



◀▲ Artwise Curators challenged Troika to come up with a sculpture that would be exciting, innovative and would welcome passengers to the new British Airways Galleries Lounges in a spectacular way. The five meter long Cloud is the first three-dimensional non-rectangular structure made using flip dot technology (a technique only previously used on 2D information boards at railway stations). Cloud uses over 5 000 flip dots with bespoke engineering and specially developed animation software that allows the appearance of the cloud to change throughout the day. The flip dots respond to their programming by audibly flipping between black and silver, creating a mesmerising wave as they chase each across the surface of the cloud. Reflecting its surrounding colours, the mechanical mass is transformed into an organic form that appears to come alive, shimmering and flirting with the onlookers that pass by from both above and below.

Be sure to have a look at Troika's fantastic book, *Digital by Design*, which deals with data visualisation. As more and more information is being re-designed, there is an abundant range of possibilities available. By simplifying data across a series of disciplines, as diverse as biology, social networks and the world wide web, designers make information more accessible, more appealing and, essentially, more readable.

Functional designs make sense to the user and require a visual language system that uses colour, shape, line, hierarchy and composition to communicate clearly and appropriately, much like the alphabetic and character-based languages used between humans.

Our favourites, to mention only a few, are Visual Complexity – a massive resource space designed to inspire, motivate and enlighten any person doing research on this field and providing links to many projects; Marcos Weskamp's active portal of innovative data design projects; Newsmap's colourful visualisation of the most talked about news posts around the globe; and Digg Labs' diggers stack (also downloadable as a screensaver), where popular stories across the net fall from above and stack into functional columns for easy reading. Number 27's brilliant 'We feel fine' project, now in book form, maps our global emotional status by drawing keywords such as 'excited' or 'depressed' from a huge database of blog entries to create a colourful visual-emotional landscape representing the world's 'mood' at any given moment.

Troika crosses the digital divide by contaminating arts with design disciplines and utilising new mediums for digital expression. We applaud them for that.