Book Section:
Aiello, G orcid.org/0000-0002-9636-1016 (2017) Losing to Gain: Balancing Style and Texture in the Starbucks Logo. In: Mosbæk Johannessen, C and Van Leeuwen, T, (eds.) The Materiality of Writing: A Trace Making Perspective. Routledge Studies in Multimodality . Routledge , London, UK , pp. 195-210. ISBN 9781138679726

Aiello, Giorgia (in press for 2017). “Losing to gain: Balancing style and texture in the Starbucks logo”. In Christian Mosbæk Johannessen and Theo Van Leeuwen (Eds.), *The Materiality of Writing. A Trace Making Perspective*. London: Routledge.

Introduction

In January 2011 Starbucks unveiled a new design for its ubiquitous logo, which ‘freed’ the iconic siren from the “Starbucks Coffee” wordmark. The new logo was introduced in an official video by Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, who stated that the new design “embraces and respects our heritage” and at the same time allows the siren to “come out of the circle in a way that [...] gives us the freedom to think beyond coffee” (A look at the future of Starbucks, 2011).

The history of the Starbucks logo is one of systematic rebranding in the wake of the coffee company’s progressive economic expansion and international outreach (Wood, 2011). Over time, the logo has been increasingly stylized, with a particular emphasis on foregrounding the appeal of its feminine image while also taming its more overtly sexualized features (Aiello, 2013). With its most recent redesign, and in trend with other successful corporate brands such as Nike and Apple, the logo has become ‘purely’ visual. In 2011, in sight of Starbucks’ 40th anniversary, the outer circle and the wordmark with the company’s name were dropped from the logo design. In addition, black disappeared from the brand’s colour scheme. In official blog posts announcing the new logo, representatives of Starbucks’ creative team remarked that ‘simplicity’ was key to the ‘evolution’ of the brand. They also highlighted how the new logo design ‘liberated’ the siren, “making her the true, welcoming face of Starbucks” (So, Who is the Siren? 2011). Such minimalism in design and emphasis on the siren also relied on a series of subtle changes in form and composition, with interventions on spacing and the width of strokes as well as changes aimed at “smoothing her hair, refining her facial features, weighting the scales on her tail to bring the focus to her face” (Bringing the Siren to Life, 2011).

In this chapter, I note how the increasing stylization of the Starbucks logo design goes hand in hand with a much less publicized though noticeable trend in how the logo is rendered and placed in the material contexts of its display on storefronts and in spaces like airports, city streets and shopping malls. The logo’s graphic features have progressively become more streamlined through the ‘loss’ of key cues; as I explain later in the chapter, over time the Starbucks logo has lost the irregularity and overall ‘roughness’ of the original design, most signifiers pertaining to the siren’s body and, eventually, also its linguistic message together with some of the remaining design glitches due to the fact that the1990s logo had been designed with an early version of AutoTrace (Bringing the Siren to Life, 2011). In this process, the logo has also become purer, insofar as it is now both exclusively visual and foregrounds increasingly stylized and abstract cues. Meanwhile, Starbucks has also devised a global design strategy to communicate locality across a number of stores (Aiello and Dickinson, 2014; Stinson, 2014) and therefore also confer more ‘texture’ to its iconic logo (cf. Djonov and Van Leeuwen, 2011). At the same time, the newly stylized logo has been increasingly woven into the very fabric of Starbucks stores, thus becoming part and parcel of the corporation’s materiality in urban space. As I argue at the end of this chapter, visual stylization goes hand in hand abstraction and, in turn, visual abstraction may lend itself particularly well to the creation of experiential meaning potentials and, overall, a material engagement with the logo.

Experiencing the Starbucks logo between stylization and texturization

Through key examples of Starbucks logos that I have physically encountered in Hong Kong, Seattle, London and Zurich, I offer a social semiotic analysis that takes into account not only changes in the logo's graphic features (its stylization) but also variations in its material articulation (its texturization). In doing this, I attempt not so much to offer a systematic account of the logo's micro-textual details but rather a reflection on its experiential characteristics as a material and spatial semiotic object.

From a visual and multimodal standpoint, stylization often entails techniques aimed at 'cleansing' images from inappropriate characteristics (Cameron, 2000), while texturization deploys cues aimed at invoking the emplaced, embodied and overall sensorial qualities of semiotic resources (Aiello and Pauwels, 2014). While these two processes may seem to be ad odds with one other, they may in fact work together to reconcile seemingly contradictory demands of contemporary capitalism. In balancing style and texture, the textual and material design of the Starbucks logo may deploy meaning potentials of both genericity and diversity, distance and connection, and authoritativeness and intimacy. It is these tensions, rather than an exclusive focus on homogeneity (or sameness) or, on the other hand, heterogeneity (or difference), that may best contribute to an in-depth understanding of how major graphic traces like those that 'make' logos are mobilized in contemporary settings of corporate globalization (Aiello and Dickinson, 2014). And because Starbucks is quite literally woven into the urban and suburban fabrics of 70 countries across continents, the coffee company's design choices are deeply intertwined with everyday life in cities.

While logos are always central to the overall experience of a brand, Starbucks has taken this premise further by highlighting not only the visual, but also the material nature of its logo as a set of traces. In his approach to studying the basic stock of graphic signs that are universally mobilized across applications, Stötzner (2003) distinguishes between 'graphs', or traces stemming from movements *along* a surface, and 'bold graphs', or 'imprints' that result from movements *onto* a surface. In other words, graphic signs originating from drawing, carving or writing, all of which entail movements of "a pen-like instrument" (p. 288), are qualitatively different from embossing, stamping or stencilling, which all result in impressions that can be considered as "the isolated trace of a physically pre-modeled form" (p. 288). For example, Stötzner argues that imprints, which include footprints and handprints, may be more closely associated with primeval forms of signification that preceded human sign-making. In both cases, however, part of the meaning potentials of these two basic types of signs derives from the movements (or gestures) and technologies (or tools) that are implicitly associated with their production (also see Ingold, 2007). For this reason, in my analysis of how the Starbucks logo balances style and texture in the pursuit of the multiple expriential appeals listed above, I also consider the trace-making processes that may be implicit in how the logo is 'placed' in urban space.

A brand *of* the world: Stylizing the logo and the logo as style

Rebranding is an important site for the study of graphic design in everyday life, as this is a process that entails the tracing and retracing of graphic marks onto quotidian material surfaces, with consequences for how we experience not only objects of consumption but also the built environment as a whole. As Mosbæk Johannessen (2016) argues, "logos have become all-pervasive features of *semiotic landscapes*" (p. x), insofar as graphic design is no longer (and perhaps has never been) a layer that is separate from and juxtaposed to the urban built environment. Logos are richly meaningful, though structurally minimalistic artifacts that

have become not only integral to the aesthetics of urban surfaces, but also increasingly woven into the textures of branded environments. I will return to this point later in the chapter.

As I mentioned earlier, the history of the Starbucks logo is one of increasing stylization. Starbucks was born in 1971, with a single store located in Seattle's Pike Place Market, and a logo based on an intricate 15th century Norse woodcut portraying a two-tailed siren, or melusine, with bare breasts, a protruding belly, and a well-defined genital area (Heckler Associates, n.d.). In 1987 the original owners sold Starbucks to Howard Schultz, whom they had originally hired as a marketing manager. This move corresponded with the coffee company's expansion to other US cities as well as Canada. This is also when the logo became less 'offensive' through its first major restyling, which entailed not only the introduction of the now iconic Starbucks colours (green, white and black) but also for the siren's body to be heavily streamlined. The original logo's siren was not fit for an expanding market, due to her rough, sexualized appearance. In the new logo design, the siren's breasts were covered by her wavy long hair but her navel and body were still visible. In his memoir, titled *Pour Your Heart Into It*, Schultz explained his decision to retain the image of the siren for the Starbucks brand by stating that the logo ought to be "as seductive as coffee itself" (Schultz e Jones Yang, 1997, p. xx). When Starbucks went public in 1992, the logo was once again 'refreshed'. Although the overall design remained the same as the 1987 logo, the siren's body had been covered by zooming in on her face. The presence of breasts was now only suggested by the siren's wavy hair and we could no longer see her body except for the tips of her tails at her sides. The 1992 logo was the most widely used and best known version of the Starbucks design up until its rebranding in 2011. With Starbucks' expansion to commercial endeavours beyond coffee, the logo was further stylized.

Elsewhere I have argued that the progressive stylization of the Starbucks logo from its 1971 version up to its 1992 rendition, which stayed with us for almost two decades, was tied to the strategic deployment and active management of the siren's feminine appeal (Aiello, 2013). This is also true for the 2011 version of the logo, which kept the image of the siren as its central and only motif. This said, the siren's femininity has been increasingly tamed or, as Phillips and Rippin (2010) argue, she "has been physically neutered so she is no longer overtly female" (p. 497) and "has been made to submit to the imposition of the symbolic order and to the suppression of difference" (p. 496). In other words, an increasingly stylized Starbucks logo embodies some of the homogenizing demands of the global semioscape – that is, "the non-mediatized but globalizing circulation of symbols, sign systems and meaning-making practices" (Thurlow and Aiello, 2007, p. 308) – which is premised upon an interplay of sameness and difference, and where difference and diversity are both deployed and contained in the interest of distinction within globalist agendas. It is for this reason that, while still being mobilized by the coffee company for its feminine appeal, the siren "can no longer be represented as lascivious, womanly, whorish Melusine, but must instead appear as de-sexed Virgin" (Phillips and Rippin, 2010). As Cameron (2000) has pointed out in her groundbreaking work on 'verbal hygiene', stylization is a process based on the strategic foregrounding, enhancement and regulation of particular identity traits at the expense of others, which are removed from language in order to make it 'proper' according to broader, powerful social practices.

Alongside its more properly ideational status as the 'face' of the corporation, the Starbucks logo is also a protagonist in the physical space of contemporary cities and, as such, it is central to the semiotic landscapes of globalization. In the next section, I will examine some of the key ways in which the progressive stylization of the logo has gone hand in hand with its increasing texturization or, in other words, with a growing identification with the experiential

rather than merely symbolic meaning potentials of the Starbucks brand (Aiello and Dickinson, 2014). Even though we may see it as an increasingly sanitized set of traces, the stylized logo is in fact actively mobilized as a key visual style which is woven as texture into the built environment. Ultimately, the Starbucks logo has been 'losing' graphic traces to 'gain' in materiality. As Thurlow and Jaworski state, style is a "reflexively managed resource" that can be mobilized to produce, stage and perform desired identities in the pursuit of symbolic capital. While the progressive stylization of the logo may be linked to "the promotion of particular ways of being (or styles)" (Thurlow and Jaworski, 2066, p. 105) tied to the homogenizing demands of corporate branding, the logo design can also be seen as a visual style that is mobilized to ground the Starbucks brand further into the everyday materiality of urban environments. The elimination of the wordmark to 'open up' the logo may therefore also be linked to the constrictive role of language in the creation of experiential meaning potentials, which are rooted in our physical rather than symbolic knowledge and in memories of the material world (Van Leeuwen, 2006; Mosbæk Johannessen, 2016). Just like the sound of radio can become a material background in the domestic environment and "a texture in which everyday life can take place" (Tacchi, 1998, p. 25), the stylized and by now also solely visual Starbucks logo is increasingly embedded in the material fabric of everyday urban spaces.

A brand *in* the world: Texturizing the logo and the logo as texture

In their work on visual communication, Djonov and Van Leeuwen define texture as an "illusion of tangibility" mainly "brought about visually, by shifts in [...] colour and by patterns of lines and shapes" (Djonov and Van Leeuwen, 2011, p. 541). While tactile texture pertains to the concrete 'grain' of matter (Conley and Dickinson, 2010), visual texture relies on cues that relate to the provenance and experiential qualities of a particular material or ambience (Djonov and Van Leeuwen, 2011). Through its wavy stripe pattern, the Starbucks logo's visual texture points both to a marine environment and to the contour of the siren's body. As the logo design was progressively stylized, these two textural references to the ocean and the female body have remained stable. With the loss of the outer circles and lettering from its overall design and the further streamlining of the siren's features, the Starbucks logo has also become texture in its own right. As I illustrate through the four vignettes below, which are set in different cities and continents, Starbucks has increasingly integrated the logo into the material fabric of its stores, first by 'texturizing' the 1992 logo design and then by turning the 2011 logo into texture. In doing so, and as emblematic lifestyle corporation, Starbucks' approach to the globalization of its brand relies increasingly on the logo's material presence and pervasiveness in the physical fabric of urban life.

Seattle

Having both its roots and headquarters in Seattle, Starbucks has regularly used this city as a 'lab' to test new approaches to branding and store design. The high-profile Seattle store located on E. Olive Way in the popular Capitol Hill neighbourhood was completely renovated in 2010. The storefront is covered in red bricks and a black and white version of the 1992 logo is painted directly over the brick façade, thus conferring texture to the design (Rolph, 2010). The E. Olive Way store was renovated as part of Starbucks' new store design strategy focusing on making flagship stores look more 'local' and therefore also more distinctive vis-à-vis the stores of corporate retail chains like Dunkin' Donuts and McCafés (Aiello & Dickinson, 2014; see also Wilson, 2014). Along the same lines, the Starbucks store in the upscale outdoor shopping mall University Village, which was renovated shortly before the E. Olive Way store, features external signage with a heavily texturized version of the 1992 logo as this is printed on a grooved surface that looks like wood (Figure 1). And

because key elements of the new store design strategy were applied to standard stores as well, texturized versions of the 1992 logo could also be found in other parts of the world. For example, a Starbucks store on Mortimer Street in Central London features both standard exterior signage on the store's main corner and a dark grey engraved version of the logo above the main entrance door (Figure 2).

Figure 1 – University Village, Seattle. Photograph by Giorgia Aiello.

Figure 2 – Mortimer Street, London. Photograph by Giorgia Aiello.

London

Located just seconds from the Old Street tube station, right in the midst of East London's so-called 'Silicon Roundabout', a Starbucks store occupies the ground floor of a listed Victorian building that used to house the Leysian Mission that was run by the Methodists until the late 1980s. In 1998, the Leysian Mission was renamed 'Imperial Hall' and was converted into a mixed-use building with 63 flats and nine commercial units. The Starbucks storefront is graced by three ample windows framed by the building's original columns and arches. The most recent version of the Starbucks logo is reproduced on one of the storefront's windows and covers the entire surface of the window's several glass panes. From the distance and to the casual passer-by, the logo looks one with the window. Although it can be peeled off the glass to easily modify the window's layout, here the logo could be mistaken for a glass serigraphy, that is, a durable print of the design on the window itself. The logo's pattern is rendered in a see-through milky hue over transparent negative space; it follows the circular movement of the building's arch at top while fitting seamlessly between the window's evenly spaced margins. To apprehend this storefront, the passer-by must look 'through' the logo rather than just look 'at' the logo. In other words, here the logo is mobilized as a texture rather than as a symbol and a semiotic object in its own right. This newfound use of the logo as texture is reinforced by the presence of proper signage featuring the green and white logo hanging from the side of the building (Figure 3).

Figure 3 – Imperial Hall, City Road, London. Photograph by Giorgia Aiello.

Hong Kong

Hong Kong's Elements Mall is a luxury shopping centre located in the northern part of the city, in the mainland residential district of Kowloon. The mall was designed according to principles of Feng Shui, a Chinese philosophical approach to creating living and work spaces that are in harmony with the broader environment and major forces of nature. Accordingly, the mall is divided into five zones, each corresponding to one of the five elements of nature: metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. Starbucks can be found in the 'wood' zone with the logo emerging from the birchwood panelling that sets apart this store. The 2011 logo's positive space – i.e. the siren's crown, face and body – blends into the wood panelling, while the background is rendered in a dark brown wooden hue that looks burnt and therefore also resembles the outcome of pyrography. In this case, an engagement with the Starbucks logo is premised upon experiential meaning potentials of tracing and quite literally 'branding' the logo into the material environment of the coffee shop.

Figure 4 – Elements Mall, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Photograph by Giorgia Aiello.

Zurich

The Starbucks store located near the Check-in 1 area of Zurich airport is in the midst of a high foot traffic area, one level down from the entrance to all departure gates. This particular store is open into the airport hall and faces both the main escalator to Level 2 and a large, low square concrete pillar that doubles up as a support for a wrap-around breakfast table in the store's 'outdoor' seating area. In addition to being architecturally integrated into Starbucks' landscape as a support for furnishings, the pillar features two different renditions of the Starbucks logo. In both cases, the logo is stripped down to a black stencil-like relief motif placed on the pillar's bare concrete. With the logo's positive space 'filled' by the concrete itself and the absence of a frame or contour between the logo and the space of the pillar, the graphic traces of the logo design are part and parcel of the materiality of the place. What is perhaps most interesting, however, is that this version of the logo is repeated twice on the pillar, once in its entirety on the side of the breakfast table (Figure 5), and once in a much bigger size on the top of the pillar. In this case, however, only an off-centre quarter of the logo – delimited by the right side of the siren's face and the bottom of her breast line – is reproduced on the concrete surface. Overall, the logo design is no longer simply the face of the Starbucks brand, but a textural motif that may be blown up or scaled down and used both partially and repeatedly to 'make' space.

Figure 5 – Check-in 1, Zurich Airport. Photograph by Giorgia Aiello.

From reproducing the logo on surfaces and through techniques that make its graphic traits look more concrete and material, or 'texturized', to using the 2011 logo design as a motif, or 'texture', that is materially grounded in the store's physical environment, Starbucks has begun to link its brand identity not only to major symbolic appeals like the siren's sexualized femininity, but also to trace-making processes that demand a material engagement with the brand. Here the Starbucks brand appears to be embedded in, rather than simply juxtaposed to, the built environment, often thanks to visual-material linkages with inscription techniques such as serigraphy, pyrography or wood carving, and relief stenciling. Such linkages point to some of the gestures and tools that set apart these techniques but are also removed from both. This is because these trace-making 'effects' are largely produced through synthesizing technologies that simulate both their underlying gestures (e.g. carving, scratching) and tools (e.g. pyrography pen), thus deliberately mobilizing the experiential meaning potentials associated with the processes mentioned above (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006). These meaning potentials are also reinforced by the frequent presence of the standard logo next to or not far from the texturized and textural renditions of the logo, which are also most often rendered in sizes and with characteristics that enhance and adapt to the physical surfaces that host them (see Figures 2 and 3). From a visual standpoint, the juxtaposition of the more properly symbolic and the more specifically material versions of the logo confers more weight and substance to the Starbucks brand.

Discussion: Logos and the materiality of abstraction

Although the four vignettes above may be seen as exceptional cases, they are in fact emblematic of how key spaces of contemporary urbanity like shopping centres, airports and busy city streets are increasingly 'designed' by global corporate business in ways that contribute to a sense of emplacement and material engagement with branding. In the case of Starbucks, passers-by who may be rushing for a flight, a purchase or a meeting are made to slow down and linger on the tactile, idiosyncratic, and concrete characteristics of the brand. This engagement with the materiality of the logo in turn leads to becoming attached, however

temporarily, to otherwise transitory spaces via a set of experiential meaning potentials associated with the Starbucks logo. As an iconic global corporation, Starbucks has been a pioneer in the development of approaches to branding that rely to references to the material world, first through appeals to authenticity (Dickinson, 2002), then locality (Aiello & Dickinson, 2014) and, more recently, also texture.

In this more recent development, and hand in hand with the further stylization of the logo, the Starbucks brand has begun to colonize aspects of our semiotic landscapes which move well beyond the symbolic or broadly discursive dimensions of everyday life. According to Jaworski and Thurlow (2010), the notion of semiotic landscape should be taken to mean, "in the most general sense, any (public) space with visible inscription made through deliberate human intervention and meaning making" (p. 2). By their own admission, however, scholarly work in this area focuses predominantly on writing and image and the multimodal meaning potentials that result from their combination and overlaps in public space. Looking at the Starbucks logo both as style and texture enables us to think of ways in which the very notion of semiotic landscape can be expanded to include considerations about the material and the experiential.

By being texturized and deployed as texture in its own right, the Starbucks logo has begun to pervade some of the more deeply unsymbolic aspects of our being in and through space, as we swiftly traverse and more rarely linger in key spaces of globalization such as shopping centres, airports, and city streets (see Dickinson & Aiello, 2016). Like other global corporate retail chains, the Starbucks brand has most certainly been an integral part of our embodied and emplaced experiences of urban environments across the world for over two decades. Through a host of deliberate sensorial, physical and spatial choices, Starbucks has contributed to shaping a very distinctive globalizing experience of urban everydayness (Dickinson, 2002; Aiello & Dickinson, 2014). However, with the logo being most recently foregrounded as both shaping and being shaped by the urban built environment, rather than being simply more or less temporarily 'layered' on top of more stable urban surfaces (Scollon & Scollon, 2003), Starbucks has embraced the materiality of its traces, along with the experiential meanings associated with their implied acts (or gestures) and technologies (or tools) of inscription (cf. Ingold, 2007). While the symbolic, representational dimensions of the logo are of paramount importance to the Starbucks brand (Aiello, 2013), its overall semiotic import is increasingly premised upon its material presence *in place* and *as texture*.

Lury (2004) has defined brands as "an *interface* between producers and consumer" (p. 48) and logos as the 'face' of branding. While the brand in itself is "intangible or incorporeal", a logo is what "makes the brand visible" (Lury, 2004, p. 74). And as Mosbæk Johannessen (2016) states, logos are just as pervasive in globalizing semiotic landscapes as they are difficult to examine from a semiotic perspective because they are "structurally minimalist" (p. x) and their simplicity is more "apt for conveying what logo designers refer to as *look and feel*" (p. x). While I am not going to attempt to solve this challenge here, I suggest that it may very well be this key semiotic characteristic of logos – that is, what Mosbæk Johannessen calls structural minimalism – that contributes to their growing material presence and significance in the urban landscape. As brands become increasingly 'global', their logos tend to be progressively stylized in the service of a globalist, homogenizing aesthetic. This process of stylization usually entails semiotic choices aimed at streamlining, and simplifying key representational features (e.g. the siren's facial features), concealing or erasing traits that may not be universally 'acceptable' (e.g. the siren's breasts and navel) and, overall, making the visual design of a particular logo look 'cleaner' (Thurlow & Aiello, 2007). Rebranding is typically associated with further stylization, as both strategic and systematic acts of cleansing

are seen as necessary to successfully 'manage' a brand's image.

From a visual standpoint, in turn the stylization of corporate logos is most often linked to abstraction. For example, Floch (2000) famously explained that the Apple logo, which he calls a 'mythogram', owes its success to a series of choices that led to an increasingly stylized design made of abstract patterns. Although the logo's semiotic resources work together to iconically represent an apple, the overall design of the Apple logo is "much easier to read" (p. 38) because, from a visual standpoint, it prioritizes basic features or 'forms' such as roundness. And although abstraction can be seen as a process leading to more symbolic and conventional (i.e. non-motivated) meaning potentials, it is also "a surprisingly basic part of perception" (Zimmer, 2003, p. 1290). As I have stated elsewhere: "[I]ncreasing semiotic motivation establishes the degree of iconicity (or literalism) of any image, while abstract symbols derive their meaning through habitual familiarity and cultural convention" (Thurlow & Aiello, 2007, p. 319). However, as Arnheim (1947) claimed, abstraction may also be considered as fundamentally 'un-symbolic' because, at its most basic level, perceptual understanding depends on the presence of simple patterns. This idea resonates with the strong linkage between notion of purity and abstraction that is central to modernist painting, for example. In this regard, Cheetham (1991) points out how both Mondrian and Kandinsky thought of abstract painting as a "method for making a universal, absolute truth material and thus perceivable" (p. 40). Arguably, this is an abstract truth that "has left behind all vagaries and contingencies" (Zimmer, 2003, p. 1285) and has therefore become general and non-specific. In this sense, abstraction may be used as a way to mobilize experiential meaning potentials that can be easily 'read' by most while also promoting both symbolic and iconic meanings.

In cleansing the logo from 'inappropriate' traces and, eventually, also language, Starbucks has engaged in a process of stylization that is based on visual abstraction. In doing so, it has also made the logo design more 'available' to un-symbolic, though still very meaningful, uses linked to the material characteristics of the logo's graphic traces and the trace-making processes associated with its relationship to the specific contexts in which the logo is physically reproduced, or that the logo 'inhabits' (Malafouris, 2013). According to Malafouris (2013), it is precisely the non-arbitrary quality of material semiosis that makes the sign enactive, and therefore also more agentful. As a set of traces and as a sign, the Starbucks logo contributes to structuring space in ways that serve its corporate logic. A 'sense of order', Gombrich (1984) has argued, is precisely what humans need to be able to make sense of their environment. For this reason, he also states that "[t]he disturbance of regularity such as a flaw in a smooth fabric can act like a magnet to the eye, and so can an unexpected regularity in a random environment such as the mysterious fairy rings in wild woodlands" (p. 110). By stripping the original design from the glitches and roughness of wood carving to then eventually repropose the logo through the material contingencies of storefronts (e.g. the particular qualities of concrete, glass and wood) and as a set of traces that can be woven into specific surroundings, Starbucks reintroduces appeals to irregularity that are however also highly regulated, and in fact most often removed from the gestures and tools that contribute to their experiential meaning potentials. With the creation of idiosyncratic spaces set apart by regular patterns, Starbucks skillfully balances style and texture, and ultimately also sets out to order both the symbolic and material aspects of our everyday lives in urban space.

References

Aiello, G. (2013). Fra abiezione e stilizzazione: Corpi femminili, corpi lesbici e corpi queer nella comunicazione visiva globale. AG About Gender – Rivista Internazionale di Studi di Genere, special issue "La teoria queer e la costruzione della realtà sociale", 2(3), 145‐163.

Aiello, G. and Dickinson, G. (2014). Beyond authenticity: Locality in the global redesign of Starbucks stores. *Visual Communication*, special issue "Difference and Globalization", 13(3).

Aiello, G. and Pauwels, L. (2014). Guest editorial: Difference and globalization. Visual Communication, special issue "Difference and Globalization", 13(3).

A look at the future of Starbucks (2011, March 7). Starbucks.com. Retrieved June 10, 2014 from http://www.starbucks.com/preview

Arnheim, R. (1947). Perceptual abstraction and art. *Psychological Review*, 54(2), 66–82.

Bringing the Siren to Life (2011, January 5). Starbucks Blog. Retrieved from: http://www.starbucks.com/blog/bringing-the-siren-to-life/645

Cameron, D. (2000). Styling the worker: Gender and the commodification of language in the globalized service economy. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 4(3), 323– 347.

Cheetham, M. A. (1991). *The rhetoric of purity: Essentialist theory and the advent of abstract painting*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dickinson, G. (2002) Joe's rhetoric: Finding authenticity at Starbucks. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 32(4): 5–27.

Dickinson, G. and Aiello, G. (2016). "Being through there matters: Materiality, bodies, and movement in urban communication research", *International Journal of Communication*. 10: 1294-1308.

Djonov, E. and Van Leeuwen, T. (2011). The semiotics of texture: From tactile to visual. Visual Communication, 10(4), 541‐564.

Floch, J.-M. (2000). Visual identities. London: Continuum.

Gombrich, E. H. (1984). *The sense of order: A study in the psychology of decorative art*. London: Phaidon.

Heckler Associates (n.d.). Starbucks. Retrieved from: http://hecklerassociates.com/brand-stories/starbucks/

Ingold, T. (2007). *Lines: A brief history*. London: Routledge.

Kress, G. & Van Leeuwen, T. (2006). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*, 2nd edition. London: Routledge.

Jaworski, A. & Thurlow, C. (Eds) (2010). *Semiotic landscapes: Language, image, space*. London: Continuum.

Malafouris, L. (2013). *How things shape the mind: A theory of material engagement*.

Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Mosbæk Johannessen, C. (2016). Experiential meaning potential in the Topaz Energy logo: A framework for graphemic and graphetic analysis of graphic logo design. *Social Semiotics*, xx(xx), xxx-xxx.

Phillips, Mary & Rippin, Ann (2010). Howard and the mermaid: Abjection and the Starbucks' Foundation memoir. *Organization*, 17(4): 481-499.

Rolph, A. (2010, October 18). New Olive Way Starbucks: Is this the future? SeattlePI.com http://blog.seattlepi.com/thebigblog/2010/10/18/new-olive-way-starbucks-is-this-the-future/

Schultz, H. (2011). *Onward: How Starbucks Fought for its Life without Losing its Soul* (with Joanne Gordon). Hoboken, NY: Wiley.

Schultz, Howard & Jones Yang, Dori (1997). *Pour your heart into it. How Starbucks built a company one cup at a time*. Hyperion.

Scollon, R. and Wong Scollon, S. (2003). *Discourses in place: Language in the material world*. London: Routledge.

So, Who is the Siren? (2011, January 5). Starbucks Blog. Retrieved from: http://www.starbucks.com/blog/so-who-is-the-siren

Stinson, L. (August 1, 2014). With stunning new stores, Starbucks has a new design strategy: Act local. Wired. Retrieved from: http://www.wired.com/2014/01/starbucks-big-plan-to-be-your-cozy-neighborhood-coffee-shop/

Stötzner, A. (2003). Signography as a subject in its own right. *Visual Communication,* 2(3), 285-302.

Tacchi, J. (1998). Radio texture: Between self and others. In D. Miller (Ed.), Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter. London: UCL Press Limited.

Thurlow, C. & Aiello, G. (2007). National pride, global capital: A social semiotic analysis of transnational visual branding in the airline industry. Visual Communication, 6(3): 305-344.

Van Leeuwen, T. (2006). Towards a semiotics of typography. *Review of Information Design Journal*, 14(2): 139-55.

Wilson, M. (August 18, 2014). Can Starbucks make 23,000 shops feel unique? *Fast Company.* http://www.fastcodesign.com/3034441/starbucks-secrets-to-make-every-store-feel-unique

Wood, Z. (5 January, 2011). Starbucks gets a new face – and drops the mugs. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com/business/2011/jan/05/starbucks-rebranding-new-face-drops-mugs

Zimmer, R. (2003). Abstraction in art with implications for perception. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London B: Biological Sciences*, 358(1435), 1285–1291.