A Sketch of Intuition and Its Design Implications

by

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Abstract:

Intuition has been a much-discussed topic in many fields of study. This dissertation attempts to look at intuition especially in the field of design. Many books, articles, and papers had been written about understanding the mysterious design processes, of which intuition plays an important part. Most of them based their writings on researches, experiments and theories of scientists, especially neuroscientists, educators and practising designers.

One then questions the need for all these studies. Firstly, is the basis of study reliable? Is the understanding of intuition in science, in philosophy and in psychology, all of which look at intuition from different approaches, complimentary, or are their findings fundamentally contradicting? Secondly, can intuition be understood at all? And if not, why bother?

In order to have some insight into such questions, this paper will attempt to map scientific findings, philosophical discourses and psychological theory of intuition onto one another, first and foremost, to see if there is any inherent contradictions, and then to derive a sketch of intuition from the process. This may give a rough picture of how intuition works, what is intuition, and why is intuition needed, and thus to the question of whether intuition can be totally understood at all. Recalling that this paper deals with intuition and design, the question of 'why bother' should also address the nature of design, and specifically, architecture design, on top of the nature of intuition.

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