THE SENSORY EXPERIENCE OF TEXTILES
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TOWARDS A SELECTION TOOLKIT
This research has unfolded from the project Digital Sensoria (funded by RCUK Digital Economy; Baurley PI), whose main aim was to enable people to communicate their sensory perceptions of textile materials, designs and real products. In this PhD I am building on the knowledge generated, whilst also responding to the gap identified through the literature review, and to insight from industry, which shows that the link between designers and consumers is missing from current research into tactile perceptions of textiles.

Textiles at hand
So far research in the textile area has mostly focused on the effect that physical attributes have on the tactile perceptions of textiles. Such approaches have timidly considered consumers’ subjective experience and, consequently, have not been a source of information that designers rely on.

Design research approach
In this project people’s experiences are central to investigating meaningful parameters when selecting textiles. Therefore, I rely on a range of methods from a design perspective to access people’s perceptions and gather information that can be more easily applicable to the design process. I’m investigating physical, sensory and aesthetic properties of fabrics to obtain a deeper understanding of their tangible and intangible qualities.

The aim
The aim of this research is to build a materials selection toolkit for designers that will facilitate the communication of perceptions elicited through tactile interaction with textiles, to enable designers and consumers to make more informed choices.

Expected impact
It is expected that this research will deepen the understanding of people’s perceptions and the manner in which this affects their experience of textile materials pertaining to different areas of research. Additionally, a textile selection toolkit that includes the consumer perspective may also impact on the design process.

Supported by:

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