.

Therefore, studying trend behaviour makes more sense than putting energy into creating foresight reports because the format depends on the industry and the audience.

Foresight, by definition, focuses on the future, but being able to foresee requires a profound understanding of the history of the trend. You have to have a vision of what has happened to envision what might happen in the future.

So, this course is not about foresight, even though you will train the skills that are beneficial for it. Instead...

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...We will focus on change in general and trends in particular, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, how to create an inspiring narrative.

The reason for focusing on change is simple: by understanding how change begins and how it happens, we learn about the behaviour of the world around us. This does not mean that change is more important than stability, but we cannot focus on everything, and now we focus on change.

We are not going to cover everything about how things change, but on some of the processes which relevant from the designer's point of view.

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Programme

24.10. Inspiring//Change+Course Intro

31.10. Design-Driven Change

7.11. Long-Term Collective Change

14.11. Changing Values

21.11. Individual Change

28.11. Changing Worldviews

5.12. Presentations

Inspiring Change. The course assignments and briefly talk about change and inspiring communication.

Design-Driven Change is about how design can be used to make permanent changes in how people see themselves and what they do.

Long-Term Collective Change is a fancy way of talking about megatrends. Our aim is to understand megatrend behaviour and how they influence what happens on this planet.

Changing Values is about the roles the values play in the lives of individuals and small collectives, such as families and bands of friends. In terms of trends, this afternoon is about lifestyle trends.

Individual Change. Finally, we turn to how individuals change. This talk touches on psychological change and transformative learning.

Changing Worldviews. In the last lecture, we will go back to the societal and cultural level of trends and take a look at so-called self-descriptions and grand narratives that we collectively create in order to make sense of the world around us.

Presentations. The course ends with your presentations of the coursework. More about that later.

A vibrant, multi-colored kite with a red, yellow, and blue patterned tail is flying in a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds. The kite is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the frame. The word "INSPIRING" is written in large, bold, white capital letters across the lower half of the image.

INSPIRING

So, we will talk about change from different points of view. In addition to that, we will talk about how to communicate a certain story, a line of thinking, or an argumentation in an inspiring manner. On each Tuesday after today, we will dedicate some time to that, too: what makes a narrative inspiring.

People in general seem to be bad at talking about (future) *change* so that it would inspire others.

This is unfortunate to us because trying to inspire change is at the core of design professions.

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Until the 1970s, the change designers wanted people to do usually related to consumption. For example, even though people already had their kitchens full of modern appliances, designers were giving new appearances and styles to things just so that people would buy the new style so that the home is up-to-date. This is the kind of seasonal styling that, for example, Victor Papanek criticises in his *Design for the Real World* (Papanek 1973)

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Since the 1970s, increasingly large numbers of people, including designers, have questioned their role as producers and consumers of fashionable stuff and have begun to learn how to facilitate changes in behaviour, consumption, ways of thinking, and even society.

And yet, we seem pretty bad at talking about change in an inspiring manner. At worst, the change appears either scary or boring. Example:

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In 2001, the EU Research Centre Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) wrote a technology roadmap called "Scenarios for Ambient Intelligence in 2010" (Ducatel et al. 2001). By 2010, increasing numbers of people would be working in knowledge-intensive jobs, and therefore, the profession would require more creativity than traditional blue-collar jobs. But the scenarios depicted people using devices to be in a meeting, apologising that they will be late for the meeting, organising child care because they are in a meeting, or making travel arrangements to get to the meeting. Hardly a thick description of creative work. When we talk about change, we should be able to touch deeper into the human aspirations.

Since then, the tech industry has developed digital software and services that support creative work. So, technological change has happened, but it took place through corporate innovation, and the world or how we live has not changed that much. We still seem to spend our time running from meeting to meeting.

We can only wonder what might have happened if the people who actually are doing creative work had been involved in designing the scenarios, inspiring people to change and to see ICTs and what they facilitate in a different, more creative light, revealing what it means and requires to be a creative professional.

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ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

The key question in the course and the assignments is

"How to communicate (about change) in a powerful and inspiring manner?"

There are two steps that make communication inspiring:

The first step is to have a good, comprehensive understanding of the thing you are talking about. It is easier for people to be inspired if they can trust what you say. In academic language, we talk about argumentation. Your argumentation should be convincing and valid for others to trust.

The second step is to tell the thing in a manner that excites and inspires. This often means that you have taken a fresh, even surprising, point of view.

The course assignments should help you to take both of the steps: to build a solid argumentation and to develop a fresh point of view.

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There are four assignments in the course. The first two are optional, and the last two are compulsory.

1. Constellation is like a visual, thoughtful mind map about your interests, thinking and associations you make. In it, you build a sort of solar system or constellation of the elements that are associated with your interest by adding points of view, people, literature, works of art and design, events and so forth that have impacted or connected with the thing you are interested in.

This is an inventory of what you know and think. You can elaborate on the constellation by drawing lines between the elements in the constellation. You can invent your own vocabulary of lines and symbols for disagreement and agreement, the degree of importance, etc.

Some of you have your interest ready: you are doing a thesis, for example. Good for you! This is a very good chance to find out what you actually think about the thing, the topic or theme, and what kind of things it connects to in your thinking.

Besides, even if you have a thesis topic, there are still options and decisions to make. For example, let's say that you are doing Service Design for a fast food chain. In that case, you can do the constellation about fast food or service design, or eating out, at least.

This is your chance to do careful and thoughtful work in a relatively relaxed manner. Put some imagination into this and try to find unexpected elements and links because this and the next assignment will be used for designing the path that your inspiring narrative will take.

**The deadline for this and the next assignment is 14.11. **because we are going to look at your assignments in class. No presentation is required.

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2. Timeline

- **Timeline.**

The second assignment is another mostly visual construction but now you'll focus on putting things in chronological order. This assignment requires thinking in terms of trends, that is, how things have evolved in the past. You should focus on building a solid understanding of the history of whatever you are working with.

This assignment helps you challenge your thinking because you have to research to be able to put things in the timeline. The talks about different kinds of change in the course should help you to realise what kind of changes you can map in your timeline. For example, mapping how a certain megatrend has evolved is probably one of the things that you should be doing. When it is combined with how people's values have changed, you already have a basic chronological framework for your argumentation.

Together, these two assignments will help you develop the narrative you want to put forward.

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3. Text (+ Draft)

- **Text (+ Draft)**

. The third assignment is compulsory, and this is the thing where you put forward your inspiring narrative based on assignments 1 and 2, or your independent research.

The assignment is called text because the emphasis is on writing, verbal expression.

The format is open: academic text, collection of 10 haiku's, or essay-like popularised research, depending on your needs and temperament. I am also open to your suggestions if neither of these formats fits your needs. If you are writing for your thesis, then academic text is recommended.

You have the option to email me a draft for this assignment, and I'll offer feedback.

Deadline for this and the next assignment is the last day of the period, December 8.

Before that, on December 5, we will have presentations based on this assignment. The presentation should simply cover the key points of your narrative so that others will learn what you have worked with.

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4. Essay on Change

- **Essay on Change**

. The last assignment is also a compulsory part of the course, and it's a straightforward essay on change based on learnings in the course and your own studies and reflection. It does not need to be long, and it does not need to be world-class literature. I simply want you to outline what you learned and what you think about change. You can, of course, use other sources in addition to my talks.

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Grading

Assignments graded with
PLEASE REVISE (0,25)

PASS (0,75)

PASS WITH DISTINCTION (1,25)

Course grade = 0-5 based on the
situation on Dec 8.

All assignments are graded with "fail - please revise - pass - pass with distinction". You can revise any assignment during the course. I will check the grades after December 8 and calculate the course grade based on the assignment grades.

Let's say that you have submitted all four assignments and all "pass with distinction". Your course grade is then 4 times 1,25 = 5.

At the other extreme, let's say that you have submitted only the two compulsory assignments, and both should be revised, but you didn't do so. Your course grade would be 2 times 0,25 = 0,5, which I will round to passable 1, provided that you have been fairly active in class.

You will fail the course if your attendance to the lectures is clearly below 80%, or you didn't submit the compulsory assignments, or if the course grade is below one, which might happen if an assignment clearly doesn't follow the instructions so it needs to be failed because there is nothing to be revised.



The course follows a simple template:

We will meet on Tuesday afternoons. There is a short talk by me about change and then a more interactive, practical session about inspiring communication.

Coursework is supported with tutoring. Every week, there is one afternoon from which you can book a Zoom-meeting. Book the meeting in MyCourses. If none of the times suits you, you can send me an email.



Tutoring on Friday afternoon!

Photo by Joe Caione on Unsplash

LITERATURE

Ducatel, K, F Bogdanowicz, F Scapolo, J Jeijiten & J-C Burgelman. 2001. *Scenarios for Ambient Intelligence in 2010. Final Report*. Sevilla: Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTs).

Paavilainen, Heidi. 2013. *Dwelling with design*. Helsinki: Aalto University.

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Papanek, Victor. 1973.* *Design for the real world. Human ecology and social change**. Toronto: Bantam Books.