

SIGNED

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HONG KONG DESIGN INSTITUTE ISSUE TWELVE 2016



PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

Sometimes you can say a lot without saying anything. To that end, you may have noticed that the cover for this issue of SIGNED is – pardon the expression – as plain as a manila envelope. While more often than not, art directors and editors sit around to debate the best choice of cover image, the angle, the strap lines, we have decided to keep it simple. The cover is an envelope because, as the saying goes, we want to “push the envelope”.

This issue, we are proud to unveil a new look for SIGNED. You will see new fonts and an updated, more consistent look. But content is still the heart of it all, and we are proud that SIGNED continues to celebrate all the exciting things happening at the Hong Kong Design Institute, as well as in the wider design world in general.

Check out our city focus section, where we highlight the places making extraordinary developments in design. Meet HKDI's famed alumni and find out how they have transformed the industry. Be an “invited guest” to new pre-fabricated spaces by the world's most renowned architects and designers in a revolutionary concept. And check out some inspiring exhibitions right at home, hosted by HKDI.

We don't want to toot our own horn, but we hope that SIGNED will continue to provide a platform for conversation, inspiration and, most importantly, relevance.

Desiree Au
Publisher



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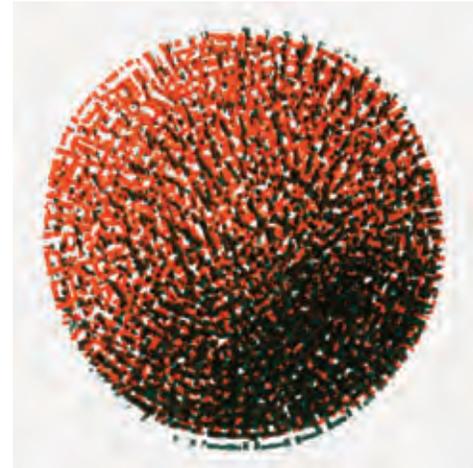
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The Hong Kong Design Institute is a member institution of the Vocational Training Council.
For more information about HKDI, please check our website on www.hkdi.edu.hk, or email us at hkdi@vtc.edu.hk

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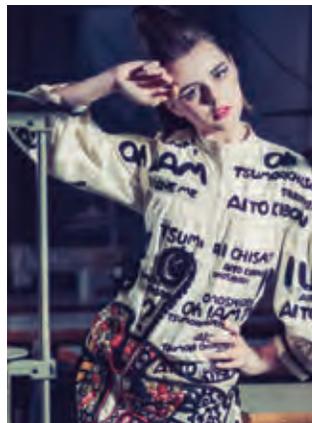
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Yen Chow Street Hawker Bazaar Student Design Project and Exhibition

FASHION SHOW:
21 MARCH 2016 AT AMMO RESTAURANT, ASIA SOCIETY HK, ADMIRALTY

EXHIBITION:
30 MARCH - 6 APRIL 2016 AT ST JAMES' SETTLEMENT, WAN CHAI

The Yen Chow Street Hawker Bazaar was developed in the late 70s and is situated in the heart of Shum Shui Po's fashion material supply district. It features nearly 190 stalls selling thousands of metres of fabric, offering designers and students a resourceful place for materials, from classical to novelty, trimmings and accessories, at a reasonable price. The bazaar is regarded as a treasure trove of material, attracting not only local designers, but also foreign fashion design students and visitors.

HKDI's Department of Fashion and Image Design is hosting an exhibition related to the collective memories of this local fashion heritage until April 6. The students have installed a showcase of their work for the exhibition and are putting on fashion shows with pieces designed by the course's alumni, utilising the resources from the stalls. The opening show is being held on 30 March, followed by an exhibition at the St James' settlement in Wan Chai, next to Hong Kong's famous "Blue House" heritage site.





Hong Kong International Film Festival

21 MAR - 4 APR

This year is the 40th anniversary for the HKIFF and sees another top selection of local and international films screening in our city, from classics such as *Goodfellas* and *Fist of Fury*, to 2015's Nespresso Grand Prize winner at the Semaine de la Critique, Cannes, *Paulina*.

hkiff.org.hk



Offset, Dublin

8-10 APR

Offset is a three-day creative conference held in Dublin each year, celebrating the best in Irish and International creative talent, from graphic design and illustration, to fine art, film and photography.

iloveoffset.com



In this Place, Nottingham

27 APR - 1 MAY

Hosted by Nottingham Trent University, In This Place is a conference aiming to create a lasting impact on design and design education. The event is organised by the Cumulus Association.

cumulusnottingham2016.org



99U Conference, New York

5-6 MAY

Based on the idea that genius is one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration, the 99U conference is about turning idea generation into execution and getting things off the ground. With a mountain of top speakers each year, this is a place to be inspired.

conference.99u.com



Typo, Berlin

12-14 MAY

Typo Berlin is an international design conference that describes itself as "beyond design". This annual event has also been held in San Francisco and London and looks to the future of design strategy and responsible design, inviting speakers from across the design spectrum.

typotalks.com



How Design Live, Atlanta

19-23 MAY

How Design Live comes to Atlanta this May for a five-day gathering of design professionals. The conference is split into seven main programmes, including Design & Creativity, In-house Management, Vision & Leadership, Branding & Packaging, Creative Entrepreneur, Interactive Design and Tools & Resources, each with a range of workshops and speakers.

howdesignlive.com



OFFF, Barcelona

26-28 MAY

Held each year in Barcelona, OFFF describes itself as a community of designers, theorists, developers, professionals and students. This year's event includes an impressive array of artist talks and workshops that include creating music with handmade instruments and your own glowing typography characters.

offf.ws



SEGD Conference, Seattle

9-11 JUN

Held by the Society for Experiential Graphic Design, this conference looks at the area of design also known as environmental graphic design. It includes signage, exhibition and retail design and branded places. Held this year in Seattle, the conference also includes city tours, and a NEXPO, showcasing companies' works.

segd.org



Design Miami, Basel

14-19 JUN

Perhaps the biggest name in the design calendar, Design Miami is the industry's premium showcase, featuring the world's top galleries and artists. Held alongside Art Basel, both in Basel and Miami, this summer's Switzerland show is set to be another must-visit event.

basel2016.designmiami.com



HKDA Global Design Awards

15 JUN

The Hong Kong Designers Association Global Design Awards is a multi-disciplinary competition that has been running since 1975. Now in its 40th year, it also includes DNA (Design Nextgen Awards), a Student section that runs parallel to the main competition. The awards for the GDA are announced on Jun 15, the DNA on Jun 22. The exhibitions start on June 22.

hongkongda.com



Emerging Design Talents 2016

16-26 JUN

Held at HKDI, Emerging Design Talents offers a platform for creative students to showcase the best of their work. The pieces on display are from across a range of disciplines from advertising design to fashion, architecture to information technology.

hkdi.edu.hk



Typographics, New York

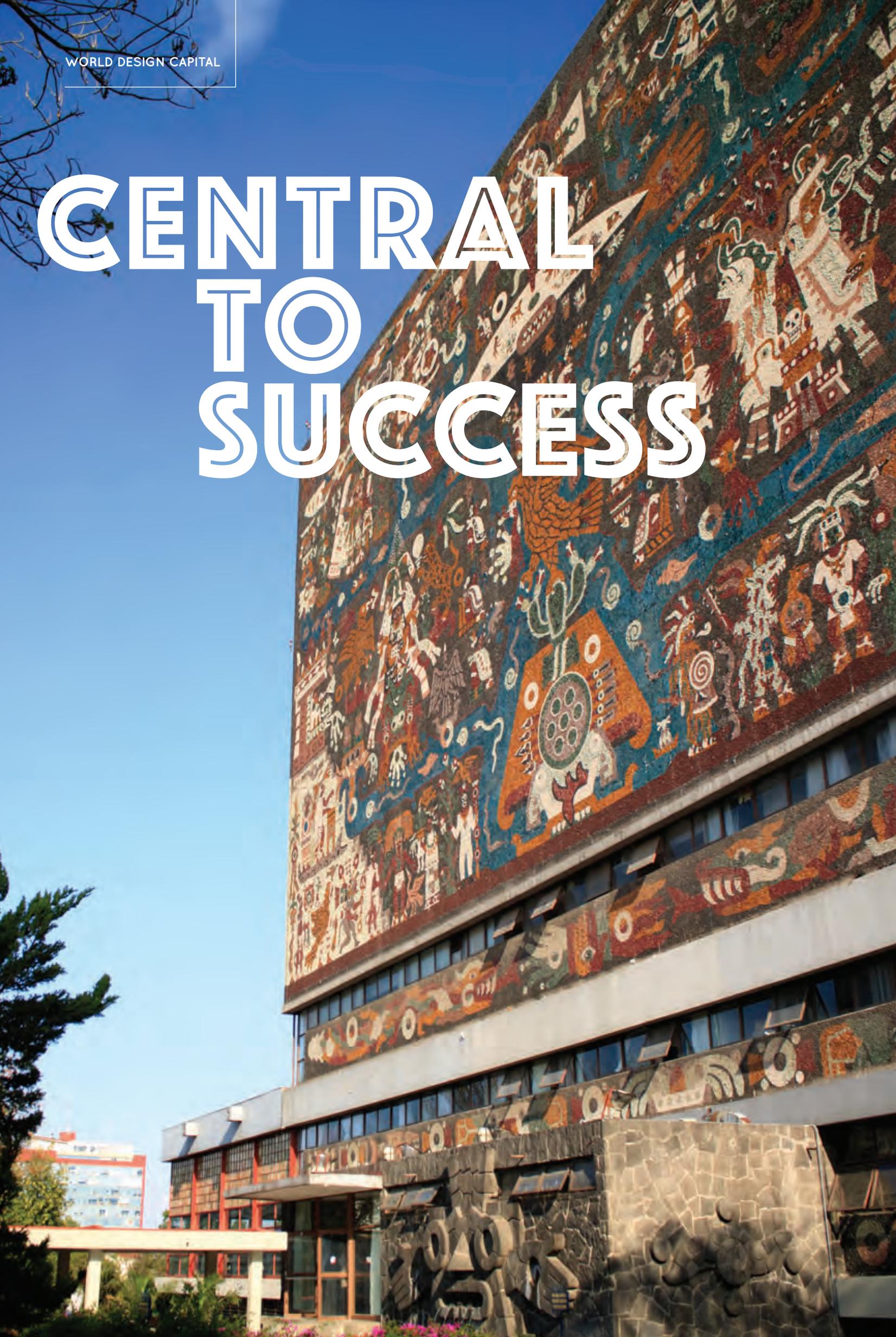
17-28 JUN

Described as a "festival for people who use type", Typographics is a 10-day event held in New York, devoted to contemporary typography. It includes workshops and tours on the subject as a whole and the future of typography.

2016.typographics.com

WORLD DESIGN CAPITAL

CENTRAL TO SUCCESS





David Pompa's lighting collection and lino tiles



PICTURE CREDIT: DAVIDPOMPO

As Mexico City prepares to take on the mantle of World Design Capital in 2018, we take a look at the city's art scene and some of its successes

Opposite: Main library in the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, UNAM, UNESCO World Heritage Site. Murals by Juan O’Gorman
Right: The remarkable Satellite Towers are a symbol of Mexico City’s urban development. These towers were built in the mid-50s. The designers are the painter and sculptor Mathias Goeritz and the Mexican architect Luis Barragan

From 17th century Baroque artists to 1950s authors like Jack Kerouac, Mexico City has long been a hub for artists, even if not the most salubrious of locations. But today the Mexican capital – once better known for its vast population, crime and pollution – is smartening up its act and is considered a desirable tourist destination. So much so that it was named number one in the *New York Times*’ 2016 ‘Places To Go’ guide. The sprawling metropolis boasts more than 150 museums and a mass of cultural centres, from the National Centre for Arts to the Mexican Film Library, as well as many small independent galleries and art spaces. But art in Mexico City exists outside gallery walls. There’s street art to be seen throughout the city, original designs in stores and a burgeoning art community. A new wave of innovative product and fashion designers, architects and film directors are making names for themselves not only in Mexico but





The works of several young Mexican designers at the Design House

on the international scene. The Oscar-winning director, Alejandro González Iñárritu, responsible for films such as *21 Grams*, *Birdman* and *The Revenant*, was born there, as was the *Harry Potter* and *Gravity* director, Alfonso Cuarón.

Behind these new talents are some forward thinking art institutions. SOMA is an independent art school in Mexico City. Founded in 2009 by a group of artists, including video artist Yoshua Okón, it focuses on fostering dialogue and discourse rather than studio practice, and is a move away from the market-driven schools of the 90s. As its website states, the facilities are ‘not designed for the production or promotion of work’, rather as a ‘space for reconsideration and reflection’. The institution offers three main programmes to students: a post-graduate two-year artist development programme, taught in Spanish; an international summer programme in English; and a series of free lectures and presentations open to the public.

Another significant addition is CENTRO, a university for creative studies offering a range of undergraduate programmes in interior architecture, industrial design, film and television, visual communication, digital media design, textile and fashion design, and marketing and advertising, as well as graduate programmes and continuing education courses. Founded in 2004, it was the first university in Mexico City specialising in creative studies and has just opened a new campus designed by renowned architect Enrique Norten, with a stunning outdoor staircase by the Dutch-born, Mexican-based artist Jan Hendrix.

Mexico’s contemporary art scene reflects the wider changes in the country. There’s a sense of energy to it and a need for expression. Though the institutions are at the heart of this change, more can be seen in small independent galleries, such as Lulu, Biquini Wax and House of Gaga, which exhibit a range of international artists alongside local artists.

Design Week Mexico was started in 2009 by a group of design professionals who wanted to establish a platform to promote creativity and design in the country. Held in October each year, the week has grown to include a guest country (most recently Italy) as well as a guest Mexican state (Chiapas in 2015). Emilio Cabrero, director of Design Week Mexico adds: “We organise and curate exhibitions and high-profile events dedicated to design with national and internationally renowned architects and designers. Sharing their views and experiences by creating a powerful network for those interested in learning and exploring the possibilities of how design culture can contribute to the future.”

Some of the highlights of the 2015 Design Week include the Design Content initiative that saw 19 containers placed on the streets housing work by young Mexican designers; the Design House transformed by 12 design firms, and a temporary living structure in the gardens of the Tamayo Museum that was a collaboration between Mexican firm C Cubica Arquitectos and the Italian company Palomba & Serafini Associati.

The Design Week team aren’t stopping there though, and according to Cabrero, one of its long term aims from the very start was to host the World Design Capital (WDC). Organised by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID), the WDC is an initiative with an aim to promote design and creativity within a city. A new city is chosen every two years and since 2008 has included Torino, Seoul, Helsinki and Cape Town. This year it heads to Taipei. As well as highlighting the local talent across the world, past cities have seen both economic and social benefits. Back in October 2015, the ICSID announced that the next location was to be Mexico City, the first capital from the Americas, seeing off Brazil’s Curitiba in the process.

The bid for Mexico City to host the WDC focused on the borough of Miguel Hidalgo. Situated in the northwest of the city, this is a popular area for tourists and includes Latin America’s largest urban park. The aim is to introduce a new bike share programme and new health, communication and security initiatives to the area, as well as to rejuvenate some of the lower income areas of the city. “We believe that through important platforms, such as WDC, Mexico City becomes a window to the world giving us the opportunity to share the diversity of our vibrant



PHOTO CREDIT: RENÉ ENRIQUEZ

Estructuras Efémeras



The Soumaya Museum in Mexico City

creative community. Allowing a space for reflection and a new and responsible way of thinking, with no boundaries for innovative ideas, making way for a new optimism towards the future by bettering the human experience of the city,” says Cabrero.

Exact plans for the 2018 schedule are still some way off, though the team promises a rich agenda of activities that will provoke thought and action, not only of the creative community but the general public alike. This, of course, is also a great chance to educate the public on the local art scene. “Throughout DWM’s history we have sought to promote design and creativity as key change-makers in society. Through our programming we seek to establish a dialogue between community members by showcasing best-practises of design and their life-changing capacity,” Cabrero adds.

David Pompa Alarcón grew up in Mexico and Austria, studying product design in London before opening his first store in Mexico City back in 2013. “I remember going to a lot of museums with my parents, not particular design

museums, but I would think of those impressions as the start for my interest in creativity,” says Pompa.

Today his studio, davidpompo produces lighting and furniture pieces that use traditional Mexican materials with new techniques and ideas. “In my work I try to include moments and experiences I have lived. The eclectic mix between heritage and technology is a big part of our concept as it brings together elements that have not been combined in Mexico before. People start to understand that Mexico is a rich cultural country with many different facets that can be used in contemporary design,” he says.

The studio took part in DWM and is set to play an active role in the plans for WDC in 2018. He adds: “The World Design Capital status will definitely push Mexican design even more and it will be a great opportunity for our brand to share our ideas with people from different cultures. Also, I can imagine a lot of collaborations between different disciplines working on projects to present the variety of Mexican design.”



Left: Visión y Tradición exhibition Right: Design Week Mexico documentaries

Message in a bottle

During his voyage across the Pacific, Leong Ka Tai's communication experiment involved dropping bottles into the ocean containing messages from various artists. We uncover the story of one of those bottles



Leong Ka Tai's slow living project, *Over the Ocean, On the Road*, saw him and his wife Rebecca, travel on a cargo ship from Hong Kong to South America and the Caribbean, documenting the daily life of the crew and the conditions on board. During the voyage, he also performed an experiment in old school communication. On a daily basis the couple dropped a bottle overboard into the ocean. Inside each of these bottles was a message in Chinese, English and Spanish explaining the purpose of the project and his contact details, should someone find it. "Putting a message in a bottle and throwing it into the sea is not a new idea," explains Leong. "In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it was used for research on ocean currents. For me, however, it was an experiment in making serendipitous connections randomly. And I wanted to do it systematically, by throwing one every day for the duration of the voyage."

Also in the bottle was a message from a series of Leong's friends and artists from a broad spectrum of styles. These messages included visual, written and audio forms. "It would be over-optimistic to expect that all the bottles would be retrieved but, if it were so, the messages would present a good representation of life in Hong Kong," says Leong. A total of 32 bottles were dropped, each with a different message, and to date only two have found their way back. "To be frank, the chance of having a bottle found in a vast ocean is very slim. Which is why I was so overwhelmed by Carla finding the first bottle and responding, after only eight months. There was a news story about a month ago of a bottle being picked up after 110 years," he adds.

To accompany the exhibition, Leong has created an app that recreates the experience of throwing and receiving bottles into and from the sea. "It is not merely an app for making friends," he explains. "We encourage the writer of the message to make it meaningful, something that people can relate and respond to. It is not certain that the message will be retrieved, and even if retrieved and responded to, the thrower may not see it immediately. This is again an experiment in making serendipitous connections randomly and to give time for the players to appreciate the experience."

Raymond Lee

Lee was one of Leong's students and was asked to create one of the messages. His piece is a quote from Roger Ebert, a former film critic of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, and with it he also enclosed a USB key with the theme song and a trailer for the French film *Le Papillon*. The bottle was found eight months later, off the coast of British Columbia.

"One of my friends was diagnosed with cancer and was under treatment in Canada," says Lee. "As his friend in the Far East, there was not much I could do. So in order to cheer him up, I started to send him junk mail every day, in the belief that 'one mail a day will keep your blues away'. Ebert's quote sounded great, so I put it as my message to my friend and also used it for the bottle. I hoped that reading it and watching the trailer would make whoever picked it up smile. To be frank, I haven't seen the movie yet, it never seems to be shown in Hong Kong. But I really liked the trailer: the old man and the young girl, their faces, the song, the French countryside, the butterflies flying free."

Lee included a few versions of the trailer and the quote, in different languages to help whoever found it understand the message. "I hadn't expected anyone to find the bottle in my lifetime but, as this one was returned, I do expect more bottles to be found."

Carla Crossman

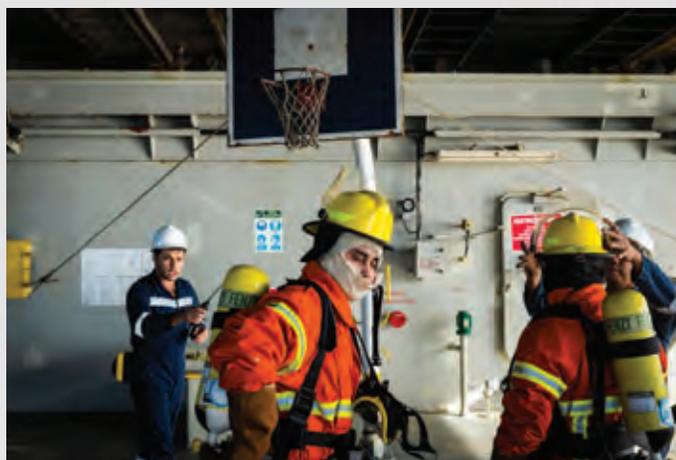
As part of her job as a marine biologist at the Vancouver Aquarium, Carla Crossman was on a field trip, collecting data on killer whales off the coast of British Columbia. "On this trip, myself and the head of the Aquarium's Marine Mammal Research Programme were beginning a 10-day cetacean survey on BC's north coast," says Crossman. "It was a beautiful day – sunny and calmer than you could ever ask for. Over breakfast, we were swapping message in a bottle stories – I was asking him whether or not he had ever found a message in a bottle (he had, but it wasn't signed and there were clues it hadn't travelled far) and I was telling him about a friend of mine who had sent a message

PICTURE CREDIT: LEONG KA TAI





PICTURE CREDIT: LEONG KA TAI



Photographs taken by Leong Ka-tai's during his travels to Latin America



Carla Crossman with Raymond Lee's message



via bottle that had been recently found. We started the day finding humpback whales and lots of Dall's porpoises. We used a hydrophone, an underwater microphone, to listen for the whales and finally we heard some killer whales. We set off in the direction of the calls and because it was such a calm day, we ended up further offshore than planned. It always amazes me how much garbage you see in the water, even in such remote areas. As we were scanning for whales, in the distance I saw a white bottle sitting amidst some pieces of bull kelp at the surface. I pointed it out and we decided to go take a look. Sure enough as we got closer, you could see the paper rolled up inside. We pulled in close and I was able to scoop the bottle out of the water – cork fully intact with a bunch of gooseneck barnacles attached."

When Crossman took the cork out, the USB stick fell out but there was no way to get to the rolled up papers without smashing the bottle, which wasn't an option on the small boat.

"I plugged the USB stick into the computer and found two documents that appeared to be the same as the ones in the bottle. There was a message from Leong Ka Tai briefly describing the project with contact information as well. The second document was from Raymond and contained a quote from Roger Ebert and links to a YouTube video of a trailer for a film called *Le Papillon*. I wasn't able to look at the videos or reply saying I found a bottle until several days later when I returned to Vancouver. Using some very long forceps I managed to reach in and extract the message from the bottle. Unfortunately, the edge of the paper ripped, but I didn't have to break the bottle!"

Local media picked up on the story and Crossman exchanged emails with Leong and Lee several times over a few months, eventually meeting Leong and his wife Rebecca for dinner. "It was a great visit, and while on paper we were complete strangers, we had a great connection over this shared journey of sorts. I've kept the bottle, message and USB stick and I've been told I now have the best dinner party story of all time. What inspired me most about Leong's project was how, in such a large world, it doesn't take much for two people to become connected. It's like something out of a fairy tale where you might casually come across a message that travelled across an ocean, but I think the simplicity of it all is what inspires me most. Put paper in a bottle, add a cork, throw it overboard and wait."

Leong Ka Tai's project, Over the Ocean, On the Road, is on display at the HKDI Gallery until 30 May, 2016. www.hkdi.edu.hk/hkdi_gallery/2016/oto



PICTURE CREDIT: LEONG KA TAI

TALKING ABOUT MY REGENERATION

Benedetta Tagliabue is one of the founding partners of EMBT, the architecture firm renowned for its urban regeneration work. She speaks to SIGNED about her projects and the exhibition at HKDI

Top left and bottom:
The Scottish Parliament
building; top right:
Benedetta Tagliabue

While many architects may dream of creating a signature piece as a shining example of their skills, the real test comes when the designer has to consider existing structures, historic sites, politically sensitive spaces and public usage. The finer points of urban regeneration can be complex and full of pitfalls, but that doesn't mean that the result has to be boring. Spanish architecture firm EMBT is an expert in this area and has created some of the most stunning urban structures of this generation, from the Santa Caterina Market in Barcelona to the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. The drawings, sketches and models created by Benedetta Tagliabue and her late partner, Enric Miralles, have been on show in an exhibition called *Urban Regeneration – Past, Present and Future*, held at the HKDI Gallery in Hong Kong.

How does it feel to see such a collection of your work all in one place?

It's really fantastic, I've just seen some of the drawings now. Whenever you do an exhibition it feels like you're showing what you have in your cupboards, in your drawers, your intimate things. But I think it's really fantastic because you have the response of many people to something that in principle is very intimate.

What do you hope visitors will leave with after seeing this exhibition?

I hope they understand our kind of informality and attempt to be natural, though that doesn't mean that it's not organised or not thought out. That's what I like very much when I'm trying to understand our own architecture, I like to have this kind of 'naturalness' in making things, so I hope the exhibition reflects that.

EMBT is known for the environmental sustainability of its projects. How much does this influence your work and is it something you feel more architects are considering these days?

I think this kind of environmental sustainability is very necessary nowadays for architects. We always try to introduce it in our work – to integrate with the environment and learn from it. To try and make the transformation a natural process, as if it's leaves growing on a tree, we'd like every transformation we do to be a little like that.

The Santa Caterina Market remains one of your highlight works. Did you realise at the time it was going to be such a significant project?

No, we were not conscious of that. Whenever you start a process, you're never sure about the ending. Because the ending doesn't depend on you completely, it depends on the reality, the circumstances, the political situation. I've seen lots of projects that have started with a lot of effort and ended in very little, but Santa Caterina was a fantastic moment for us.

What would you say are the most important aspects of any urban regeneration project?

I think there is a very strong transformation happening in this generation. It's not about conserving everything and trying to go back to a hypothetical, fantastical, historical moment. We don't believe in that. But we do believe that





Left to right: Spanish Pavillion for the Shanghai Expo; Hafencity, Hamburg; Santa Caterina Market, Barcelona

for something to work well in a city or a situation, it has to be synchronised with the present and also with the past. So we're trying to make a transformation that has continuity. I hope you can feel that in the exhibition.

Your works incorporate tradition but have you come across any opposition to change in EMBT's projects?

Many, especially during the process of designing a project. A lot of people think they could do it better, or don't agree with you, or think it won't work. It's very difficult to convince everybody to be patient and believe in the process, and to wait for things to manifest and become real. At the end, people don't realise it's a transformation, they just take it as fact.

The Scottish Parliament building, Holyrood, has become a cultural icon in Edinburgh. How much freedom were you given with the project, and were you left to come up with your own ideas?

Not entirely, but I think we were given the opportunity because they needed [an outsider]. They really wanted to have a symbolic building that would be important – and now it receives more visitors than any other building in Scotland. So they required someone to give them something unexpected, but keep the influences very strong. It was very difficult because there was this conservative influence on the existing building and it seemed impossible to transform it. They wanted to make it like a museum, which doesn't correspond to anything. And there was a lot of pressure from the historians, who had ideas in mind, so it was a very complicated project, but also fantastic. My husband and partner died at the beginning of the construction work, on site, and I think he had made one of his most complex projects. He really put his soul into it. That's why I love it very much.

Is the unveiling of a new site still as exciting today as it was in the beginning?

It's very exciting but very scary. I tend not to see it because I feel anguish – I think every architect gets that. You hear stories about the engineer of bridges, jumping from the

bridge on the day of opening, things like that. Because you have the responsibility of bringing into reality something that is heavy, that is expensive, that is useful for a lot of people, so you always feel you're not sufficient. That's why I don't go to see it.

What artists or buildings inspire you?

There are some, but I have very little time to learn from my colleagues. Someone once told me how a person met the great Catalan painter Antoni Tàpies on his way to the Louvre and said, let's go together, and so they went through the great gallery of the Louvre but he couldn't keep up with Tàpies because he was running. You see, when you are creating yourself you have a different view of other people's work. Because it's so close to you, touching you so much that it's attacking your own securities. So you look at it out of the corner of your eyes. I think I have this kind of relation to other people's work these days, kind of through a fog.

You set up an office in Shanghai following your Expo 2010 piece in the city. Is there more room for experimentation in architecture in China than Europe right now?

I always had a pull towards China, mainly because it's one of the most ancient civilisations we have in humanity, and this is terribly attractive to me. I'm fascinated by human history and human construction. I think now is a special moment for China, it's dangerous and beautiful at the same time and I'm very happy to have this opportunity.

What are the complexities of working on public spaces as opposed to private buildings?

When you work on a public space, you have to think that everybody has to feel at home in this space, and everyone has to feel that it's their space, to sit, look and enjoy. So you need to take into consideration how people usually move, what people like and where they are going, because you're creating a space that will be used in the future so you have to give hints and imagine new ways. I think for this reason it's important to be a bit of a daydreamer – daydreams help a lot [*laughs*].





PICTURE CREDIT: ROLAND HALBE



Tell us a bit about your collection of water projects, how did these come about?

I think sometimes doing competitions becomes a kind of exercise, so even when you don't win them, the experiences are still useful. The exercise has brought you to a way of thinking and you have in mind a solution that you can adapt a little later somewhere else. In the case of Hafencity in Hamburg, and the transformation project, we had some previous experiences in competitions which were similar. It allowed us to respond better, so we could look back and say, let's see what we did when we had a project in the harbour of Frankfurt. In that case we knew that we were not going to build, but it was good practice. After that we did another competition in Bremen, which is near Hamburg, which had a similar brief: a river harbour, far away from the city, which now has to be transformed as a city. So we had other solutions that were much more crazy, but then when we were faced with that same problem in Hamburg, we could respond with all that knowledge. That's why we want to present all of this together.

Left: HKDI Architecture students at a three-day workshop in EMBT Studio, Barcelona

Below: The EMBT exhibition at HKDI gallery





Robert Barton, *Differential Enclosure - An Illumination of Thermal Proximity*

Extreme constructs

A group of Master's in Architecture students experienced life in the Arctic to understand how best to design modern environmental structures that can survive extreme conditions

The Masters programme in Architecture and Extreme Environments at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (KADK) School of Architecture likes to take its students to extremes. From late 2014 to early 2015, the group travelled to the Arctic, visiting Greenland, Iceland and Svalbard in Norway for an extended period. Students were then required to build a structure designed to deal with the extreme conditions in new and innovative ways. The result was an array of forward-thinking designs that formed a part of the exhibition: *The Arctic – Architecture and Extreme Environments*, which was on display in the Experience Centre, HKDI from last October to February this year. We speak to professor David A Garcia, head of the Institute of Architecture and Technology and Masters programme director at KADK, about the students' experiences and the thinking behind the programme.

How did the students' view of the extreme Arctic conditions change when they actually visited?

First, there's the realisation of the real harshness of the conditions that they are experiencing. Though for months they'd been researching and gathering information, when everybody gets there, it becomes very apparent that there are things that only the body can teach you. We were in Svalbard in January, which is in the middle of their four-month pitch black period, so for three weeks the students didn't see the sun. Very quickly the serotonin levels in your body drop to the floor and depression kicks in, resulting in a lack of motivation and interest. It made them realise that architecture can have a strong influence on how we curate spaces, and how light curated within spaces can help mitigate some of the effects of these long night periods. There was also the immediate contact with the wild nature. There are 3,000 polar bears and about 2,000 inhabitants in Svalbard, which means that the danger is a very real one. I had to go around with a loaded rifle as protection, and the governor has to give you approval to leave the town. There's this alertness and constant stress that also starts to probe questions as to how to renegotiate the boundaries between the wild and the inhabited. These are just some of the examples of how only by being there, and being there for some time, results in some realisations, which should be taken into account when designing. This is part of the reason why we don't just visit but we're there for quite some time, engaging, actively partaking in constructions and dialogues.

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Architecture can have a strong influence on how we curate spaces, and how light curated within spaces can help mitigate some of the effects of these long night periods

What surprised you most from the solutions that the students came up with?

There were some that were quite fascinating. How they manifested themselves not only as ways of testing performance and inventing but also as objects in their own right, which is important for us as designers and architects. The Light Mast study in Svalbard was a fascinating project, because it's a very real necessity that nobody has taken on board and it was made in collaboration with Philips, who suggested the lights. It is a very elegant, very beautiful, simple manifestation and reinterpretation of city lighting. In Svalbard as well, the salt and snow smelter that generates electricity by transparent batteries lighting LEDs was just a great example of how sometimes what we think of as a problem can become an asset. I think the huge cube with the tensile material that was frozen immediately as it was sprayed, testing shell constructions, was also a great project. In Iceland, I was impressed by the project that tested humidity. The veneer unrolls in a very natural manner, using a property from the material to open and close instead of the complexities that we often add to systems – a motor, a sensor and a circuit and light sensor and electricity and batteries – this is completely autonomous, just doing the same thing on its own right. I think the steam catching geodesic structures that catch steam as a way of diffusing light is both very sculptural and a very active way of capitalising on light. But

I have to say that it was a very successful year, everybody did very thorough and interesting projects.

The project focuses on dealing with extreme cold weather conditions but could some of these solutions also be valid in extreme high temperature conditions with a cooling effect, or adapted for more temperate climates?

It very often happens that things can work as an opposite, and are easily applicable. In essence, the agenda of our programme is not to make experts in extreme environments, but to make experts in hyper specificity. When we take the students to an extreme condition it's very easy to move them away from a comfort zone and constant references. It becomes obvious immediately that a copy-paste of their traditional solutions will not work, and putting them in those extreme scenarios not only makes them knowledgeable of the context but also allows them to quickly realise that this requires a new set of rules. Each year we change the theme and our area of action. Last year it was the Arctic and this year we've just come back from a month's stay in the Amazon, under the same premise, and next year it will be another theme altogether. This means that the accumulated knowledge in the programme is shared, so we gain solutions that very often can be applied to very different conditions.



The sky is black as night at noon in Longyearbyen, Svalbard

PICTURE CREDIT: DAVID A. GARCIA





Above: All the devices in the exhibition have travelled to Greenland, Iceland or Svalbard to investigate the challenging environment



PICTURE CREDIT: GRACE CHEN

Left: Grace Chen, Conditioning Humidity - Investigating Climate and Space

Why do you feel that commercial research into environmental space concepts for extreme conditions has been lacking?

There are many factors but I would dare to say that one of these is that there's an established tradition, which is always very difficult to break. The construct is very strange because we build in the Arctic much like we might build in the middle of Europe. Mainly because those who build there are Europeans. There is no building tradition in the Arctic for contemporary needs, there are no entrepreneurs, no manufacturers, so literally those who end up building are the normal manufacturers that build the house next door. There is the desire to keep using what you already have on your shelves because who would want to introduce a new product and challenge when you have a chain of delivery that already works? And the designer accepts what's there instead of saying to the manufacturers, 'hey I'm sorry but this doesn't cut it, I'm not going to build the same way we build in Germany, in the middle of the Arctic like we've been doing for the past 50 years'. So I think the responsibilities, if you can call them that, are dealt with and shared by many, even with the users saying, we've been living in these buildings for several generations and they're humid, they break apart, they're cold, we don't want this any more.

With the exhibition coming to a close in Hong Kong, where will it go next?

The exhibition will be shown in Denmark and we're in talks to actually show it in Svalbard.

What's next for the course?

The students have just come back from their expedition to the Amazon, so we have again a series of results, which will

be similar to what you've seen in the exhibition in HKDI, but dealing with the Amazon. This is a way of leading them into a building design that challenges how they build. Now they are in the phase of defining what that building would be, what would its programme and function be, how can they incorporate some of the solutions or discoveries of their first investigations into such a building. And then they have a semester ahead to develop. We've just made a publication of last year's work from research all the way to building, and we hope to start the design for the next publication of this year's theme.

Do you have a wish list of places to go to next?

Yes, we've been doing this programme now for seven years, even though the programme has only existed at KADK for a year. It has taken us from Fukushima to Chernobyl to the mines of Australia to the deserts of Mojave. There are so many places that are under such pressure and present a challenge that the list is endless, and we're as interested in naturally challenged areas as much as environmentally or humanly challenged. I mean, Hong Kong itself, to deal with its density, is a fascinating context, it's just as extreme in its own way. I'd like at sometime to deal with Antarctica, and not because it's Arctic again but because the territory is under protection but is also under such pressure and we wonder how long it will be maintained like that. The history of base stations is quite a disconnected one, and to chart how that has dealt with such an extreme environment, I think there's a lot of knowledge accumulated that is not really dissipated.

See the latest from the KADK projects on their blog: <https://kadm.dk/blog-architecture-and-extreme-environments>

Not to be type cast

When a German typesetter challenged the rules of design and typography he changed the game forever. We look back at Wolfgang Weingart's Swiss Punk style that has been the subject of a major exhibition at HKDI

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olfgang Weingart's work in the mid to late 60s, and through the 70s, revolutionised the world of typographics. Taking the Swiss style as his starting point, he deconstructed the rules of the day and created what is now known as Swiss Punk, or New Wave typography, paving the way for a new breed of designer. A major exhibition of

his work has recently been on show at HKDI in Hong Kong in partnership with the Museum für Gestaltung Zürich (MfGZ), largely formed from a significant collection of Weingart's work and that of his students, donated to the museum. "We received a cross-section of his archive, with roughly two-thirds reserved for his own work and about one-third coming from his students at the Basel School of Design," says Barbara Junod, the exhibition's curator. "The donation included highlights like the TM cover series, but also examples of key design processes, which are very important to understanding Weingart's design approach and the way he taught." The exhibition shows both Weingart's and his students' work and their creative processes, grouping the designs in displays and visualising them in a documentary film and two animated sideshows. "My goal was to let visitors dive into Weingart's universe and discover for themselves that typography can actually be inspired and fun. It was less about showing the progress than about featuring the formal, technical and content-related aspects in Weingart's work and teaching," adds Junod.

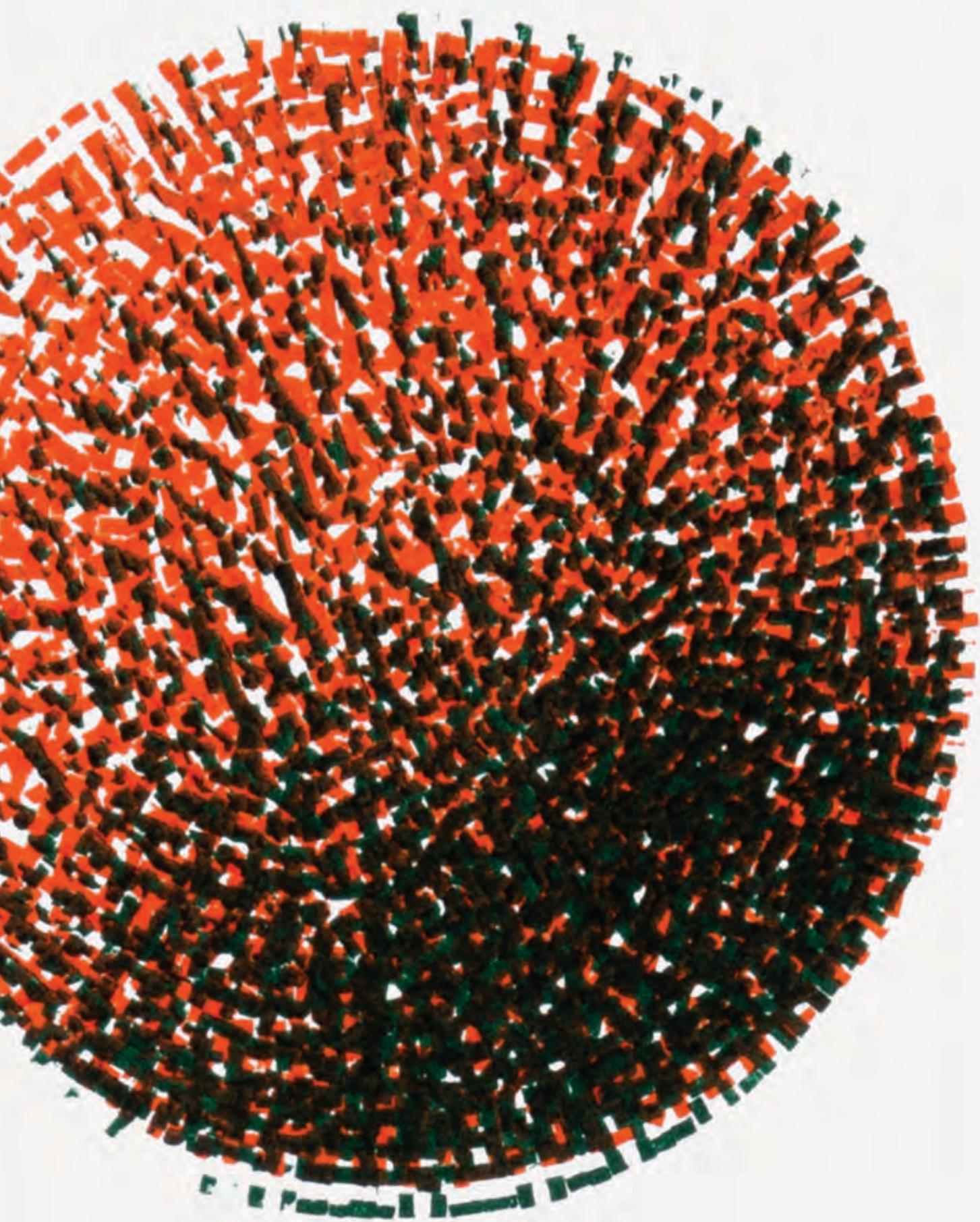
What made Weingart so unique was his breaking of the strict grids and alignments of the time. "He was among the first designers of his generation to declare that typography can do more than just transfer information," says Christian Brändle, Director of MfGZ. "He took an artistic approach, a way of using this technique of typography that went much further. He opened up a totally new field of how type can be used." His new style was also



MUSEUM FÜR GESTALTUNG ZÜRICH, GRAPHICS AND POSTER COLLECTION.
PHOTO: U. ROMITO © ZHDK

Above: Wolfgang Weingart, *The Swiss Poster 1900–1983*, 1984, poster, offset print (based on halftone film collage). Right: Wolfgang Weingart, *Round Compositions* (reconstruction of the 1962 experiments for the Darmstadt exhibition), one print out of a series of twenty-seven, 1990, letterpress

MUSEUM FÜR GESTALTUNG ZÜRICH, GRAPHICS AND POSTER COLLECTION.
PHOTO: U. ROMITO © ZHDK

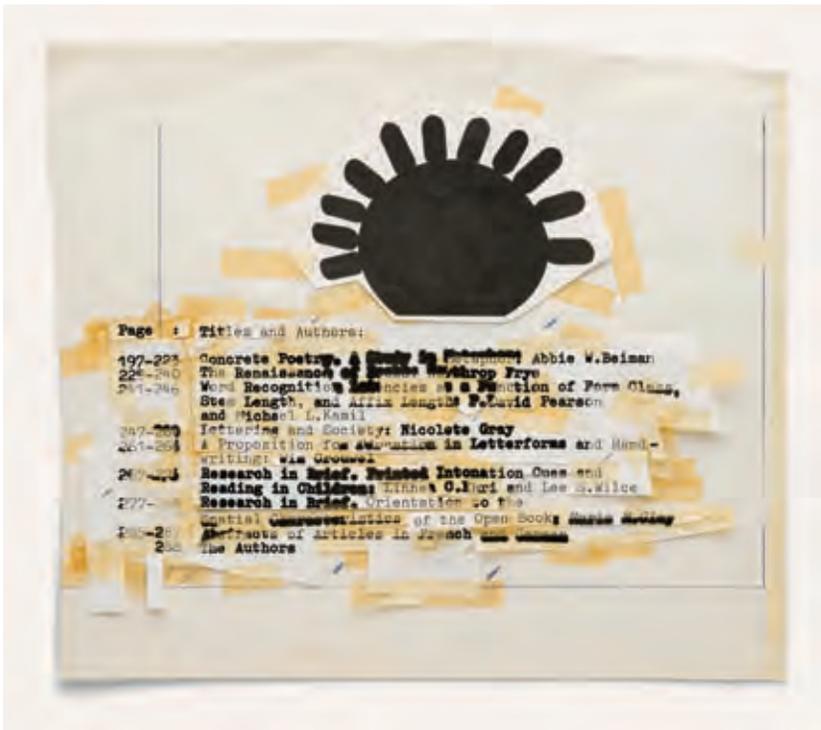


significant because it was developed in the same country as those original, highly restrictive rules. It was an attack on the typographic establishment and therefore considered 'punk'. Weingart wrote in his own monograph that his first rule breaking experiments were due to an accident. "It all started when an old drawer full of thousands of lead characters had fallen to the floor and Weingart had to put the letters back into the typecase," Brändle explains. "It was obvious to him that this would take him at least three days to redo the whole thing. It was then that he decided to make a test, by filling a cardboard ring with the type, and printing both surfaces of the composition, the customary face of the letters and the bottom of the type."

But Weingart didn't stop with lead characters. Through his career he used new pieces of technology in alternative ways to continue his development of visual expression. "As soon as Xerox machines were available at the school, Weingart used them for his class. With his students he tried to find out how to use these machines in order to get new aesthetic results. Later on he bought the first Apple Macintosh computer and gave some tasks to the students, for example exploring the painterly possibilities of the program MacPaint," says Brändle. "In the mid-1970s, Weingart surprised the professional world once more with his unusual technique of halftone film collage, anticipating digital sampling and today's Photoshop software. The halftone film material's transparency allowed him to overlay text and image and to alter lettering with the repro camera," adds Junod.

One of the pieces in the exhibition that really stands out for Brändle is titled *Moon Rufen*. The piece sees the words 'moon' and 'rufen', meaning calling in German, getting smaller, as if being called out and being lost in space as they head towards the moon. The letters themselves are actually made up of other characters, extending the font to create the diminishing effect. It's a simple yet very onomatopoeic image and one whose influence can be seen

MUSEUM FÜR GESTALTUNG ZÜRICH, GRAPHICS AND POSTER COLLECTION, PHOTO: U. ROMITO © ZHDK



Wolfgang Weingart, *Visible Language* (American trade magazine), draft of magazine cover, 1974, photo collage

in more contemporary designs. For Junod, it is Weingart's free line pictures in lead from the mid-1960s that she is specially attached to. "They are so simple, but they have a very sensitive, musical touch," she says.

Weingart's influence on the world of design and his way of exploring and combining new and old technologies has been extensive, both in his own work and that of his students he taught at Basel School of Design. But according to Brändle there are still big changes to come in typography. "When I look, especially in Hong Kong, at other writing, like Chinese, Japanese, Tamil or Sanskrit, there's this whole universe waiting to be explored," says Brändle. "Imagine exploring Chinese characters the way we have with Latin. The modern Latin alphabet is extremely restricted, you have 26 different characters and it's done. In Chinese you have thousands."



MUSEUM FÜR GESTALTUNG ZÜRICH, GRAPHICS AND POSTER COLLECTION, PHOTO: U. ROMITO © ZHDK

Wolfgang Weingart, *Moon Rufen* (Call the Moon), in "The Vomitbook", book of typographic experiments, double page, 1970-1972, letterpress

MUSEUM FÜR GESTALTUNG ZÜRICH, GRAPHICS AND POSTER COLLECTION.
PHOTO: U. ROMITO © ZHDK



The Weingart Typography exhibition at d-mart, HKDI

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“Weingart was among the first designers of his generation to declare that typography can do more than just transfer information. He took an artistic approach that went much further. He opened up a totally new field of how type can be used.”

Christian Brändle, Director of MfGZ



MUSEUM FÜR GESTALTUNG ZÜRICH, GRAPHICS AND POSTER COLLECTION.
PHOTO: U. ROMITO © ZHDK

Above: Wolfgang Weingart, *Wolfgang Weingart: Fabrika Treviso* (Italy), poster for a lecture, 1998, offset print (based on a collage with computer-designed elements) Right: The M cube exhibition at d-mart, HKDI



MUSEUM FÜR GESTALTUNG ZÜRICH, GRAPHICS AND POSTER COLLECTION.



Bird language by Xu Bing
Opposite: Calligraphy on an Electric
Box by the King of Kowloon

have influenced generations of artists. Excelling in every script, particularly the semi-cursive, or the running script, legend has it that rearing geese played a part in his producing calligraphy – Wang claimed that he mastered the key of wrist movement by observing how geese moved their necks.

In the modern age, it is apparent that there are far fewer varieties of Chinese fonts compared to Western typography. This is due, in part, to the difficulty of producing fonts with such a large variety of glyphs, while, in contrast, a typographer only needs to design 26 characters for English fonts. But that hasn't stopped artists and designers from playfully exploring Chinese typography.

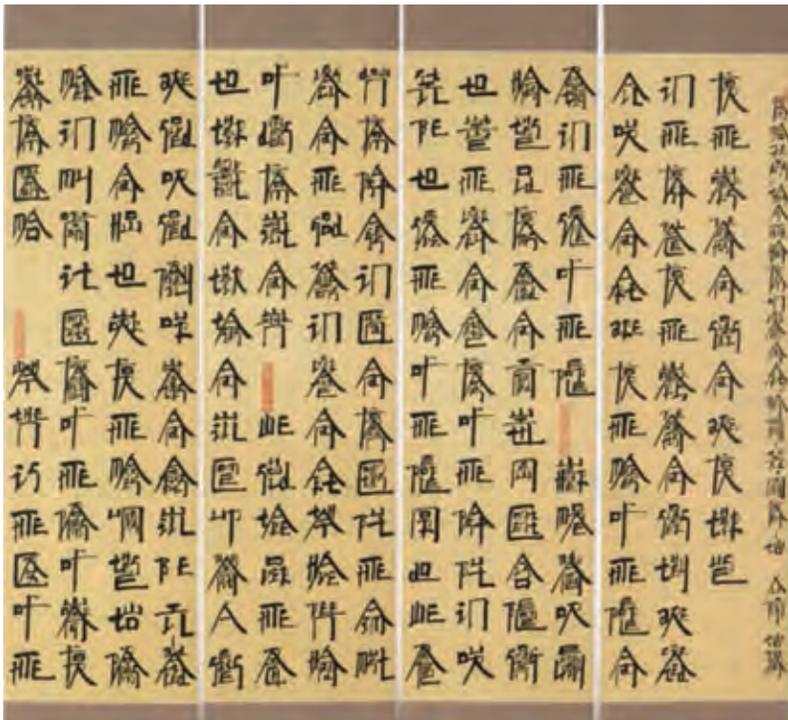
Douglas Young, is the founder of Goods of Desire (aka GOD), a Hong Kong-based store selling creative and witty designs. Inspired by the city's own vibrant culture and energy, Young plays with the clashing of East and West, age-old traditions and cutting-edge technology. He often adapts vintage neon signs, old Chinese newspapers and traditional 'Prosperity' rice bowl designs with a contemporary twist. "Typography is a form of calligraphy for the digital world," says Young. "Like calligraphy itself,



Newspaper print pillow from GOD



Calligraphy in China has long been regarded as not only the top most form of art required of any serious scholar, but also an identity and building of a person's character



Xu Bing's Square Word calligraphy



PICTURE CREDIT: MABSOCIETY.COM



Newspaper design A4 file



Neon sign apron design from GOD

it should be considered as art and a means of cultural expression.” When asked his favourite typography representative of the city, Young chooses the iconic but slowly disappearing pawn shop symbol. “Legibility is the most important. People still look back to old fonts because some classics are hard to beat in terms of legibility,” Young explains. “Also, by sticking to classics, one avoids drawing too much attention to the choice of the font itself.”

Tsang Tsou-choi (aka the King of Kowloon) – who died in 2007 – covered the walls, electricity boxes and streets of Kowloon with his painted symbols and poetry. He would paint messages over and over again that proclaimed his ‘right’ to the land – Tsang claimed that his ancestors owned Kowloon and that he had a claim to the area, though this was never substantiated. The large painted calligraphy he used and the tightness of the spacing became like a pattern on the walls, making it instantly recognisable as his work.

Xu Bing, one of the most prominent Chinese contemporary artists with an international career, has been turning Chinese calligraphy on its head since 1994. Exploring a potential link between English and Chinese characters, he developed a brand new system called Square Word Calligraphy. Xu meticulously reinterprets each letter of the English alphabet into an individual Chinese glyph written with ink. “The order is like Chinese: from left to right, top to bottom, outside to inside,” explains Xu. “You’ll find out the order when you read the alphabet. You really can get a sense of the letters.” What is so ingenious about his Square Word Calligraphy is that it’s able to achieve the almost impossible task of transcending design, art, culture and language. As Xu says, “Through my calligraphy, Western people can really get into calligraphy art. I hope my art is not only restricted to the museum or the art world.”

With tens and thousands of glyphs and characters, Chinese writing remains arguably the most complicated and fascinating of all. It is an art form in itself, with infinite space to delve into the possibilities of innovation through calligraphy and typography.

DRIVING CHANGE

Chelsia Lau is the chief designer for Ford in Shanghai and is behind some of its biggest projects. We speak to the Hongkonger about the changes in automotive design

I'll never forget the moment I first saw one of the production models my team designed on the road, that moment is beyond words - It's magical and very rewarding.

Originally from Hong Kong, Chelsia Lau studied at Lee Wai Lee Technical Institute before joining the Art Centre College of Design in Pasadena, California, and has been with the Ford Motor Company since 1992. During this time, she has worked on projects from the compact Fiesta to Explorer SUV, and even the Mercury MC4 concept in 1997. Today she is chief designer in Ford's strategic concept creations team in Shanghai and is responsible for delivering design localisation for products in China.

with the vehicle, the interior environment, the drive and feel of the vehicle, just to name a few.

How much does fuel efficiency and environmental issues come into the initial design stage of a car?

They play an important role in the initial design phase as we need to consider them in all aspects of our process. At the same time, we also need to assess aerodynamics and air flow of different design proposals to improve fuel economy.

What's been the biggest change you've seen in automotive design in the last 10 years?

Firstly, as technology innovation continues to progress and digital becomes an important part of our daily lives, there is more focus on connectivity, automation and electronic features inside a vehicle. Auto manufacturers are striving to offer smarter solutions to keep pace with information-centric digital lifestyles. Secondly, there has been a shift from just satisfying transportation needs towards more of a full driving experience. This encompasses human interaction

Has the implementing of environmental concerns been more difficult in China?

Ford works very closely with regulators to test and certify that our vehicles meet all environmental requirements, such as applicable emission and fuel economy standards. Our efforts in this area are no different in China than in other parts of the world.

What's more rewarding for you, designing a concept car or something that goes into full production?





To me both can be very fulfilling. In terms of designing for near-term production vehicles, something more tangible and feasible that presents certain constraints, while leveraging existing technologies or components and striving for innovation can be highly challenging. I'll never forget the moment I first saw one of the production models my team designed on the road, that moment is beyond words – it's magical and very rewarding.

When designing for concept vehicles we have more leeway to stretch the design vision and envelope. It's always fun and exciting to engage ourselves in contemplating the future, especially as things are evolving at lightning speed in today's digital era.

What do you look for in a car?

First impressions are very important. Great proportion, silhouette, stance, shape and form executions

are some of the key elements that constitute a great looking exterior.

Interior design is equally important. It's a personal space that the owner will spend most of their time in. To achieve the sense of perceived spaciousness is essential inside the cabin. It needs to be warm and inviting, comfortable and very intuitive. A great interior has clarity of intent; superb craftsmanship and, most importantly, it's memorable!

What made Ford want to enter the taxi market in HK?

Taxis are a primary means of transportation for Hong Kong's over seven million residents and many millions of visitors. It's a big taxi market, so there was definitely room for more competition.

There has been feedback on the taxi that it is too expensive for drivers, do you think this will be an issue for its success?

We have been very pleased with the feedback we've received about the Ford Transit Connect Taxi from owners, drivers and passengers alike.

Last year we conducted a survey with taxi drivers, and found they love being able to offer their passengers a better experience, as well as the comfort and safety features provided by the taxi. According to an experienced driver who upgraded to the Transit Connect, he can now generate 20 percent more revenue than he could before.

Do you think autonomous vehicles will see a shift in car design?

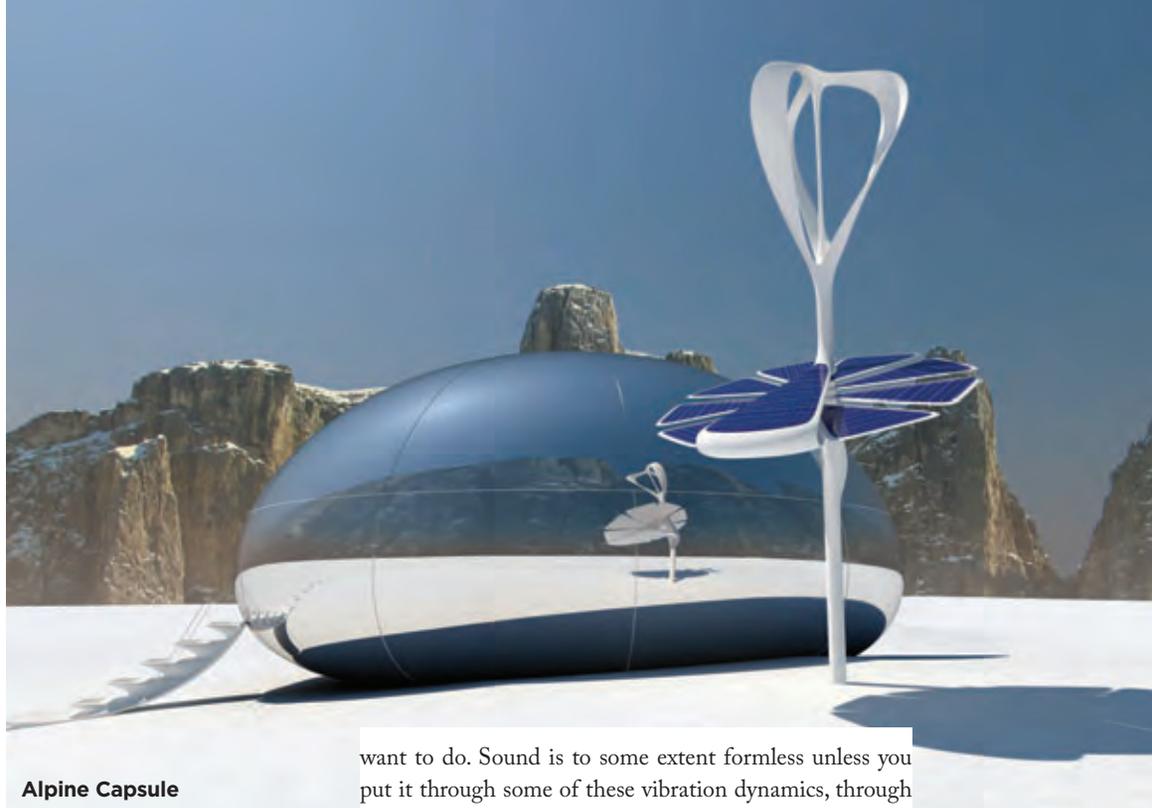
The development of autonomous vehicles is a hot topic nowadays. With new technological breakthroughs, the idea of transportation will be redefined. A car in the future could look totally different than the car we are familiar with today based on its function and usage. The biggest impact will be on the user experience.

With autonomous or semi-autonomous vehicles, the driver will gain more time and flexibility during the journey. What people will do with this new found luxury of time is a topic of great interest. This opens up lots of opportunities for car designers to explore much broader innovative solutions.



Breaking the **SOUND** barrier

Known for his curves and natural shapes, eminent product designer Ross Lovegrove has returned to the audio world to create the best sounding wireless speaker



Alpine Capsule

Ross Lovegrove is one of the great product designers of our time. Originally from Cardiff in Wales, he has worked on early Walkman projects for Sony, for Knoll International in Paris, on a concept car for Renault, and been exhibited at the Guggenheim and MoMA in New York and the Design Museum in London. Lovegrove's latest project sees him returning to work with the British audio company KEF. After designing the monolithic, space-age MUON speakers nearly 10 years ago, this new project set out to create a portable wireless speaker for the brand that retains the same high quality finish and sound. The result is the MUO, a coloured aluminium block with a uniquely hand drilled grille and touches of Lovegrove's organic curves, which form a three-sided oblong that can be placed both horizontally or vertically for listening. We spoke to the designer at the Hong Kong launch of the device, at DeTour in PMQ, about his work and inspiration.

Your work has often been described as organic, would you say that's fair?

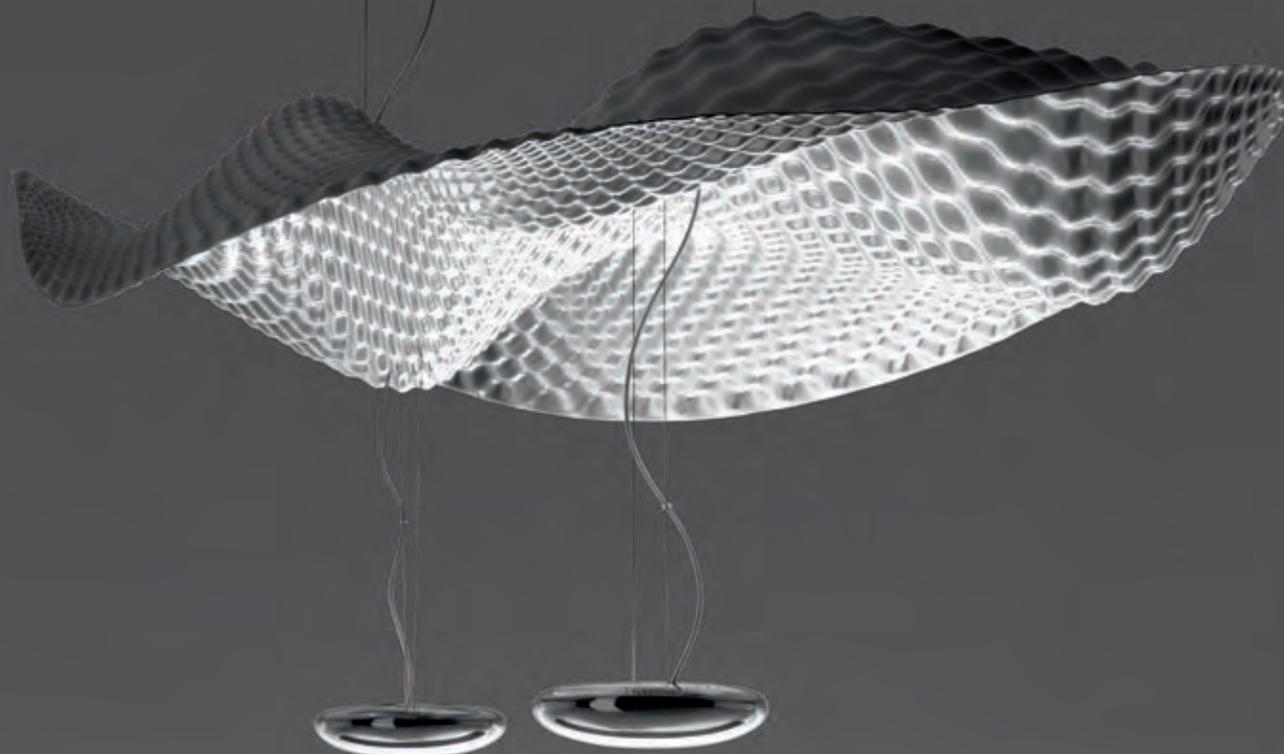
Well, it's sort of become a bit of a label, but I don't mind. As long as people don't relate it to food all the time. I think organic has taken on a whole new meaning. In most people's understanding it does mean something with goodness, something healthier for you, in a sense. But that's not totally how I exercise. Organic seems to be a wonderful way to talk about form in a very straightforward way, but it also relates to materials. We, as people, are organic; we are physically, materially organic, our geometry is organic. I like organic because it's free-form, non-gravitational – things that are grown and not constructed. That's where I'm trying to go with my work, but it's not always easy due to limitations within the manufacturing process. We've just been through a decade, if not more, of design that's been butter patted, contrived to linearity and it's much more premeditated and cold and calculated to do straight lines and radius, it really is. I never subscribed to that, it doesn't feel natural to me. If you work with ceramics, ceramics is a solid, made liquid, made solid. It has its own memory and it wants to go into form, so it's facetious not to make it into form. It's the naturalness of materials and what they

want to do. Sound is to some extent formless unless you put it through some of these vibration dynamics, through a resonating material. So sound, to some extent, is organic because it's a nebula. It's like air, and at some point you have to be able to ground that and make it tangible. I'm not like Zaha [Hadid] or anybody like that, I don't think form should run away. I use quite clean geometries, then I can be more free once I've defined what it has to do.

I was asked earlier what my view on organic essentialism is, which is coalescence of two important factors. Essentialism is a way of creating something without the use of extraneous materials. I think that's fundamental. We talk of economics in terms of money, but what about economics in terms of resources? We're using too much material all the time, which costs too much energy. I've been designing for 41 years and organic essentialism is something I've arrived at and I believe in. And I've had to endure at least 10 years of everybody saying, no, it's got to be like this because that's cool. Today, with 3D printing, computer design, the way we use programs and algorithms, we have no fear of form in the way we make it. Form in nature is really cheap, because it grows. My aim in the future is to get into really advanced biological manufacturing. I'd love to just have a lab and try things that would force industry to change.

Ross Lovegrove





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How did the collaboration with KEF come about?

I started 10 years ago with MUON in the search for a new apex standard in the dialogue between form and sound or technology and the poly-sensorial beauty of elevating sight and sound.

When I was asked to do MUON, KEF had tried for about 10 or 12 years with great engineers – Dr Andrew Watson and a really great team – to perfect sound, to find if there was a possibility of perfect sound. Well, of course there is and there isn't, because if your ears don't work you can have the most incredible sound but it wouldn't matter. Everybody hears things differently, as they see colours differently. I got that shape in eight weeks, from my instinct, and that's the best sound ever produced. It's because there's no interference.

Is there a different process designing something that's main function is sound compared to, say, a vehicle or something you physically interact with?

Everything I do is searching for the generic genesis heart of a concept. We are taking resources out of our Earth and transforming them into tools for living or enhancing consciousness. They become either the icons of our civilisation or its demise. So yes, there are differences, but fundamentally I'm designing to augment the human life experience. I've been fortunate, however, to design for brands that in themselves are looking for this and are absolutely focused on creating the very best possible, and KEF is no exception.

Everything I do is searching for the generic genesis heart of a concept. We are taking resources out of our Earth and transforming them into tools for living or enhancing consciousness. They become either the icons of our civilisation or its demise.

What first attracted you to product design?

I was attracted to design because it's where creation meets innovation, which meets vision, which meets making things, which meets humanity, which meets a very clearly defined purpose in life.

You studied at the Royal College of Art in London. How did this shape your work?

I structured my three-year Master's at the RCA very clearly in order to raise my abilities and to understand who I am individually as a designer. To find my place and my philosophical approach and to ensure that, when I left, I could be of value in my profession. My first year saw me readjusting to an environment where everyone around me was elite and the best of the best from their respective design schools. I was shocked at how good their thinking was, how good the model-making was and how much I had to step up my skills to reach their level. So I arrived

every morning at 8am, two hours before everyone else. I experimented in a very free-form way, highly influenced by the Memphis Movement led by Ettore Sottsass, who was really breaking the rules at the time.

In my second year I found my own design approach, which fused technology, art, materials, innovation and invention with a love of form. I also secured my job at Frogdesign in Germany, so any free time and holidays I had I went to Altensteig to work there on designs for Apple and others.

And in my final year, I acted on my self-improvement and created works for my degree show, which would define me as an individual and designer, expressing the highest of qualities from thought to concept, to drawing and to quality of making things, as I always believed that the RCA was the greatest and rarest of opportunities.

Have modern moulding techniques and materials made the design process easier or just raised the bar?

New technologies have made design far more inventive with new typologies emerging every day that never existed. But this has made designing a very demanding and intensive profession as the leading designers who innovate technologically and aesthetically require such advanced skills and knowledge today. We have to invest so much more time and energy to clearly define what we do, engineer and get it into production, and we rarely have the engineering or computational support that architects do. So when you see something great it's because of a greater knowledge and massive level of commitment to the overall process.

What inspires you?

I'm inspired by the potential of the times in which we live and pioneering a new era of design that is inspired by nature and the extraordinary gift of our planet.



Go Chair



Ilabo Shoe



MUON speakers

Is there a piece of design you wish you'd created, or one you'd love to revamp?

The smart phone. At the Royal College of Art I was told that every time there is a paradigm shift in anything, you do not have a precedent, which means you can design in any way you want because it did not exist before. If I see designers doing something super contemporary with a kind of retro styling, it's the worst crime on earth, I think.

What's the project that you're most proud of?

I think my CAR ON A STICK [his urban green car concept] says it all until I get a chance to go further with new 21st century smart minds.

See more of Ross Lovegrove's work at rosslovegrove.com

Building the Revolution

A collection of pre-crafted houses and pavilions, created by the world's best architects, designers and artists, forms Revolution. We look at this epic collection and its creators

Design Miami is one of the main focuses of the design calendar, so it was the perfect platform to launch a project that includes a space-age pavilion by Zaha Hadid and a Polynesian inspired pre-crafted home by Tom Dixon. *Revolution* was conceived by real estate guru Robbie Antonio, founder and president of the New York-based Antonio Development, and managing director of the Philippines-based Century Properties. Pre-crafted or pre-fabricated properties became a popular way to build after World War II in the United Kingdom and has long been a popular method of building in the United States. A series of panels and kits supplied for assembly on site, rather than individual designs, is a cost-effective way of building but the structures are usually thought of as dull and lifeless. This project seeks to change that by showcasing designs that although are still very liveable and practical for their environments, also challenge the monotony of these mass produced designs. Aiding Antonio in this project is an advisory committee made up of industry experts from a range of fields, including Hong Kong's own Adrian Chung, the executive vice-chairman and joint general manager of New World Development Co and founder of the K11 Art Foundation, as well as Dr Allan Zeman, chairman of the Lan Kwai Fong Group. "Hong Kong is a cultural centre for design innovation and an artistic community," says Antonio. "The city has built upon the legacy of its global business leaders and has expanded its reach to the art and design world, as evidenced by Art Basel Hong Kong."

The project itself was one year in planning and saw Antonio call on his long-standing relationships with a series of prominent architects as well as the expertise of design magazine *Wallpaper** to help curate some of the homes and pavilions. At Design Miami, *Revolution* debuted with the pavilions by architects Zaha Hadid and Gluckman Tang, though to date there are 18 designers listed in the project. This is expected to reach around 40, with a new product or design announced each month through the website and newsletter. According to Antonio, the structures will continue to be showcased at various art, design and architecture fairs and festivals across the world, the next of which is the Salone del Mobile in Milan this April. With what is already a strong Hong Kong connection to this project, it's hoped that some of the work may make its way to our shores in 2016 as well.



Robbie Antonio



Volu by Zaha Hadid and Patrik Schumacher

The Volu dining pavilion is the work of Pritzker prize-winning architect Zaha Hadid and her firm's director of architects, Patrik Schumacher. The geometric design, like many of Hadid's pieces, has more of a space-age feel to it. However, it also owes a lot to nature with both the roof of the pavilion and the furniture looking almost organic. The roof and the floor of the structure are joined at the rear in

a clam-like form. The design is fully realised using a digital process, which has meant that it is efficient to manufacture, allowing flat sheets of metal to be used for the parts and the amount of material to be kept to a minimum – all factors that are extremely important in pre-fabricated structures. An edition featuring 24 of the structures is available for order with a price tag of around US\$480,000.

The Volu dining pavilion





Block by Tom Dixon

British product designer Tom Dixon has created another of the pre-crafted houses for the project. “I think coming from a product design background we can look at architecture in a completely different way,” says Dixon in an interview for Revolution’s website. Block is his take on a traditional portable housing form, where each cabin is a single container that can be joined with others to create different housing configurations. The interior is a hard wearing cork, creating what he describes as a natural backdrop for living. “We become designers of a system and the customer becomes the architect of their own requirement,” he adds. The struts or supports for the structure are all adjustable, allowing the building to be placed on uneven terrain or cope with a range of different environments, much like traditional Polynesian houses built on stilts. The construction itself takes influences from traditional architecture with Eastern wood carpentry techniques translated into an industrial product, making it possible for anyone to quickly assemble the structure.



Eden by Marcel Wanders



The Billboard House by David Salle in collaboration with AA Studio

The Model Art Pavilion by Gluckman Tang



The Bamboo Pavilion by Estudio Campana



The Eros Senses Pavilion by Kulapat Yantrasast



The Armadillo Tea Pavilion by Ron Arad

The Palloon



The Palloon Relaxation Pavilion by J Mayer H for *Wallpaper**

One of the pieces curated by *Wallpaper** magazine, the Palloon is the work of Berlin-based architects J Mayer H, headed by Jürgen Hermann Mayer. The design is a form of 3D lattice made from overlapping plastic beams, which allows some seclusion while still being able to see glimpses of the outside world. The indoor-outdoor space is conceived for a garden or an open space where people can relax without completely shutting themselves off from the environment. Covering an area of 25 square metres however, it does require a large space to put it in. J Mayer H also conceived one of the houses for the project. The Diago home is a flexible space with a cantilever roof supported by diagonal columns around the skeleton of the building. Available in one and two bedroom versions, its walls are entirely made of glass panels, though indoor and outdoor curtains and panels can be added to provide privacy and a change of lighting.



Instrumental Home by Marmol Radziner



Casa A by Selgascano in collaboration with HelloEverything





Sou Fujimoto's Sphere Greenhouse and Infinity Ring



Infinity Ring by Sou Fujimoto

For his pavilion, Japanese architect Sou Fujimoto took inspiration from an infinity ring, a piece of jewellery that is rotated to align multiple rings. In this design, the structure takes the shape of a large ring with a six metre radius. This contains various spaces inside it and by rotating the entire structure different areas can be used, providing a range of size and scale in the seating options. "It's an integration of furniture, architecture and art pieces and a new challenge for a new lifestyle," says Fujimoto.

The Tokyo-based architect has also created the Sphere Greenhouse. Built from circles, this allows the owner to create their own living sphere made of plants, and spend time within the dome, surrounded by natural walls.

Revolution contains many interesting works that cover multiple uses, from the Instrumental Home, with interiors envisioned by musician Lenny Kravitz, to New York architects Gluckman Tang's Mobile Art Pavilion offering a compact exhibition space that's as stylish as the art work inside it. Due to the sheer scale of these pieces it's unlikely that they will all be united in a single physical show. However, their presence at various festivals and exhibitions across the world allows an insight into the thinking behind what is really a revolution in the way we view pre-fabricated properties.



The Bettina Pavilion by Michael Maltzan



The ReCreation Pavilion by Daniel Libeskind



Lenny Kravitz interior

Keeping in fashion

The Fashion Archive at Hong Kong Design Institute is a treasure trove of historical and significant pieces. We explore the huge collection and discover how it's helping to launch new careers

Creativity, dedication and careful attention to detail – these are just a few key aspects that play an important role in maintaining an extensive and beautifully kept fashion archive. The Fashion Archive at HKDI embodies just that. It also works closely with a variety of exciting professionals, including costume designers, for projects ranging from theatre shows to movie wardrobes. It's an exciting project that can lead to many opportunities for those keen to start a career in the ever-evolving world of fashion and creative design.

The Fashion Archive houses many unique, signature, historical and representative archival items. There are many valuable pieces, each representing a special style or character, which can be borrowed from the archive for many reasons, such as use in a historical movie set or a theatre performance. For those at the Fashion Archive, the right balance of knowledge, creativity and historical accuracy is required to showcase the most relatable pieces needed, and to leave a lasting impression of fashion.

“We split the collection by era, design detail, fabrication and silhouette, and into Eastern and Western garments.

In the collection we have costumes from Cantonese opera and Miao tribe clothing to television drama costume and kimonos, 18th-century Western garments to 20s flapper style dresses and 50s clothing. It's really quite a rich experience to see,” says Elita Lam, head of the Fashion and Image Design department at HKDI. “Being able to look to the past with such an archive is very important because fashion is an evolution and goes in cycles. Designers can see what the original garment looked like, then add modern techniques to innovate it.”

Taking advantage of this growing resources centre, the Higher Diploma in Costume Design for Performance programme at HKDI equips students with the necessary skills and knowledge to work in a variety of different fields. Graduates can go on to potential careers in costume design for performance, styling and wardrobe coordination. This unique course also offers opportunities to work in film, television, theatre costume design and fashion archives, like the one at Hong Kong Design Institute. The programme also aims to build a solid foundation for a career in many creative industries by cultivating students' skills in lifelong learning, research and also self-learning.



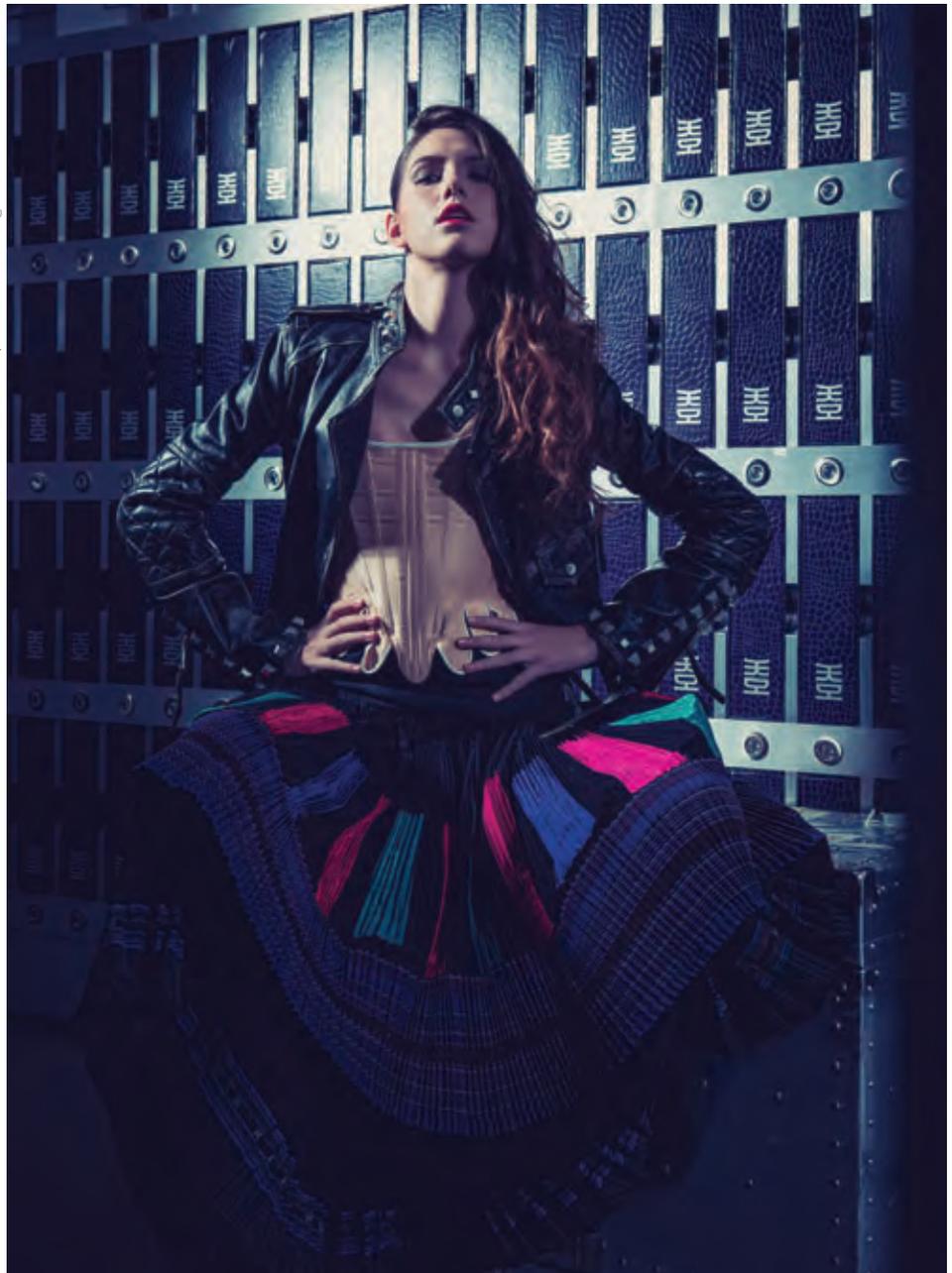
MaxMara Grey floral printed tunic, with 1920s floral printed chiffon dress underneath



PICTURE CREDIT: DICKY MANANA X IMAGE LAB 360, MODEL: TIANA P@MODELS INTERNATIONAL LTD

1970s iconic crochet trouser suit

PICTURE CREDIT: DICKY MANANA X IMAGE LAB 360, MODEL: OLGA SO. @MODELS INTERNATIONAL LTD



DSQUARED2 Black leather biker jacket with silver metal studs and zipper fastening. Underneath: 18th century corset coordinated with a multi-colour pleated skirt from China's Miao minority

“The Fashion Archive is the most valuable of resources for costume design students. Students studying costume design can study original costume masterpieces, from the Edwardian period to contemporary fashion, experiencing their styles, colours, fabrications, cutting and construction. They are the life books to assist my teaching,” says renowned Hong Kong fashion designer, Pacino Wan, now a lecturer at HKDI.

The course teaches students real-world practical experience for life as a costume designer to help them step into the market. The role of a costume designer requires a great deal of experience and helps to define the overall ‘look’ of a TV production or film. This must be achieved within strict budgets, and to tight schedules. During pre-production, costume designers must carry out research into the costume styles, design and construction methods suitable for the time period. They must work closely with the production designer to make sure the costumes fit in with their overall vision, and work with the chosen lighting and camera angles. They collaborate with the hair and make-up team to make sure a cohesive look is created, and may even discuss costume and character ideas with performers.

Academy Award-winning costume designer Yip Kam Tim is known for dressing actors in movie productions such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. Yip understands the importance of the archive and the need for a proper curriculum to ready people for the film and performance industry. Karen Chan, an art director at TVB, also appreciates the niche fulfilled for graduates working in costume design, coordination and other new opportunities available in Eastern and Western costume development. These professionals, along with many other well-known production designers, managers and actors, are fully committed to supporting and helping students, and provide an active support for teaching these unique skills through learning activities.

“Costume Design is a relatively new discipline in Hong Kong’s design education. The local and regional demand for costume designers with technical know-how has grown with the expansion of theme parks and the stage performance business in the region. Potential employers in film, TV and stage performance are looking to employ assistants with fundamental knowledge and skills in this profession, and with the prime costume production base shifting back to HK, there are significant demands for graduates to support the development of these industries,” says Pacino.

Though fashion design and costume design are closely related and both represented in the archive, there are some significant differences that set them apart. Fashion

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Fashion follows a cycle but the fashion cycle has no specific measurable time period.



PICTURE CREDIT: DICKY MANANA X IMAGE LAB 360, OLGA SO @MODELS INTERNATIONAL LTD

1890 Cream-coloured lace wedding dress with Azzedine Alaïa wool fleece cropped bolero

designers typically work for retailers or apparel companies, though some are self-employed and contribute designs to multiple clients. They tend to create collections of pieces that are introduced in stores seasonally, creating the concepts of each piece and overseeing the creation of the samples that are used in manufacturing.

On the other hand, costume designers often work for a production company or television show, but can also be freelancers, taking jobs on a production-by-production basis. They work with a production’s creative team to settle on a plan for the costumes. They tailor the costume designs to particular characters and to other components of the production. While fashion designers frequently attempt to create something original, costume designers often replicate pieces in an effort to help a production recreate a time, place or atmosphere.

The Fashion Archive is still expanding and one area that it hopes to expand is its collection from local designers. “I think the collection is still very small, so I would like to see it grow in all areas, especially the Hong Kong designers’ collection, as they are a very important part of our fashion history,” says Elita. The Fashion Archive also plans to host more open workshops, allowing lively interactions between the students and the collection.

Fashion reflects society, it can be influenced by wars, conquests, laws, religion, the arts, and even individual personalities can have an impact. Fashion follows a cycle but the fashion cycle has no specific measurable time period. Some styles sustain for longer periods, while some die out quickly, and others come back years later. So the Fashion Archive isn’t just playing a role in storing our fashion history, it is acting as inspiration for future designers too.

1910



Edwardian tulle
tea gown, circ 1910



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Dating from the 1910s to the 2000s, the collection allows students to learn about the changes in fashion and different techniques.



Unique
1920s dress

1920



1940



1940s coat dress
made with a Chinese
brocade print



1950



1950s Harrod's
embellished
cocktail dress



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Besides giving students a chance to study real garments, we also play an important role in the curation and conservation of fashion items.



1970s psychedelic print
jersey maxi dress

1970



2000



2000s laser-cut
pattern dress by
Hong Kong designer
Vivienne Tam





Design Research Society

50 years of understanding design

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Though I think it may well be possible to make a designer out of any intelligent man, it is a more economical proposition to look for potential designers waiting to be released.

In 1962, a conference was held at Imperial College London to discuss design methods and terminology. The conference covered everything from the advent of the ‘electronic digital computer’ that would aid the design process, to recognising talent in future designers. “Though I think it may well be possible to make a designer out of any intelligent man, I am fairly sure that it is a much more economical proposition to look for the people who are, as it were, potential designers waiting to be released,” wrote DG Christopherson, vice-chancellor of Durham University. This forward-thinking conference led to the formation of the Design Research Society (DRS) in 1966, for the ‘study of and research into the process of designing in all its many fields’.

Through its history, the Society has seen many major advances in the design world. A newsletter from 1968 talks of the formation of the UK’s new National Design Council (which became simply the Design Council) and the new computer-aided design possibilities, while an early 90s publication mentions environmental issues in design and the idea of electronic libraries and a worldwide network for design.

Fifty years after its foundation, the DRS is still going strong, providing a commitment to design across all disciplines. It has a worldwide network and is also a founding member of the International Association of Societies of Design Research (IASDR), an umbrella group of like-minded societies across the world that includes the Japanese Society for the Science of Design (JSSD) that was founded in 1953. The society produces regular publications, holds a conference every two years, presents awards for design studies and lifetime achievement and offers student bursaries to those working towards the publication of design research. This year it also offered

a series of special anniversary grants on the origins of design research.

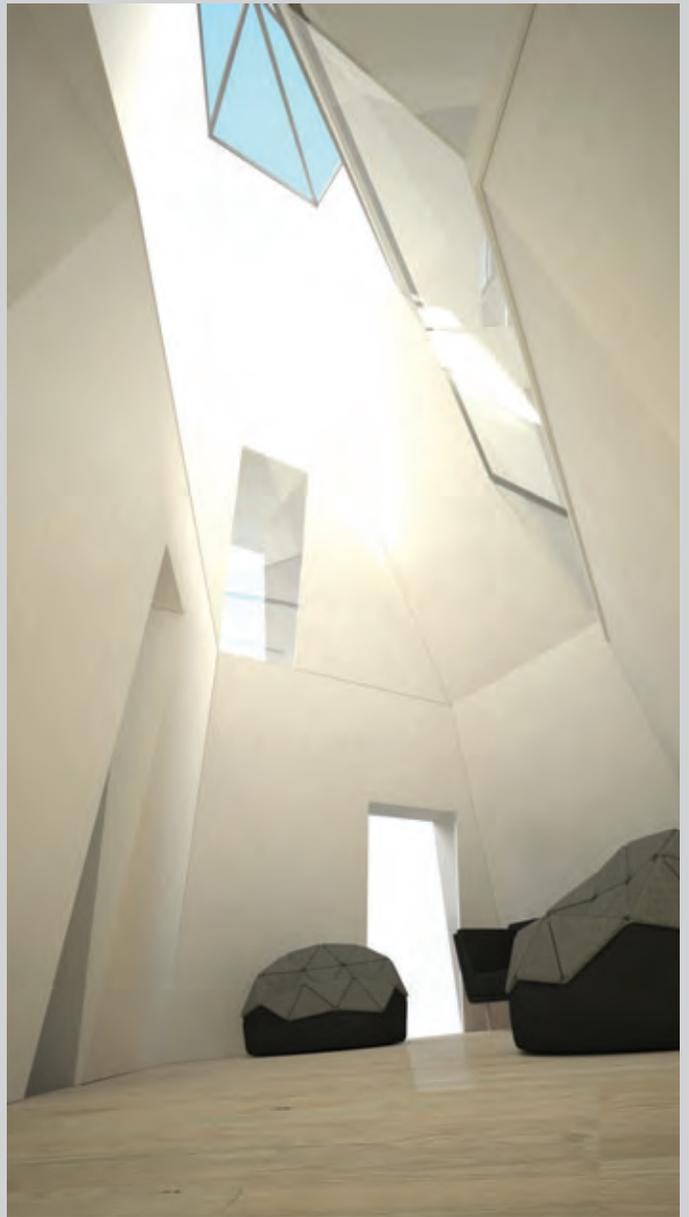
In celebration of its 50th anniversary, this year’s conference, to be held in Brighton in the UK, will have a special significance. “We are planning a special and inclusive event that looks back on the history of design research, but most of all, looks forward to the future,” says a special message from Peter Lloyd, the General Chair for the conference and professor of design at the University of Brighton. The conference, which runs from June 27-30, poses three questions: How can design research help frame and address the societal problems that we face? How can design research be a creative and active force for rethinking ideas about design? And how can design research shape our lives in more responsible and open ways? These and many other subjects will be addressed and discussed in papers, workshops and seminars held during the event between industry professionals, academics and students. There is also a sustainable element to the conference, with the main dinner having a zero-waste theme in partnership with local sustainable restaurant Silo. We can only hope that this level of lively discussion on design is still happening in another 50 years.

For more information on the conference and the Design Research Society, visit www.drs2016.org



Play on

Music lab is the work of Higher Diploma in Interior Design student, Forest Lai Yip Lam, and pays tribute to the Hong Kong music Industry. This multi-functional music studio features three primary spaces, representing the life cycle of a musician. Visitors can enter the music shop to choose albums for inspiration, practise in the music academy and then record their efforts in the studio. This piece won the A&D Trophy Awards in 2015 for Interior Design (Best of Students category), and Best of the Best (Students category).



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