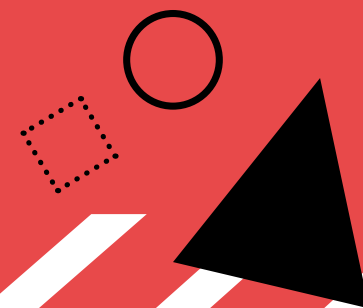


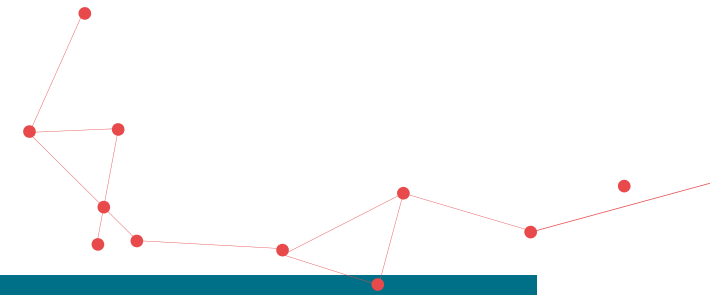
01

CONTEXT



no generally accepted definition of the term. Or rather, we have not been able to find this definition so far. Entrepreneurs, governments, designers, and others involved all formulate their own definition. The recently published book *We moeten eens koffie drinken* [Let's grab a coffee sometime] by Van Vliet & Wijkhuis (2015) confirms this. They claim that the creative industry is an industrial mindset, an umbrella term, a form of recognition, or even an austerity measure. That lack of clarity surprised them and they started to explore the term of creative industry by comparing various views. Everyone determines their own framework and within that context there are no correct or incorrect definitions, according to them. This makes sense to us. In order to better place the principle of concept thinking within the creative industry, we gladly offer our own definition in order to prevent any further confusion. In doing so, we also determine our own framework in this book. Similar to the definition of 'concept', it is also virtually impossible to give the 'creative industry' one single definition. There are simply too many definitions in circulation. The creative industry produces meaningful products or services that are the result of creativity and entrepreneurship. It is our opinion that it is important to understand that you need to offer added (symbolic) value to consumers and organisations in society. Considered from that standpoint, you are not creating your own ideal product or service, but a meaningful solution to which creating symbolic value is vital. For arriving at our classification of the creative industry, we took the European definition of creative industry as a point of departure: 'The creative industry is a sector that, in addition to economic value, also creates and exploits symbolic value. It rests on the ability of individuals, groups, companies, and organisations to

create meaning'. We take the activity as stated in the definition as a starting point for categorising or not categorising something as belonging to the creative industry, for which we replace the activities of 'creating' and 'exploiting' to those of 'developing' and 'framing', respectively. In addition, we add the activity of 'activating'. The creation of symbolic value is then the result of developing, framing, and activating creative, meaningful content and design. In this way, we can largely reach consensus on what activities belong to the creative industry. We maintain that professionals and organisations directly responsible for the development of the concept are virtually always part of the creative industry. This makes the business sectors involved in the activation of the developed concepts, such as concert venues, broadcasting companies, and museums, part of the creative industry as well. All these companies are often in dialogue with the makers/developers about the eventual form of the products and content of the expressions. They are responsible for access to the creative content and as such have an influence on the symbolic value. For instance, the activities of the gaming sector also fall under the creative industry. In this case, we are not referring to the development of software, but the content, the story, and the interaction between the player and the game typical of gaming. In determining whether an organisation does or does not fall inside the scope of the creative industry, it is therefore important to never lose sight of the essential activities: the development, framing, and activation of symbolic value. There are various organisational connections to be recognised between the various activities. The manner in which the content is developed, framed, and activated can entirely occur in-house. However, in the case of for instance creative



THE CORE ACTIVITY OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY IS CREATING SYMBOLIC VALUE.

**CREATING SYMBOLIC VALUE**  
=  
**DEVELOPMENT**  
**+ FRAMING**  
**+ ACTIVATION OF THE SYMBOLIC**  
**VALUE**

business services it is commonly about the creation of meaningful content for other business sectors. In that way, creative business services providers deliver creative input to several business sectors. They strengthen the distinctive capacity of companies and their products and services and can be of value for each activity. Another organisational form within the creative industry emerges when an organisation develops independent creative content, commercialised and therefore activated by the other business sectors. In addition to symbolic value, the creative industry also offers functional value. A design from an architect will have aesthetic value, but must also be functional in use. Keeping the aforementioned in mind, we have made a

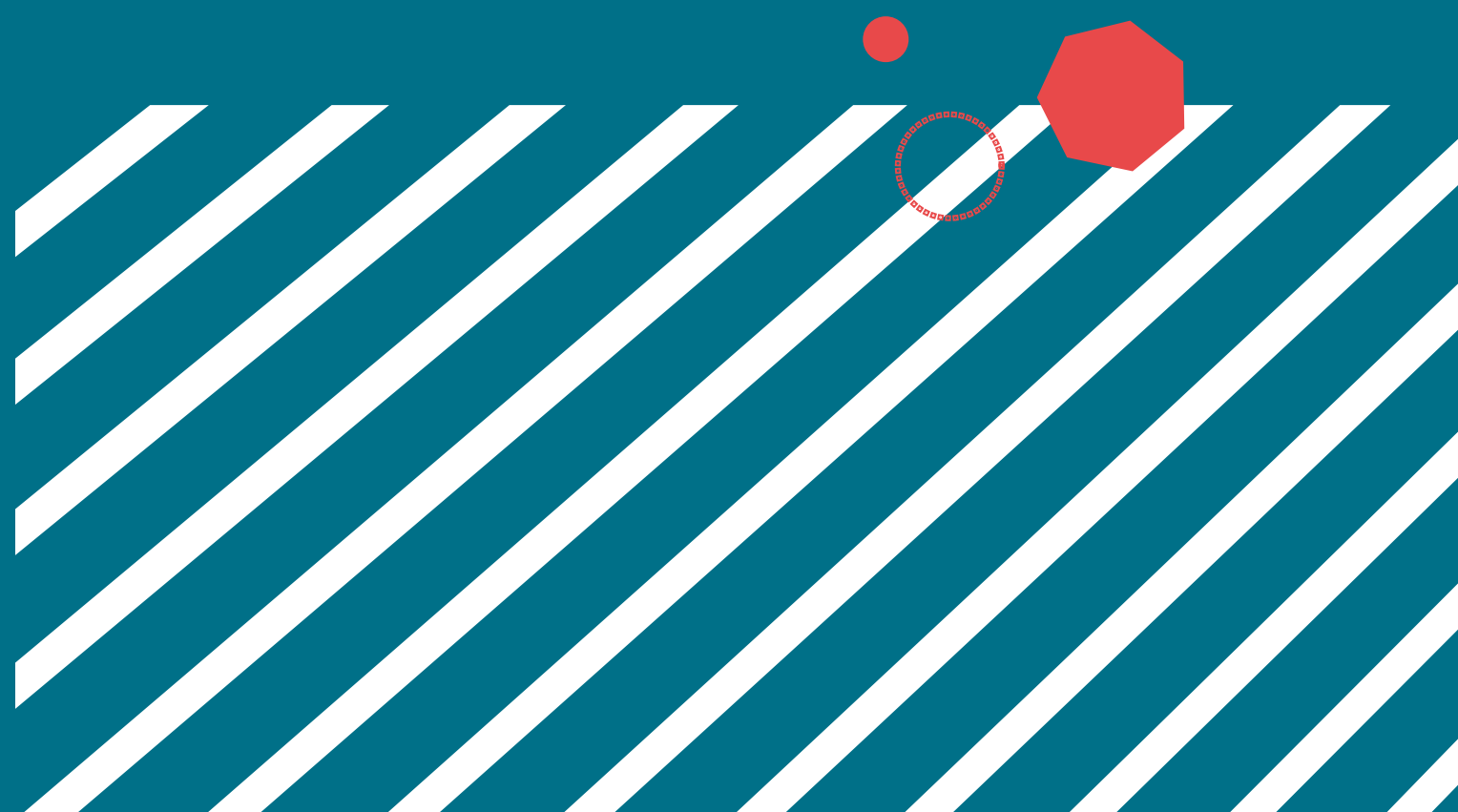
classification for the creative industry connected to our definition and phasing of a concept, subdivided into the dormant, awakening, and living concept. The three activities together create and communicate meaning and ensure a meaningful experience for the consumer.

**DORMANT CONCEPT**

All activities for which the development of creative, meaningful content and design is essential. These are focused on the symbolic value and the development of the vision.



**VISION,  
VALUES  
AND CONCEPT**



## FREITAG

Why is FREITAG doing this? What is their motivation? This is where they are unique. Many companies make bags and accessories, thus the 'what' or the living concept. Significantly fewer companies make bags and accessories from used truck tarps and recycled materials, and even fewer do it with the kind of passion FREITAG does. FREITAG is a good example of how you can create, produce, and exploit meaning on the basis of multiple value creation. The core values of FREITAG are symbolic in nature, but are certainly not disconnected from the economic value. FREITAG's extensive vision, which they identify as the WHY, consists of a number of elements they deem important: such as: next life, the founding story with the bicycle bags, liking people, intel-

ligence, added value, inner value, honesty, simplicity, thinking in cycles. FREITAG likes to think things through in such a way that their products and projects last longer. In the beginning, there was the bicycle. Their bags were originally made to carry things on a bike. They used dumped bicycle inner tubes as one of their key materials, and they still do so to this day. FREITAG likes people: their customers are friends, not target groups. They look for gaps in the market relating to modern life and try to find new answers. According to them, intelligence connects design with ecology and humour: sustainable fun. In addition to intelligence, they also stand for culture. This alone creates an ideological added value. Responsibility is an integral part of what they do. FREITAG is mindful of inner value. Their bags are not just brimming with quality and functionality, but



also contain hidden details. These details make people happy and make the selling, owning, and using of the bag a great experience. FREITAG is thoroughly genuine, unique, and authentic. They reduce complexity without becoming trivial. Reduction, dropping the superfluous, and focusing on the essential and the meaningful are always their goal. Finally, the Why also contains thinking in cycles. Waste turns into something sustainable, as they use its material and give it a new life.





»»A CONCEPT WITHOUT CONVERSATION IS NOTHING. YOU AND I CAN THINK OF A CONCEPT, BUT IT IS CRUCIAL THAT IT IS TALKED ABOUT BY OTHERS.««

Arjo Klamer, Erasmus University Rotterdam

its own identity is the point of departure. The organisation will then automatically get an audience: people who want to be associated with the vision. These people identify with the vision and the concept.

**IS EASY TO UNDERSTAND AND EXPLAIN.** Users need to be able to easily find the essence of the concept and as a provider you also need to be able to explain the concept in one sentence. Imagine that you need to store your concept in a moving container with many other concepts and you are not permitted to add the name of your company. What would then be that one sentence that you would write on the box?

**GOES TOGETHER WITH THE POWER OF LANGUAGE (IN WORDS AND IMAGES).** Language is an important part of a strong concept and ensures that we can convey the concept. Language is communication and emotion. You convey your thoughts to others by means of language. And a good message is convincing, sticks, and fascinates. A clever choice of words that covers the essence of the concept is highly important in this. Language and perception are connected and you can play with this as a concept thinker. People interpret language

in various manners, which is why language has depth. People visualise language in personal images and in that manner draw meaning from words. If language and visuals are combined effectively, they reinforce each other. Together they make up an appealing whole, which makes you think and triggers your imagination. In translating the concept into the awakening concept, you therefore need to carefully consider your word and image choices. Your dormant concept helps you in doing so. What is your vision? What target group do you wish to address? This will determine what words you use in your awakening concept. Will you opt for the English language, which often occurs in concepts, or will you choose a local language, for instance Dutch in the Netherlands? Does your word choice cover that which you wish to communicate? Sometimes a poor title still perfectly covers the essence of what you wish to convey. For example, this was the case for the TV programme *De slechtste chauffeur van Nederland* [The worst driver of the Netherlands]. That was exactly what it was, no more and no less. In addition, it fits with the way in which BNN (a public broadcaster for youth in the Netherlands) communicates: clearly, briefly, and concisely.

**IS RECOGNISABLE.** A good concept ensures that whenever the user sees, experiences, or feels something, he or she immediately knows that it belongs to the brand in question or the organisation behind it. The concept ensures that all recognisable loose elements come together under one umbrella.

**HAS A LONG SHELF LIFE.** An idea is like a mayfly: beautiful, but with a regrettably short lifespan. A concept is like a chameleon: perseverant and able to survive in complete harmony with its environment. An effective concept therefore is aligned with earlier campaigns, products and/or services and offers ample space for continued development. The concept is in line with the circular economy: not just because its raw materials can be reused, but also because it has endurance and thus has the capacity to adjust to new insights and developments. A concept always offers space and is always a piece of a puzzle which can be moved around and used for further expanding the concept. A strong concept is not static, but offers space for further development. It is important not to get stuck in a rigid mould, as this is limiting. The world is not static and therefore concepts should not be either. A concept should not already be outdated by the time it is introduced; it must respond to the advancing time and the advancing insights.

**IS FREE OF DISCIPLINE.** The world is increasingly hybrid and specialisations are increasingly fused. Concepts must be able to handle the complexity of today, but also that of tomorrow. Geoff Maree, lecturer Imagineering at NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences, was asked to design the cemetery of 'tomorrow'. The cemetery was allowed to be different from the traditional headstones and urns the supplier

had been using up to then. The ultimate solution was much broader: tombstones with small TVs in them. These monitors were linked to an Internet page on which children could for instance upload new drawings for grandpa and grandma, which could then again be placed on the cemetery. This is an example of a cross-border concept that constitutes an improvement of the old granite stone. You start analysing the intention of the cemetery, and that intention is to stimulate and enhance engagement between people and with the deceased.

The secret of a strong concept is hidden in all these principles, but it remains to be seen whether you need to meet all of these criteria in order to arrive at a strong concept. We believe it is most important for your concept to be aligned with your vision and symbolic core values at any given time. The more of the above principles additionally reflected in your concept, the stronger it will become. Upon testing your concept, take these focal points into consideration. We will get back to this in chapters 5 and 6.

>>ALLOW YOURSELF TO WONDER. QUESTION EVERYTHING: WHY IS SOMETHING THE WAY IT IS?<< Mark Leurs, TBWA

imbalanced, you also know what elements must in any case be deployed in order to further develop the concept. Subsequently, it depends on your starting situation and the domain in which the concept is created what elements you do and do not use. Below is a visual representation of the elements of concept development. You can see that you need different elements at each stage of the development, and that the development of a dormant concept is a more extensive undertaking than the development of the awakening concept. Still, the stages of a concept are interlinked; they need each other. A living concept has no body without an awakening and dormant part. Indeed, the output of the dormant and awakening concept come together in the living concept. The elements of content and design are different per stage. The model displays

the elements per stage. These are the same for content and design, but naturally they take on different shapes. In addition, it illustrates what the output of each stage is for both content and design. It is an ongoing process of formulation and visualisation going hand in hand, in order to translate this into a unique output later on.

### 3.10 CONCEPT DEVELOPER SECRETS

Your starting situation and all the elements are all good and well, but they are useless to you without the required characteristics of a good concept developer. On the basis of literature and many interviews with experts we made a selection of the required characteristics. We provide you with an overview of them.

>>IN EACH PHASE YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE WHERE YOU STAND AND YOU COMMUNICATE THIS WITH VISUALS. AT THE BEGINNING THOSE VISUALS ARE FLUID AND ABSTRACT, BUT THEY GRADUALLY BECOME MORE CONCRETE.<< Mark de Jong, Kossmann.dejong

>>GOOD CONCEPT DEVELOPERS ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE HIGHLY INQUISITIVE, HAVE A BROAD VISION, AND ARE GENERALISTS. THEY HAVE A BROAD RANGE OF INTERESTS AND DARE TO ALLOW THEIR INTUITION FREE REIN. "CANNOT" DOES NOT EXIST. THEY HAVE THE GIFT OF BEING ABLE TO CONVINCING OTHERS OF AN IDEA.<< Jan Rijkenberg, BSUR

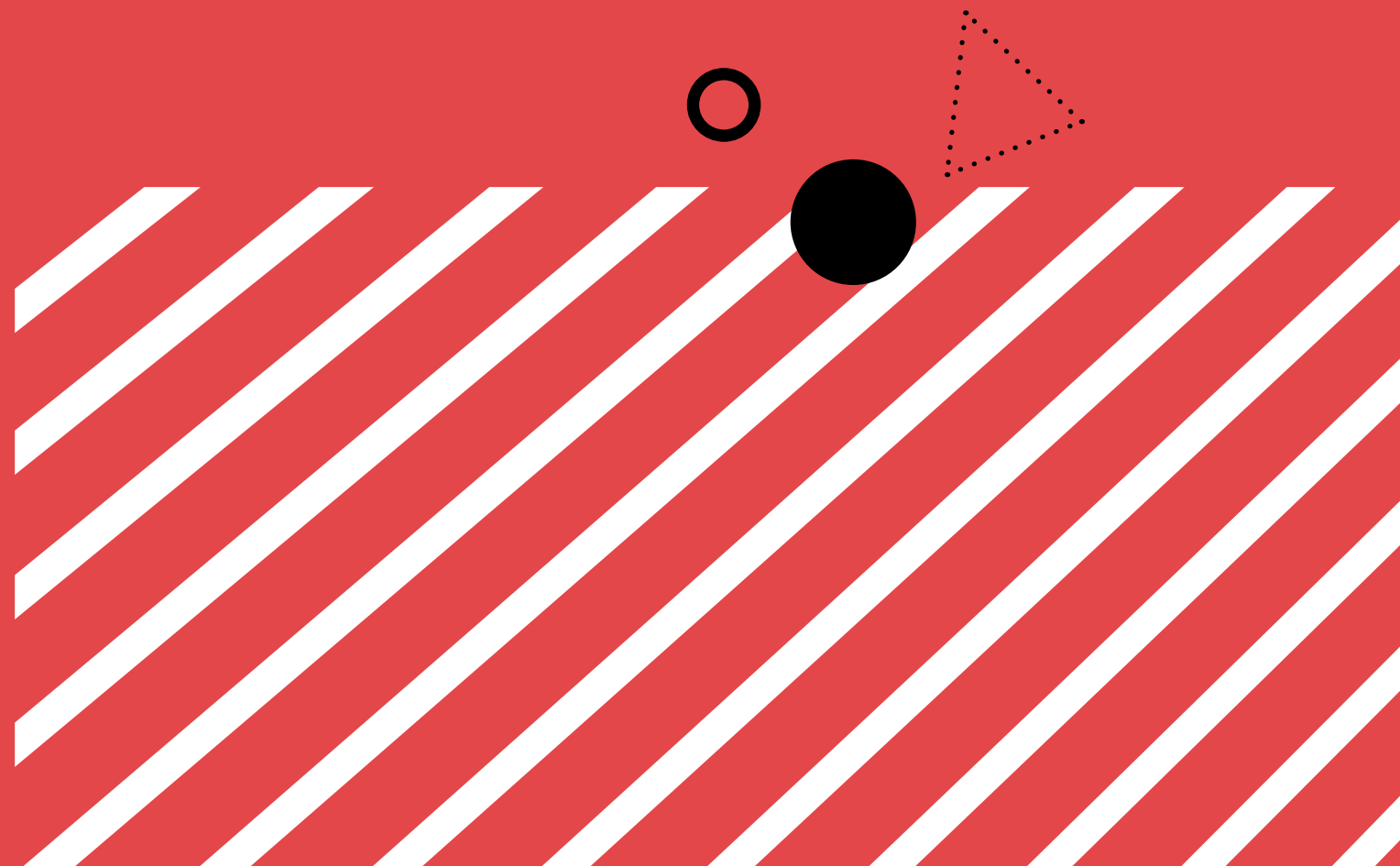
#### A GOOD CONCEPT DEVELOPER:

- IS CURIOUS
- IS OPEN-MINDED
- HAS IMAGINATION
- HAS GUTS
- IS GOOD AT OBSERVING
- IS INTUITIVE/EMPATHIC
- SEES THE OVERALL PICTURE/CAN ZOOM IN AND OUT
- QUICKLY MAKES CONNECTIONS
- IS CONVINCING
- IS WELL ABLE TO PLACE HIM- OR HERSELF IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES

Naturally, you cannot embody all of these characteristics; you can merely strive to. Still, you can train and challenge yourself to have more guts or sharpen your skills of observation. Can you learn concept thinking? We believe you can, with the sidenote that naturally some will have a greater talent for it than others. It is a way of thinking in which we make much more use of both our brain hemispheres. The next chapters of this book discuss per stage what the elements mean and where they lead. It provides you with a more concrete insight into how you can develop each stage of the concept. As you were able to read in chapter 1, we consider each stage of a concept as an activity that takes place within the creative industry. Depending on your style and expertise, you could therefore also be an expert in one stage of the concept.

**3**

**FRAMING,  
THE AWAKENING  
CONCEPT**







»WE STRIVE TO CHALLENGE THE INDUSTRY BY DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY. WE WORSHIP UNCONVENTIONAL IDEAS, CHARMING SMILES AND REAL EMOTIONS. WE SEE THE OLD CONSERVATIVE WORLD AS EXTREMELY TEDIOUS AND AS OUR BIGGEST ENEMY.«

KLÄTRA INTE HÄR!

Coop



STAGE:  
LIVING CONCEPT  
ELEMENT:  
ACTIVATION OF CONTENT  
AND DESIGN  
SUGGESTION:  
DESIGN METAPHORS

**WHAT IS IT?**

A metaphor offers a description of an object or idea by comparing it to something else with similar characteristics. You can think of a metaphor as a form of imagery. You use images to trigger and inspire the receiver.

**WHAT DOES IT ACHIEVE?**

A metaphor brings two different matters together. It is a powerful way to express something. According to Lakoff and Johnson (Metaphors We Live By, 1980) metaphors are even necessary to be able to think conceptually. A metaphor can help you word your feelings. How exactly do metaphors work?

- Metaphors break through boundaries
- They appeal to your sense of imagination
- They evoke recognition
- They make positive associations possible
- They correspond with personal emotions and

experiences

- They provide depth to communication
- They reinforce the message
- They anchor values

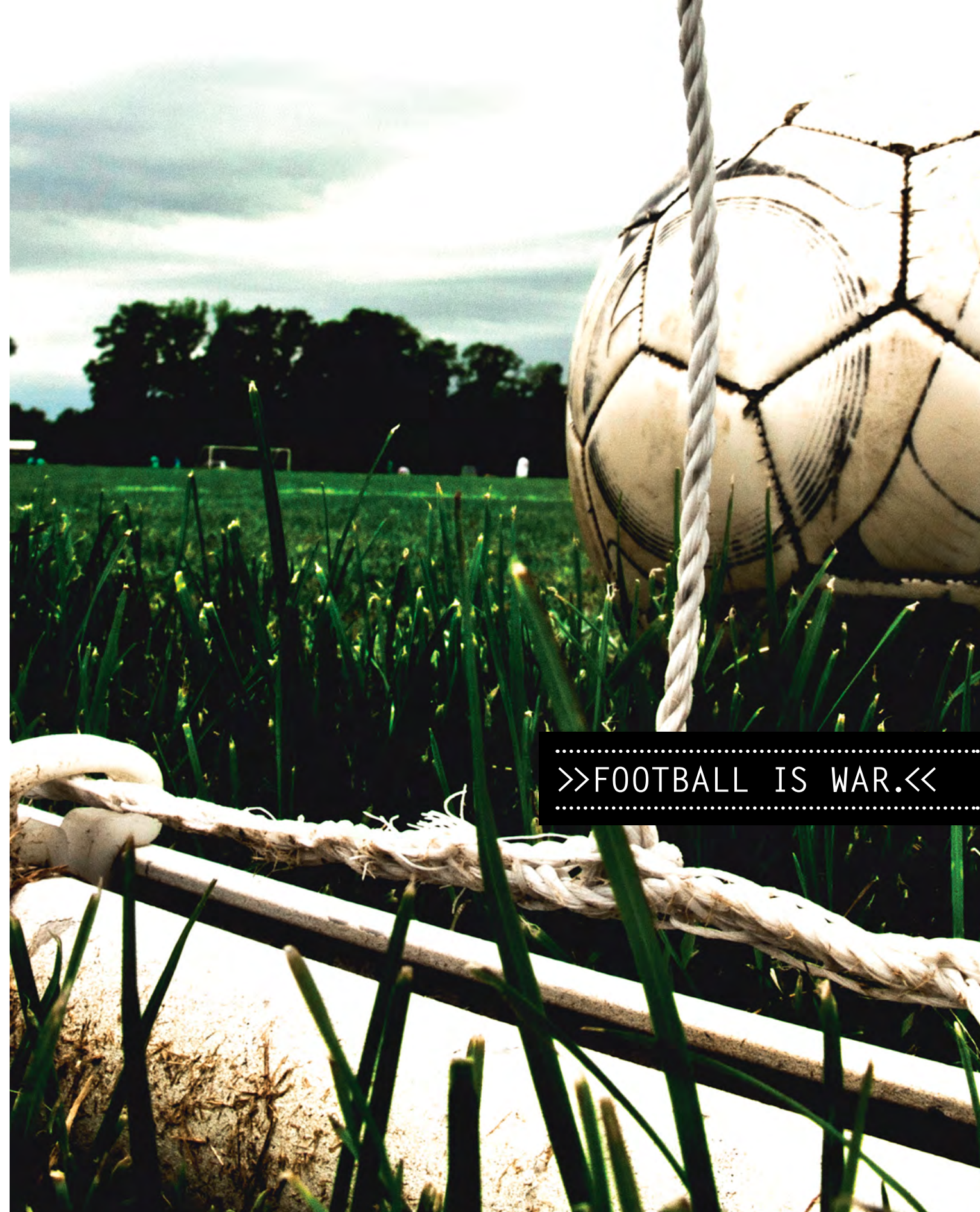
A good example of thinking in metaphors is the statement by football coach Rinus Michels: 'Football is war.' With this metaphor he illustrates his view of football. Thus you can use metaphors to create new structures. The scientific term for this is synectics.

**HOW DOES IT WORK?**

In the design process you have a variety of information that serves as the basis for your design. You have a story as your basis. In order to trigger people, you need to shape this information in an effective manner. You can do so with metaphors. There are a number of examples of synectics, according to Roukes (1988), that you can use to get inspired and find the right metaphor. We name a few: personification, comparison, changing scale, combination, replacement, repetition, and isolation.

Using the examples above you can review your concept and think about how you might depict it metaphorically. You can use the world around you as inspiration in order to then make use of one of the aforementioned examples. To get inspired, you could look at film, theatre, politics, architecture, visual arts, books, and history.

**Also refer to:** Roukes, N. (1988). Design synectics. Stimulating Creativity in Design: Davis Publications  
VandenBroek, J., Koetsenruijter, W., DeJong, J. & Smit, L. (2010). Beeldtaal: Perspectieven voor makers en gebruikers: Boom onderwijs



>>FOOTBALL IS WAR.<<



>>WE GET STUDENTS THAT WE DESERVE, SO IF WE OURSELVES ARE NOT ENTREPRENRIAL, CURIOUS, INQUISITIVE OR MUTUALLY ATTRACTIVE, THIS ALSO INFLUENCES THE STUDENTS.<<

In addition to this more or less fixed structure of concept carriers, new touchpoints constantly emerge from questions from the environment of ACI World and from initiatives by teachers. Pieter Bon:

‘In the past year, we have just found and made the connection with the city here in Tilburg. That city is used as context. The questions from the city come for instance from a local public broadcaster such as Omroep Tilburg, a city marketing lab or a ‘City lab’, or a festival such as Mundial. In addition, they come from the municipality itself: for instance they want to professionalise their event organisers within the municipality. We have embraced all those questions in the city and used as an environment for students to learn.

An important touchpoint for every concept are the people that carry out the concept, the people with which the consumer comes into contact. This is certainly the case in education, where the teacher essentially delivers the actual ‘service’ to the student. How does ACI World deal with this? Pieter Bon:

‘On the basis of the vision, you hire people and organise the culture to fit. This shapes the personality of ACI, which is also constantly in development and will remain

so. I do not believe the identity is the start. There are always policy plans, management reports, and annually two strategy days. We have also formulated three principles again. ACI will become more of a challenge, which means that we will be leaving that classroom even more. ACI will become ACI World. Those three components are interconnected.

As a team, we need to learn to look every year at where we are, in what scenario we are, and how we will continue. We involve teachers and the IMR (institute’s participation council, ed.) in this and this has made us what we are now. That fresh air needs to stay in; we need to continually develop ourselves. The basis is that there is a creative industry that defines creativity according to application in three different ways and that we prepare young people for this. The identity is what it is. We once formulated this in core values. The identity has been formed over the years and will continue to be formed, I think.’

Ultimately, it is about your living concept being an actual experience for people that come into contact with it. That they can experience your concept without having to read your plans. How could ACI World be defined? Pieter Bon:

‘If you interpret our ACI World, you would arrive at our students being able to study in another culture in forty places across the world. There are five world cities, including Tilburg (laughs), where we take the questions of that city and the city itself as a learning environment. Not yet to the extent I would like to see that happening, but that is also our world. We have provided ‘The World is Our Classroom’ with some structure. Admittedly, that is a physical structuring of the world with content

elements surrounding and within it, such as the labs (Dance lab, Game lab, Design lab, etc.). We also want to start with a ‘Trend lab’. Another interpretation of such an environment is more the ‘NY Academy of Creative Industries’ and the ‘London Academy’. That is a strategic umbrella to indicate that our activities are referred to as such there. Before I get a chance to explain what Fontys

is, we will be here for ages; the ‘London Academy’ is instantly recognised. Further shaping a concept requires constant effort. You need to bring people along in a vision. I hope we will be doing this a lot. We also talk very visually about the academy, instead of using policy language. This gives the academy a certain shape and experience, an image. It is almost philosophical.’

