



Changeable context of the new technology artefact and the changeable research outcomes

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Computer Aided Drawing (vector based) and painting (raster based) packages, allow the mock-up of designs in virtual space. Whilst this is beneficial for visualising the end product, both methods of drawing have been applied to new and existing machining technologies so that some aspect of the product is derived from a computer file. Today, the applied artist now has an abundance of CAD/CAM (Computer Aided Drawing / Computer Aided Manufacturing) technologies awaiting them. So much so, that in the past fifteen years, many makers have embarked upon practice-led research to find out what a particular technology can do with regard to their design interests. Within such research, the object is the manifestation of what has been discovered through the research activity. This paper considers the relationship between the content of the research object and the context for the object's reception. This is examined with regard to the author's research with new technologies for the applied arts. Examples will highlight how the characteristics of artefacts that arise from the research can help determine who the audience for the work is, and how the technology might be used by different kinds of craft practitioners. References will also be made to the work of other designer-makers working with and researching similar technologies. Evidence from practical examples will also be supported by a more theoretical discussion. The implications of supplying, or not supplying, background information for an audience within a variety of settings on the perceived content/context of the object, and the communication of the research, will also be discussed. It is concluded that when developing new processes, keeping the work open to a number of audiences can maximise the outcomes and increase the chances of the process being integrated within practice. The discussion also highlights a trend of positioning the consumer/viewer at the forefront of the research, and a need to evaluate their experiences.