CPH airport

Future Airport Scenario
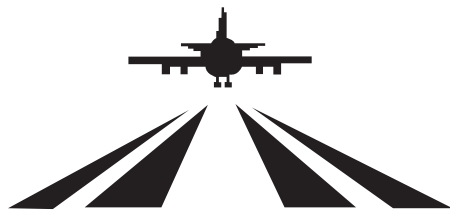
Future Airport

Presentation Document

This document presents the first phase of brainstorming through a collaboration between ARUP Ingenieers London and Interaction Design Institute Ivrea.
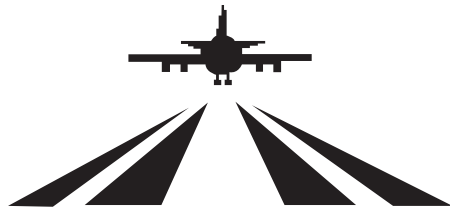
The document is sectioned into five chapters including an introduction of or vision, a description of the metaphors behind our vision and an outline of the concept, Design Airport.
We present a range of ideas within various areas that all is fitted within the concept of the Design Airport.
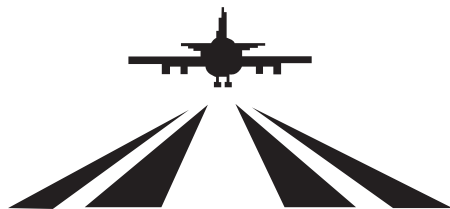Finally we shortly introduce the next steps we propose to follow in the second phase of the design process.
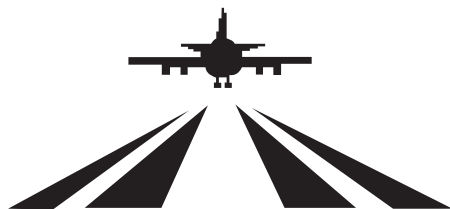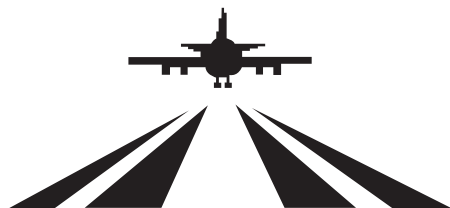
Introduction

A world apart

Considering the future airport we were interested in addressing how the airport and the activity of flying has changed over time. In a broad history of human evolution the ability to fly has been a long cherished, yet impossible dream.

We were interested in how the activity of flying has gone from being a glamorous and exclusive form of travel to an activity, which is so mundane as to be tedious and boring.

We have considered the airport as a kind of city, albeit of a unique kind. The airport exists as a space apart from our usual experience - it is a transitory space, which we occupy for a very specific amount of time. However within this transitory space there are shops and restaurants, which allow us to understand it as a familiar space. Whilst we understand the commercial imperatives that have produced a 'shopping-mall' metaphor for the airport, we are interested in proposing some alternative metaphors for the airport to challenge visitors' expectations and make the experience more memorable and enjoyable for them.

Metaphors

The playful airport

The performance airport

Airport as artwork

The airport of time

The design airport

The Playful Airport

Designing playful objects and experiences is one of the central aspects of our design philosophy at Interaction Ivrea. The playful airport gives passengers a different way of interacting with the objects and space of the airport. Airports can be stressful places to pass through and introducing a playful element to the experience could help to ease this stress. Additionally, the playful airport could help travelers who lead a time-poor lifestyle to make the best use of their time within the airport.

The moving walkways could be repurposed as treadmills. The baggage trolleys could have different levels of resistance to exercise the muscles. Climbing walls could allow different routes to through the airport and the chairs in the waiting lounge could double as weight training machines. There could even be special public phones: to get a free conversation you must constantly tug on a rope. Additionally there could be areas within the airport that allowed passengers to engage with a playful activity purely in order to pass the time. For example by building animations using plastic tiles or by interacting with sensorial spaces.

In this way the whole airport would become a playground. We are imagining a system where the normal activities of the airport are conducted in a playful way rather than devoted areas.
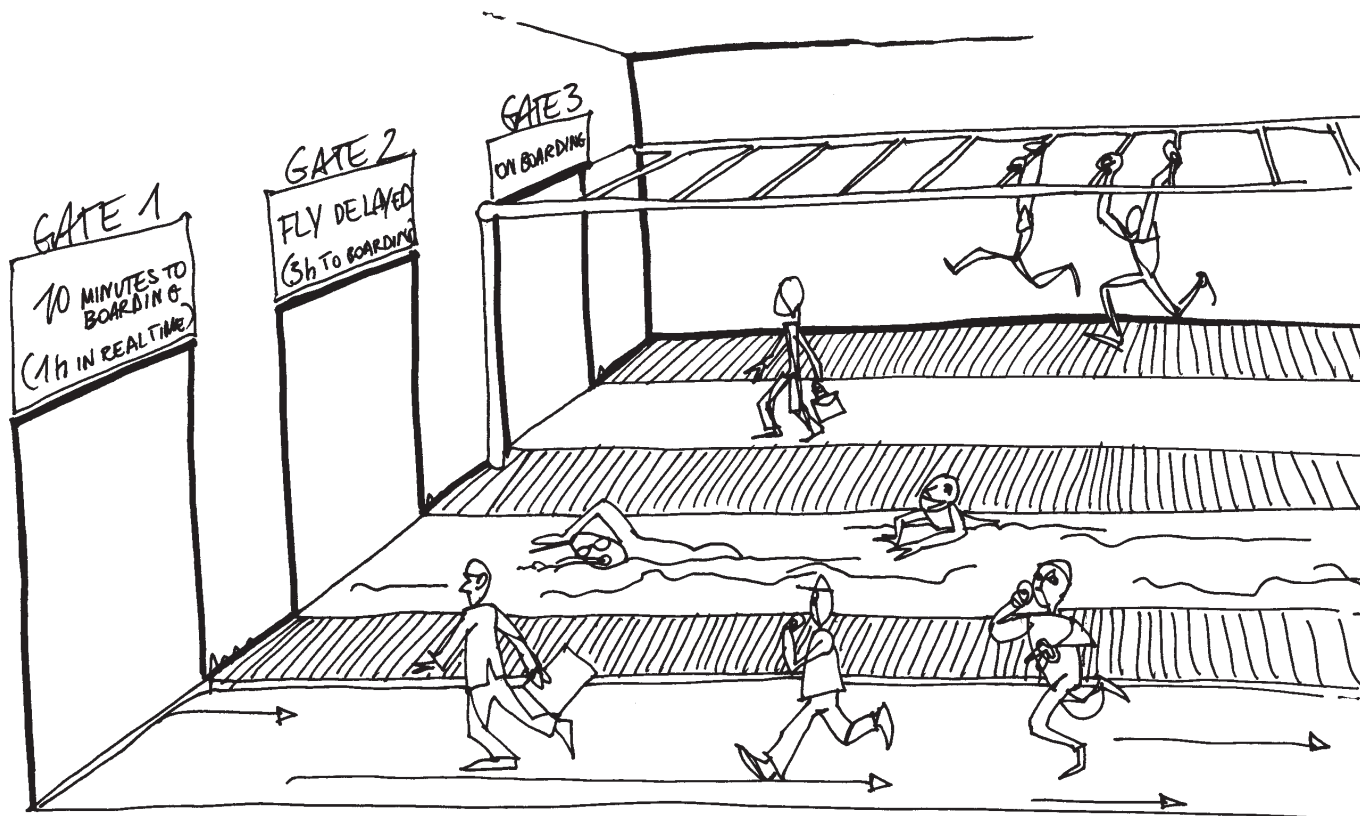
The Performance Airport

The airport is a very controlled space where it is rare to encounter the unexpected. The performance airport would introduce an overall narrative, which is experienced across different media within the space. This would introduce an unexpected element into the airport experience which would be invisible to those not attuned to noticing it. This would be in some ways similar to mixed-reality games (e.g. Nokia Game), but would exist within the defined space of the airport and over a defined time period.

The communication of the narrative could take different forms: The boarding pass could make reference to an overall narrative. The departure screens could have information about fictitious flights or convey different content and/or information. Actors could enact scenes from a narrative within the airport whilst appearing to be regular passengers. Passengers could receive messages on their phone telling them about where the next narrative event would be happening.

The airport could also become the location of special tailored production - the Copenhagen Airport soapopera. The idea being to cross the traditional airport functions with the activities of a movie or TV studio.
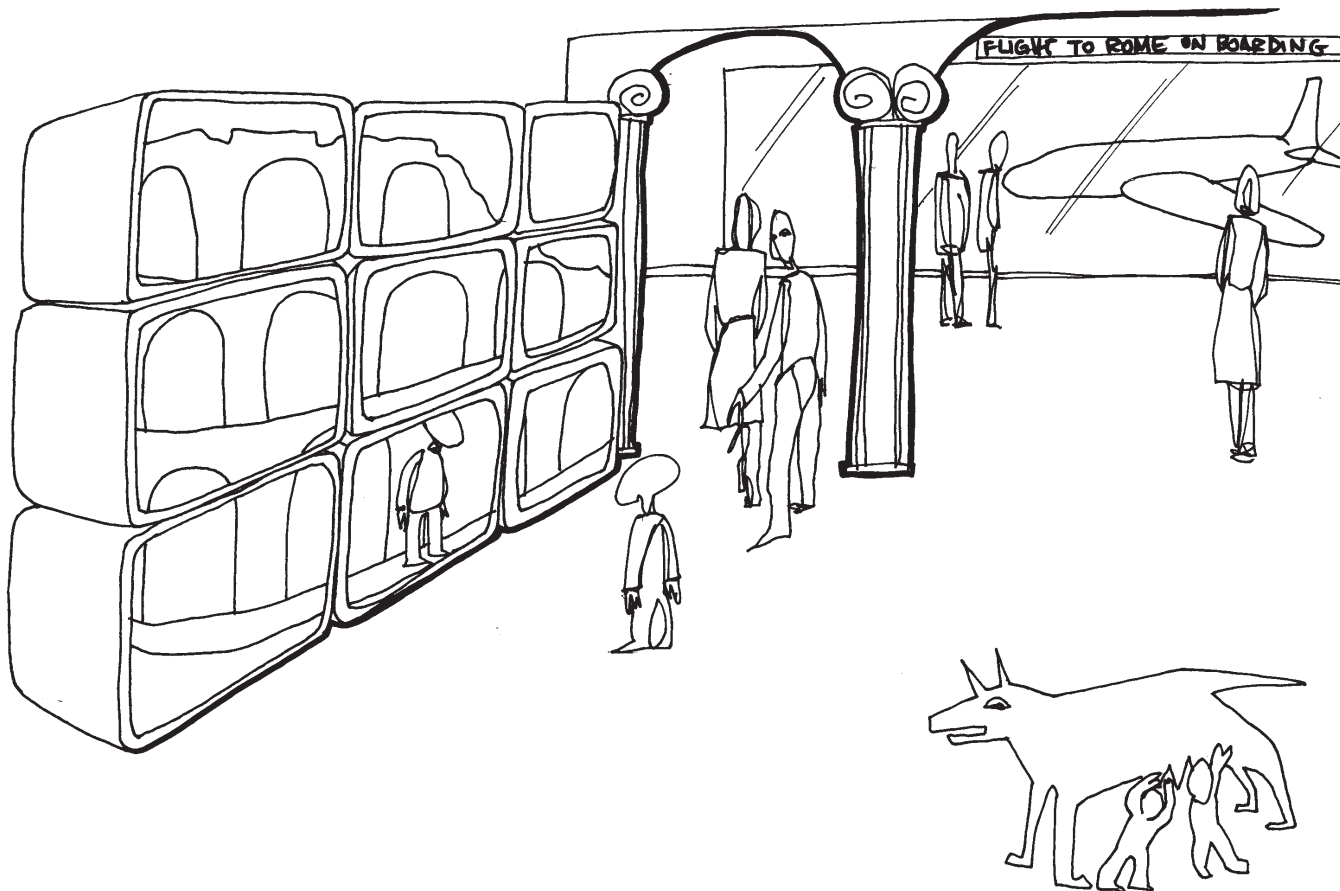
Airport as Artwork

Currently Copenhagen airport hosts a number of important and beautiful pieces of art. We propose a new model where the art would not be there only to be seen, but would be mixed with the functional needs of the airport.

For instance we would propose that, rather than buying discreet pieces of art, we would commission an artist to create a VIP lounge or the check-in area. We would look to involve both celebrated and up-andcoming artists and ask them to address the different needs of the contemporary airport: the signage, parking areas, departure lounges etc.

The airport as artwork becomes a series of artworks which you pass through and experience whilst going through the normal airport procedures.
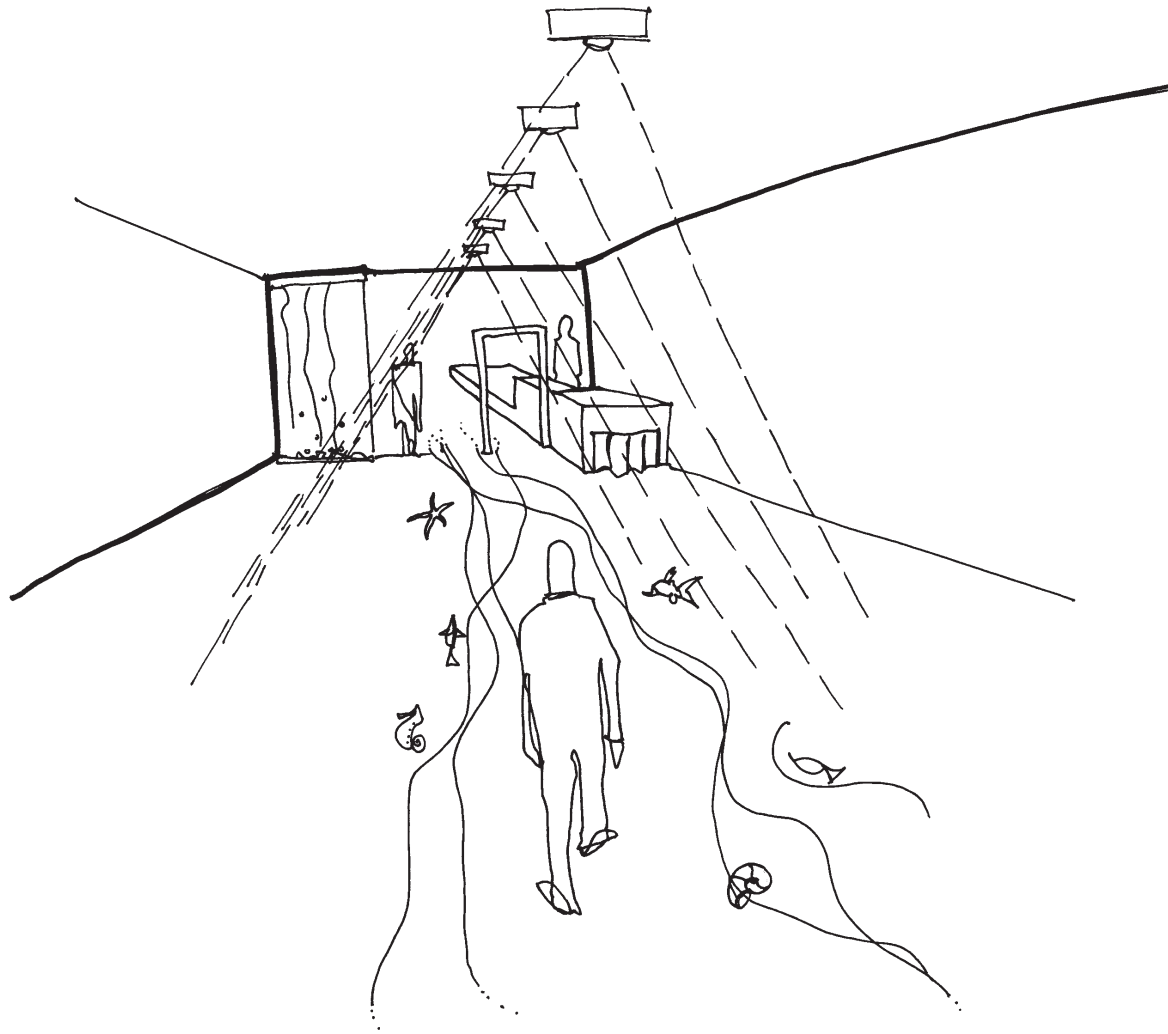
The Airport of Lost Time

Time is central to the experience of the airport. The airport is one of the most time-controlled spaces that we regularly pass through. However our time within the airport can become quite unendurabe if a flight is delayed.

We speculate that adopting the notion of the time bank within the airport would be interesting. Timebanks are a way to link people locally and allow them to share their time and skills.

Everyone's time is equal: one hour of your time earns you one time credit to spend when you need a helping hand. This concept could be adjusted to work within the airport. One possible system would be to focus on the ticket or frequent-flyer membership card. This could double as a time card and allow passengers to 'buyback' some of the time they have lost in the form of services. The card could be pre-charged and automatically topped-up if delays occur. The card could work in partnership with different service businesses based in the airport (wellness center, bar, restaurant).
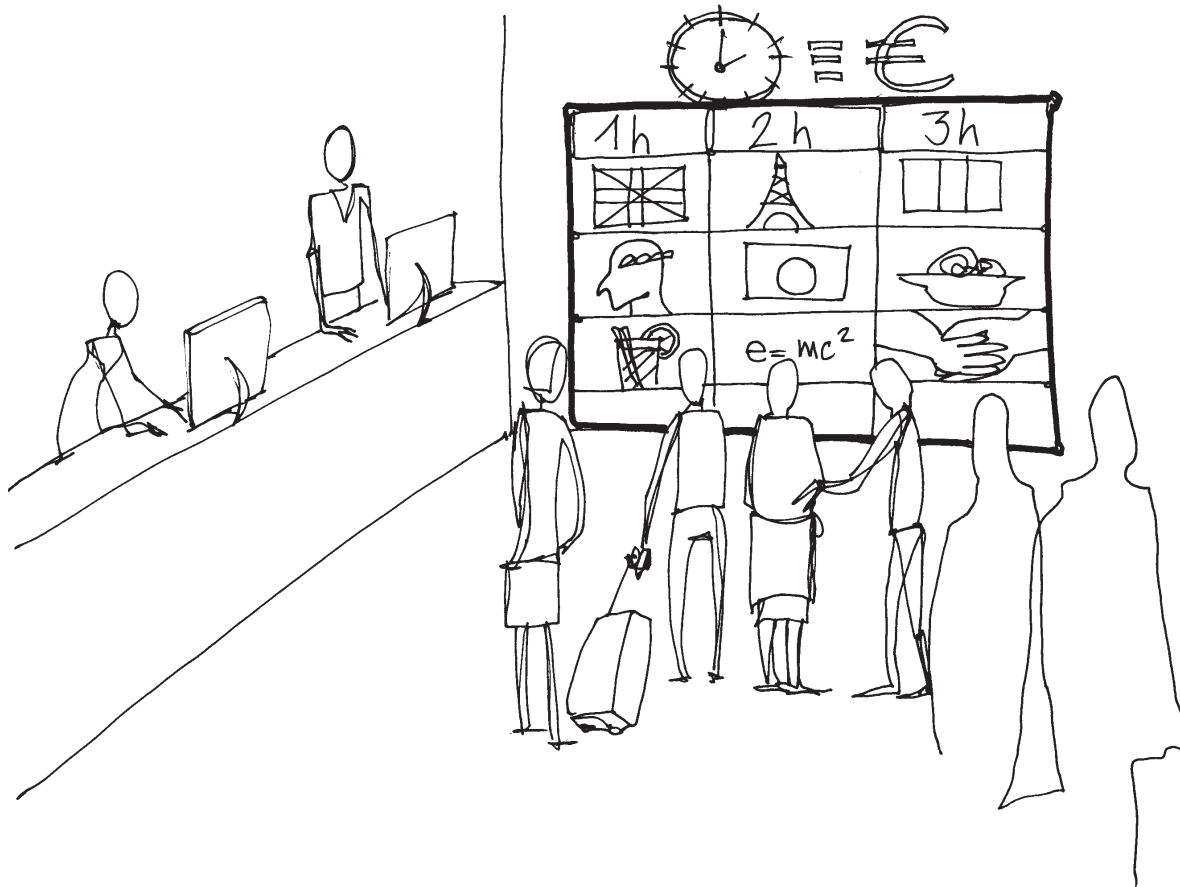
The Design Airport

The design-city theme supports the desire of Copenhagen city to be seen as a city of design. We imagine a scenario where the airport would become the hub of the design capital with workshops and studios. Passengers could both buy and discover how things are made. Interactive devices would allow people draw the pattern for a fabric with the same fabric transformed into a dress that they can take away with them. On-the-spot production could engage people with a new shopping experience - people could choose roll of fabric and then watch whilst the shop assistant cuts and sews the clothing in front of them. This production process would not be limited solely to fashion but could also include souvenirs, furniture design, make-up, etc. The traveler is invited to leave a mark to generate a design which can produced and taken away with them.

New Technology is revolutionising the design arena. Visitors could see and experience this revolution directly within the Copenhagen Airport. Shopping could be mixed with experimental production. The airport becomes an area of production as well as an area for consumption. We consider the current airport to be formed around the metaphor of the shopping mall. This solution is we believe an intelligent expansion of this current metaphor.
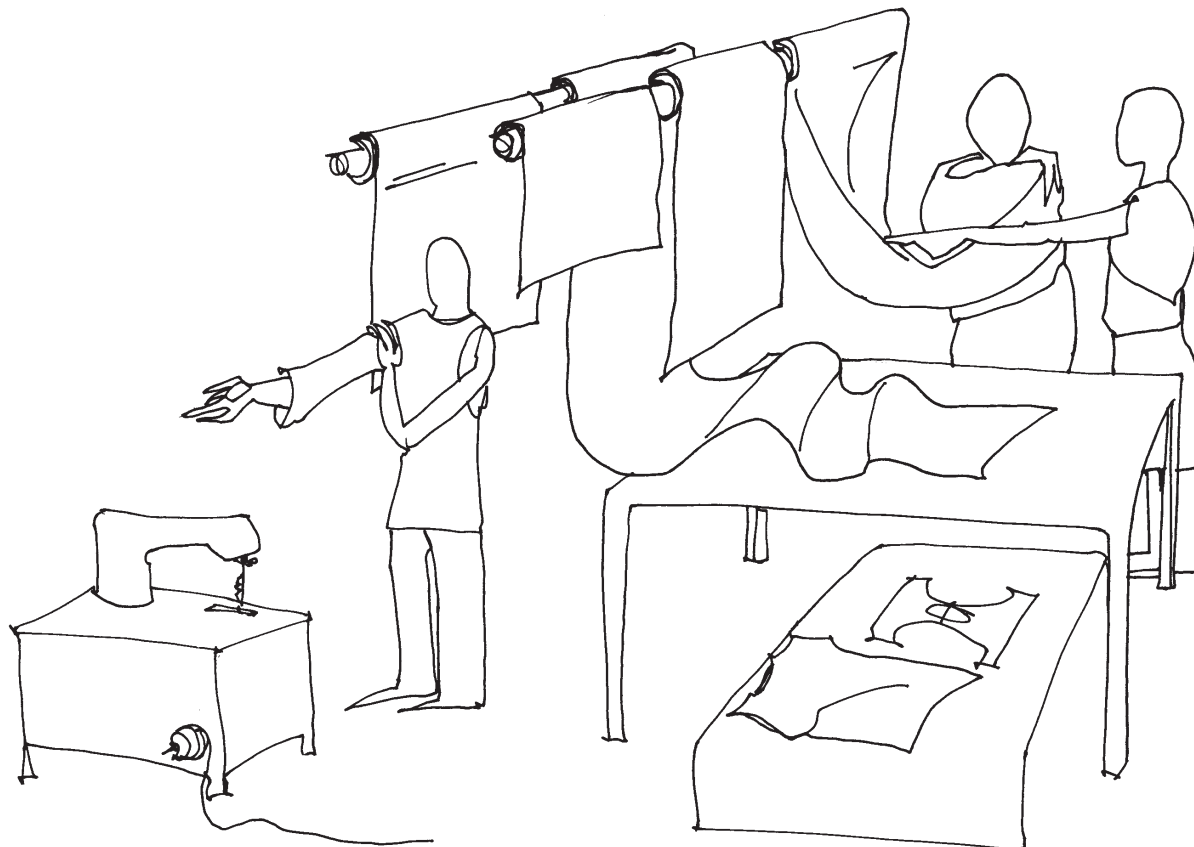
CONCEPT:

DESIGN AIRPORT

CPH Design Airport

The area that we believe is most promising to develop is that of the Design Airport where passengers can participate in the design and customisation of the things they buy. The idea of the Design Airport links into the promotion of the Index2005 event and a broader aim of promoting the reputation of Denmark as a centre of design.

For inspiration we have looked to the Mediterranean souk, an open public market where the distinctions between consumption and production is often blurred. The airport could transform itself into a place where one can buy, see, and participate. This could be facilitated by a combination of designers and emerging technology. In the Design Airport visitors are no longer anonymous travellers but are involved in the production process – customising the parameters, elements and materials of the final item.

We imagine a scenario where the traveller could even forget that they are in an airport and become immersed within a design activity. At the end of this they would have a unique item that they had participated in creating to take away with them - either to keep themselves or as a special gift.

Design Airport
Ideas

Below we present a selection of ideas for different types of products that travellers could create and some of the ways that they could go about participating in their creation and customisation.

Fashion

Fashion is one area that we believe could provide an exciting opportunity for visitor participation and customisation. Travellers could create different patterns for fabric using a digital interface, the design could then be transferred onto a fabric where it could be cut to size and sewn into an item of clothing.

The interaction to create the pattern or design would not necessarily be limited to drawing or sketching. The traveller could interact with software using different inputs - for example the travellers voice, their name, even their height could be used as the seed to grow a pattern or a design. We feel that it is important to have an opportunity for people to participate who might feel that they lack technical skills.

A number of companies are already exploring similar approached to this – the Italian fashion company Diesel offer an online service where one can specify certain parameters of their clothing - texture, colour, cut. Diesel then produces the finished garments based on the customer's choices. A slightly different approach can be seen at Muji where items can be purchased which support a certain level of customisation – for example they sell a single size of rain coat that can be cut down to fit the wearer.
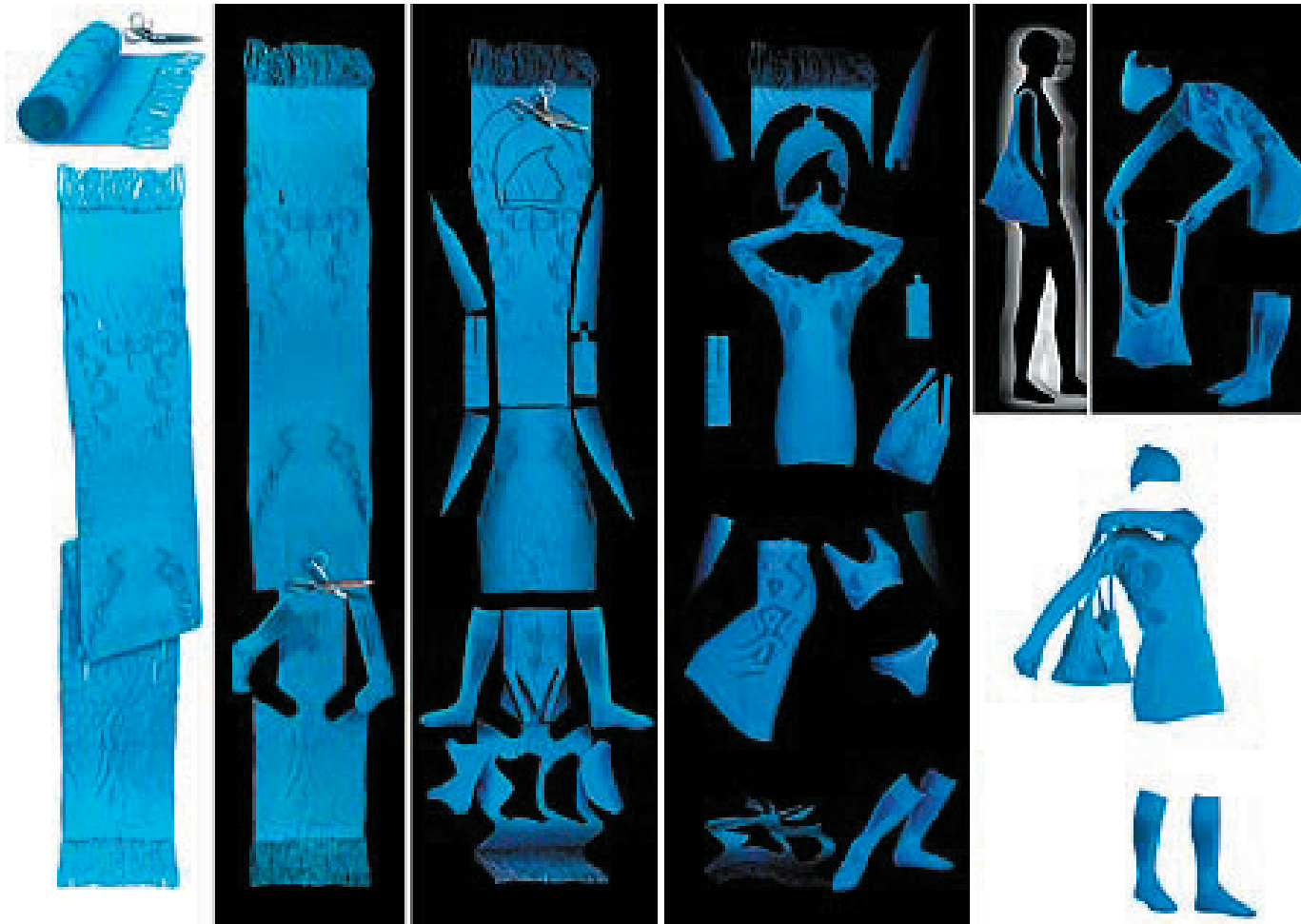
Furniture

Denmark has a worldwide reputation as a centre
of furniture design. It would be very exciting
to combine this heritage with developments in
technology to produce furniture customisable to
the travellers requirements.
The furniture might be for the short term –
perhaps a pillow / headrest sculpted to their body
for them to use on the plane.

The furniture could also be something which they
design around themselves for their own home –a
chair produced using measurements from their
body so that it exactly fits their body.

Product

Obviously such an item would not be ready on-demand, but could be sent on to the traveller's home once it has been produced.

Several companies are already exploring ways to offer on-demand customisation of their products - Swatch offers a facility in some of their shops which allows customers to design their own watch.

We imagine different types of products that the traveller might be interested in creating. On the one level we could try to support them in creating things that are immediately useful to them – for example a special long-haul survival pack which each traveller could customise to their own particular requirements. This survival pack could then be vacuum sealed with a handle to make it into an easily portable accessory. On a different product level we could establish a collaboration with Royal Copenhagen, perhaps allowing travellers to design their own motif or pattern which is then produced by Royal Copenhagen as a one-off piece.

Through the use of technologies such as body-scanners and computer controlled cutting equipment one could imagine a very special form of personalised item. A traveller could have their head scanned and this data could then be used to produce a one-off 3-d jigsaw for them. Another product could allow a traveller to have their whole body scanned and this data could then be used to produce a miniature figure of them (we believe in never underestimating people's narcissistic curiosity). On a simple level a traveller could be photographed and this photograph cut-out and inserted into a novelty item – for example of snow dome.

Souvenirs

Often the things available to purchase in an airport border on the kitsch. It would be interesting to play somewhat with this expectation. Travellers could be given the opportunity to stage a set of fake holiday photographs – perhaps from destinations that they would never visit. This ficticious souvenir could allow the traveller to play with the expectations of their friends back home.

Goodbye Lenin!

Chocolate

Chocolates are often brought at the airport and we think they could be rendered even more attractive by adding a layer of personalisation.

This could run from imprinting images onto the actual chocolates, to making a personalised packaging to contain the traveller's selection of chocolates. Printing onto the chocolates could be achieved using starch-based edible inks, this could allow the transfer of photographic images – travellers would be able to use their photographs to create edible postcards.

Another option would be to print images onto the wrapping of the chocolates to create a very individual package. Perhaps the traveller could specify not only the appearance of the chocolate but also the flavour – different ingredients could be combined on demand to create a personally tailored chocolate.

Music and Literature

Travellers could be offered a way to customise different media to suit their needs or interests.

This could be easily achieved with music in the form of a cd-burning bar – travellers could design and create their own music selection personalised to their taste (or perhaps they could take a copy of someone else's selection to broaden their taste).
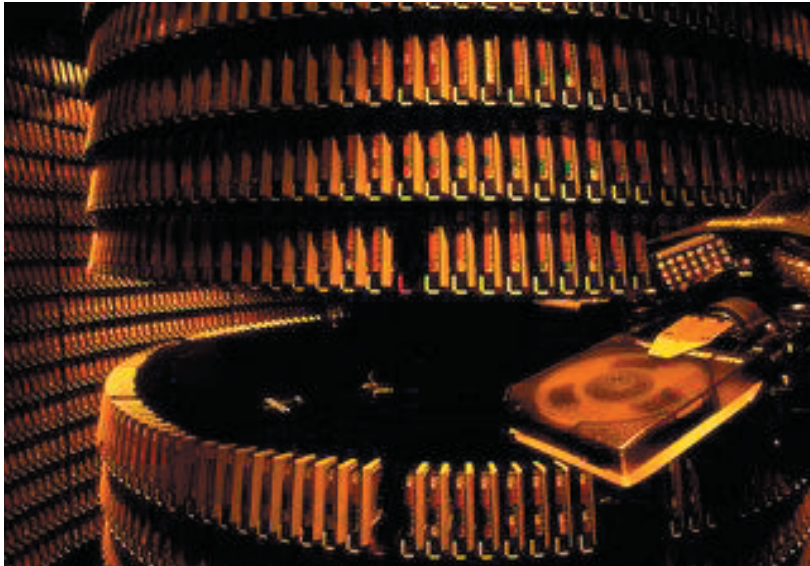
Books, especially guide-books could be available written from different perspectives – for example a guide to Copenhagen could focus on a specific area – the bars, the architecture or the transport system.

Next Steps

Collaboration

A number of the ideas outlined here depend on collaboration with other companies to realise them.
A logical next step would involve contacting companies to and establishing partnerships with them to develop projects with them.

Another interesting avenue to explore would be to involve machine manufacturers who could assist greatly with the provision of machines and who we imagine would be very interested in the kind of exposure that such an event might provide.

Credits

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e1

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