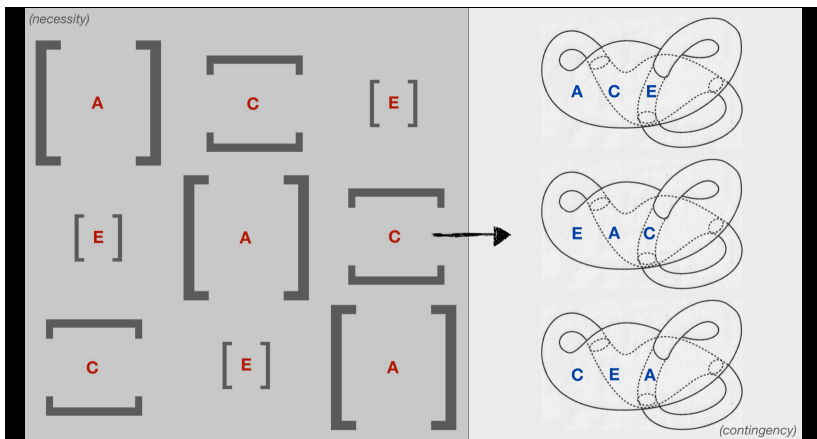


If we agree that there are things that happen each time we cause them to happen. And there are other things that never happen no matter how hard we try. Then we might also agree that between these two extremes—seen as two ends of a “pool”—there is a continuum of narrow, or slim, possibilities.

If we decide that we want to dedicate ourselves to these, it could simply be because we find them more interesting (than things that always/never work). So, we can learn something from them. An alternative motivation is to consider that the approach is deeper into an ecological sense of the world.

From this angle, the things that *always* work do *not* require your assistance. And that things that never work do *not* depend on you. While the edgeland between them—the larger stretch of the pool—is where you can make a difference. Then we’d want to know more about how it works *causally*.



In this flyer, I will attempt to establish the relation between *occasional cause* and ‘analogy’ (on the backdrop of precisation). It is a vision for the design discipline, and a plea to the design field. In the introduction to Enzo Melandri’s book on analogy, Agamben makes analogy *inhabit* contradiction.

By sustaining contradiction, and insisting that it does *not* exclude a third (against Aristotle’s principle of the *3rd excluded*), Agamben shows how it becomes a hatching ground for analogy. This is close to what Adorno/Benjamin wrote about *mediation*: it articulates *between* thesis and antithesis.

On this backdrop, the potential and interesting etymology of *design* as *drawing* and as *purpose* (It. *disegno*) becomes clear: if drawing is *per-ambulating*—harking back to Klee’s definition ‘taking a line for a walk’—and *targeted* at the same time, it certainly breathes and breeds in contradiction.

However, if this contradiction is sustained, what we have is a target-seeking professional practice (and the analogical thinking that follows in its wake). It seems that at KHIO we have a long-standing tradition for organising analogical thinking around *such gaps*, as in the names of our specialisations.

*Graphic design and illustration. Fashion and costume. Interior architecture and furniture design.* They all sustain a tension all field around the word ‘and’. So, in this aspect the relation between the *gap* and *analogical thinking* is *perhaps* troublesome, at times, but *not very* controversial.

The heart of the matter—and which may bring controversy—lies in the connection between *analogy* and *occasional cause*: that is, in the target-seeking professionals that designers are, according to the present thesis, what is perceived by others as ‘contingencies’ rather are *necessities*.

It is important that one should not be reducing ‘occasional cause’ to *opportunity*, nor the arbitrary notion that *sovereign decision* lies at the heart of creative work. The master of ‘occasional cause’ in this sense—linking the sovereign to opportunism—is Machiavelli. But what are the alternatives?

A more risky understanding of ‘occasional cause’ comes out if we make up our minds to consider *analogy* as a real thing happening, rather than as an imaginary form imposed unto the material of the event. This is possible if we choose accept that things do *not* happen because they are important.

And alternatively set our minds on accepting *that things are important because they happen*. And on our *bodies happening*. In this setting, analogy is not expressive, but rather a kind of *information* that results from transposing *between* two things happening—the event and the body—alongside.

Analogy thrives from this companionship—as a citizen of the edgeland, and the adventurer of the gap—and can act as a *causal agent*. It does shift into a causal agent when wedded to *precisation*. That is, including the event into the perimeter of the body, and lending a body to the event: *embodiment*.