

CHALMERS

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Textile Sound Design

Margareta Zetterblom

Thesis to be defended in public at 24 May 2011 at
13.00, at the Gallery floor 2, The Swedish School
of Textiles, Bryggaregatan 17, Borås,
for the degree of Philosophy.

The thesis will be defended in English.
The opponent is Professor Hilde Hauan,
National Academy of the Arts, Bergen, Norway



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Abstract

The thesis aims at developing conceptual and methodological tools in order to adapt sound in a “designerly” way within the discipline textile design. Occupational groups working with sound are to a large extent problem driven. This implies knowledge regarding sound and sound design mostly focuses on defensive strategies, not creative possibilities. The ambition with this research project is to make suggestions how textile designers can work practically with textile sound design, in a more nuanced way.

As a starting point the thesis describes commonly used methods and processes used in the design process within an industrial context, followed by a more thorough analyze of the textile design process. These studies constitute a foundation to make it possible to see in what way these methods and processes will be affected when sound is added as new design tool.

By studies of two sound design models, the first attempts to develop a vocabulary concerning how to describe sound affecting qualities or sound expression of a textile are developed. Research focusing on language issues, especially on the development of conceptual tools done at the research institute Cresson, provides descriptive concepts, “sound effects”, embracing the interaction between human and his sound environment. These concepts are followed by a model of how to describe a specific sound or “sound object” in “itself” (not in relation to anything else), developed by Pierre Schaeffer.

The theoretical models have been applied on the outcome of an empirical study named Describe.

A number of design examples are finally presented as methodological examples of different ways to work with textiles and sound.

Keywords: *sound, design, textile design, sound effect, sound object*

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