

Doors of Perception Encounters

John Thackara

"one of the great voices on sustainability" Business Week

"has established a global reputation as a cutting edge design expert" Wall Street Journal

"brilliant insights into the internet and sustainability" Economic Times of India

"a business provocateur" Fast Company

From encounters, to action

Climate change. Financial crisis. Peak oil. Each challenge is daunting on its own. Taken together, are they too big to deal with? John Thackara says not: *"we are creative enough to imagine sustainable and engaging futures - and take design steps to realize them"*.

John inspires high level business meetings, design workshops, and community events. He frames the sustainability challenge as an opportunity for immediate action - and talks about exemplary actions under way in other contexts.



Says John: *"We don't need reminding that the challenges are grave. But despair gets us nowhere. I prefer to talk about practical actions that people are taking now, often at the edge of our known worlds, that are elements of a sustainable alternative. I use these stories to start conversations: What small steps might you take, right now? how? and with whom?"*.

Topics for 2010

From doomsday machine to clean growth economy
Today's growth-at-all-costs economy is like a doomsday machine: it compels us to launch a new product every three minutes into a biosphere whose carrying capacity is finite. The alternative is to move from an extraction economy, to a restoration one, and to innovate services that create value without destroying natural and human assets. This talk will identify opportunities in your organization.

The dance of the Big and the Small: what social innovation means for you

The green economy is not a future dream - it already exists, at least in embryo. Social innovation is all around us in a million grassroots projects. The better-known examples have names like Post-Carbon Cities, or Transition Towns. What is the opportunity here for your organization?

Food: a 'wicked problem' - and some promising approaches

Food systems are in crisis for complex reasons. Neither an individual, nor a single firm, can tackle the challenges alone. Food is a 'wicked problem'. So what to do? This talk kick-starts conversations about complex issues in other domains, too.

How to travel less

We would probably travel less, and telecommunicate more, if the sensation of "being there" were more engaging than it is now. Artists, theatre directors, fashion designers, psychologists, game designers even philosophers - could do their bit.

The arts in a green economy

Ecological artists can help us perceive complex systems in new ways. The sculptor's skills can alert us to the embodied energy in artefacts. The dramatist can teach us about us conversation. The painter can give us insight into connectedness. The conductor knows how to co-ordinate a group of creative individuals.

Benefits to participants

"I'm a kind of bee", John explains: "I cross-pollinate ideas, people and places". These encounters deliver tangible benefits:

- actionable insights into sustainability and resilience;
- a shared vision of "preferred states";
- opportunities for innovation in your organization;
- the impetus to launch high impact projects.

Encounter formats

Doors of Perception encounters occur in a variety of formats - from an hour, to a month or more - selected to suit your unique needs. Some examples are:

- one hour keynote lecture;
- a two hour "seven steps" brainstorm;
- interactive workshop or design clinic;
- Explorers Club work-plus-social evening event;
- Dragons Den: innovators pitch their idea to investors.

Live and in person. Or remote. Or both. (Please enquire for details)

John Thackara is an inspiring speaker - but he is not just a talker. As director of Doors of Perception (Doors), John produces events around the world that are inspired by two questions: "what might life in a sustainable world be like?" and, "what design steps are needed to get us from here, to there?" His talks are filled with inspiring stories about these real-life projects.

look and listen www.thackara.com
weblog www.doorsofperception.com
newsletter www.doorsofperception.com/maillinglist

Selected recent keynotes

Food Systems and Cities

Foodprinting The City, Stroom, The Hague, NL

Clean Growth

T-Mobile, Bonn, DE

Annual Innovation Awards

Cognis, Düsseldorf, DE

Metrics for a new economy

Forum d'Avignon, France

Quality Time At High Speeds

European High Speed Train Network, Breda, NL

New Geographies Of Learning

University Of Professional Education, Amsterdam, NL

Low Entropy Urbanism

Norwegian National Architecture Policy Forum, Oslo;

Off-grid Water Systems (Design Clinic)

Stanford University, Palo Alto, USA

Innovation at the Scale of the Bioregion

World Innovation Days, Poznan, Poland

From Greenwashing to Clean Growth

Four Days, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Design for Resilience

Design Forum; Zaragoza, Spain

Sustainable Daily Life Projects Clinic

The Planning Center, Los Angeles

Fashion, Ethics, and Sustainability

Colombo, Sri Lanka

Car Design after the Car

Fiat/Ambrosetti: Torino, Italy

Resilient Regions: From Mindless Development to Ecological Urbanism

Agor Azur Congress Conseil General des Alpes-Maritimes, Nice, France



Testimonials

FROM THE BOARDROOM

TNT

We wanted a thought leader who would provoke us with outside-in, future-related, concepts and opinions. Arthur van Veen, Divisional Director, TNT Express Specialist Services.

Schiphol Airport

His presentation had a substantial influence in defining our board's aspiration to redefine the airport. Hubert-Jan Henket, supervisor of architecture and city planning for Schiphol Airport.

Cognis

John Thackara's presentation at our annual innovation awards was inspiring. Dr. Antonio Trius, Geschäftsführer (CEO) Cognis

T-Mobile

Our high-level guests greatly appreciated John's challenging talk - and it continues to generate lively discussion internally.

Wolfgang Hisserich, Vice President International, T-Mobile

IN THE PRESS

a business provocateur... FAST COMPANY (USA)
<http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/36/ifaqs.html>

has established a global reputation as a cutting edge design expert. WALL STREET JOURNAL (USA)

a wired era visionary
SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (USA)
<http://tinyurl.com/58a8h4>

(insights on) innovation that contributes to Europe's new identity. LE MONDE (France)

Working at the intersection of business, technology, sustainability, and design, John Thackara looks at daily life as a design opportunity.
BUSINESS WEEK, (USA)

brilliant insights into the internet and sustainability.
ECONOMIC TIMES OF INDIA

IN THE BLOGOSPHERE

... top dog in the space of flows
RHIZOME (USA) <http://tinyurl.com/6xddos>

"le pape du design" (the pope of design)
TERRA-ECONOMICA (France)

always provocative and intelligent... CORE77 (USA)
<http://www.core77.com/chicago99/sat.html>

FROM THE CONFERENCE HALL

BBC

John was invited to offer a broader perspective on how the world's largest public service organisation might contribute to designing social change. John's contribution made several senior producers re-evaluate their editorial propositions. Adam Powers, Head of Design for BBC Interactive Factual and Learning.

Lift

John Thackara challenged us to rethink innovation, its goals, its processes and its stakeholders. With a combination of wit, concrete examples and analysis, he opened up wholly new possibilities.

Daniel Kaplan, Founder and CEO of the Next-Generation Internet Foundation (FING), co-director of LIFT Marseille

Creative Industries Styria

An enlightening and intriguing lecture. We had a lot of positive feedback and response to a critically convincing keynote speaker. The atmosphere that you helped us create was more than stimulating and inspiring. Eberhardt Schrempf, Managing Director, Creative Industries Styria, Graz, Austria.

Global Place

At our centennial conference called "Global Place" John was asked to set the tone for the conference on ecology and technology. He did so admirably and compellingly. He's clearly a key player in the international dialogue on the future of the planet. Douglas Kelbaugh Faia, Dean and Professor, Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan

Aspen Design Summit

John was a gracious and engaged host with such a well-crafted, sharp, pay-attention-or-you'll-miss-it wit, it ran like footnotes beneath his intelligent commentary.
mediabistro.com

European Commission

John was an excellent choice...he combined a deep knowledge of the subject with a relaxed and entertaining style that gripped and entertained our large international audience. Paul Desruelle, organiser, Information Society Technologies Conference

European Carton Makers Association

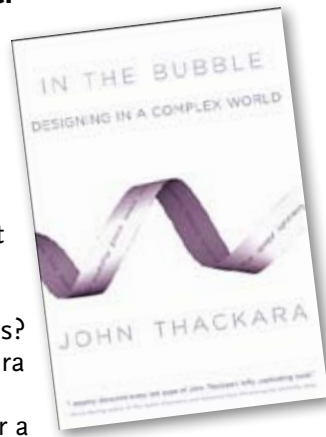
Against a background of collapsing financial markets and structural adjustments among major players in our industry, your presentation on 'Clean Growth' gave our conference the positive energy it needs to face the difficult challenges ahead.

Jules Lejeune, Secretary-General, ECMA

John Thackara's best-seller

IN THE BUBBLE: DESIGNING IN A COMPLEX WORLD

We're filling up the world with technology and devices, but we've lost sight of an important question: What is this stuff for? What value does it add to our lives? So asks author John Thackara in his new book, *In the Bubble: Designing for a Complex World*.



"One of my best business books of the year",
Howard Rheingold in Strategy+Business magazine,
www.strategy-business.com

"John Thackara's brilliant book about quotidian design describes innovation driven by social fiction instead of science fiction." Paul Hawken,

"Whatever you are designing, keep this book next to you", Bill Moggridge, Co-founder of IDEO

"Design with a conscience: that's the take-home message of this important, provocative book".
Don Norman, Nielsen Norman Group

"I eagerly devoured every last page of John Thackara's lofty, captivating book, up to and including his wry footnotes and that superb bibliography."
Bruce Sterling, author of *The Hacker Crackdown* and *Tomorrow Now: Envisioning the Next Fifty Years*

Biography

John Thackara studied philosophy, and trained as a journalist, before working for fifteen years as a book and magazine editor. He then began to organise conferences and exhibitions around the world, and was Director of Research at the Royal College of Art in the UK.

John was the first Director (1993-1999) of the Netherlands Design Institute where he founded Doors of Perception in 1993. Doors of Perception became an independent company in 2000. It now organises festivals and projects around the world in which grassroots innovators work with designers to imagine sustainable futures - and take practical steps to realize them.

He was programme director in 2007 of Designs of the time (Dott 07) a new biennial in North East England. In 2008 he was commissioner of City Eco Lab at Cite du Design in St Etienne, the most important French design biennial. These Doors events bring real-world sustainability projects together so they may cross-fertilise, and grow.

John prepares and leads workshops and project clinics in which participants work on real-world projects - often with citizens in their own location. John's formats range from a one hour talk; to half-day (or evening) Explorers Clubs, or Design Clinics; up to Project Reviews that can last two days or more.

Contact details

If you'd like John to speak at or facilitate your event, please contact:

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