Cumulus Working Papers

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UNIVERSITY OF ART AND
DESIGN HELSINKI

Contents

FOREWORD Christian Guellerin

Cumulus serves to promote ideals of democracy, exchange and freedom

I just wish to remind you the foundations Cumulus relies on, and the values advocated by our network.

To this day, Cumulus has become the largest structure in the world gathering together higher education institutions in design, art and media.

As you all know, Cumulus was brought to life in 1990, in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall. It was founded to promote the sharing of common ideals – ideals of democracy, exchange and freedom – in order to give Europe a new start and especially to call ideals of peace into being…

Since 1990, the network has kept growing, becoming stronger and stronger as new partners and institutions joined the team… Today, we are 124 members.

In 2005, we decided to turn our faces to the world and to share it… to "get global" and to open up Cumulus to each and every culture, each and every country… to learn and create by gazing as far beyond our boundaries as possible… always spurred by the same values of exchange, democracy and freedom…

Why do we need to exchange, get together and share anyway? Probably because we are entrusted with a heavy responsibility: design, creation and innovation have now become driving forces in a large number of companies, institutional or private structures and even national economies, at a time when a fantastic global industrial reorganization is under way, a time when information highways keep bringing opposites closer and closer.

Moreover, when doing their job, designers, artists and architects are compelled to reflect upon the world of tomorrow, the world we wish to live in, the world we wish our children to live in… Therefore our responsibility is heavy: it consists in learning from others, a practice which enables us to excel ourselves, to rise, to create… along the line of "our global responsibility in building sustainable creative societies"…

Meeting in Bratislava is really emblematic of Cumulus's commitment… Slovakia is still a young democracy, a young Republic… Inviting Cumulus members to come over here is an opportunity to make the world know about the tremendous enthusiasm driving you, about the skills of your creative professionals and artists, the skills of your students, your educators, your researchers… about the tremendous enthusiasm spurring you to promote your culture and the values dear to you.

Christian Guellerin, General Director
President of Cumulus

PREFACE   Jozef Kovalčik

Invisible dimensions – visible challenges

DESIGN+3D
Cumulus Conference
11–14 October 2007
Bratislava

We are pleased *the Academy of Fine Arts and Design Bratislava* was given an opportunity to organize a conference and be a host of the representatives of institutions associated to the international association *Cumulus*. The aim of the event was to point out to the themes resonant in the Slovak design but also in the context of design, architectural or artistic creation in the Central Europe. That is why the subject and the topic of the event were three "other" and not obvious dimensions of design – art, society and production politics. These do not stop influencing design, enriching it permanently with new challenges and moving the borders of design thinking.

Ideas, conceptual frames, theoretical approaches but also cliché and prejudices are often taken from the past unthinkingly and we apply them to the current culture which has already stopped being compatible to the old fashioned explanations. The culture has changed radically, that is why it seeks an adequate interpretation and understanding of its current stature. As it is unbearable to understand the culture rigidly, it is also becoming unreasonable to define the relationship between fine art and design traditionally. Firm borders of both disciplines are more and more permeable and they are a place for innovative and creative solutions enriching visual as well as material culture.

Not only conceptions on a relationship between art and design are changing, there are also changes and fundamental shifts in consideration on the role of design in society. A belief in a universally emancipating design or a design for everyone lost its justification when confronted with an everyday reality. It is much more required to look for solutions applicable in a specific social context. That is why the familiarization with a specific situation of a country, in this case Slovakia, should become a means of a productive comparison and searching for strategies applicable also in other societies.

In recent years Slovakia registered a rapid increase in the automobile production. According to the statistics we achieved the world primacy in the automobile production per capita. Dominancy of the automobile industry is a challenge for local designers to think about long-term perspectives of production as well as about global strategies concerning production policies. Questionable is the dynamics of large companies production, commercial boom and consequences of globalization in many other areas of a regional life – these were until recently in the direct competency of local designers. For Slovakia, the strategy of small producers support seems to be important. Thanks to the available technology, in a given setting small producers are often able to offer, from designers' perspective, more interesting and acceptable products.

Certainly, each of the above mentioned dimensions of design deserves to be thought of independently and separately. However, considering the fact that all these spheres are close-nit and linked, we decided to adjust our conference to this situation and connect them. We invited various academicians and professionals who could introduce their experience and results of their research and then confront them with attitudes of specialists from completely different areas. We believe that in this way we have created a room for strengthening a productive cooperation among institutions and individuals and underlined the importance of interdisciplinary design education.

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Landscape and architecture synthesis

In Central and Eastern Europe (as well as in other parts of the world) landscape is changing rapidly. Some remote rural regions lose their population. People migrate to economically strong agglomerations, which still keep on growing and attracting more people. In many rural peripheries agriculture is not profitable any more. Only a few big farms remain and succeed with intensified and big-scale agricultural production. Of course these changes affect the landscape as well. Some areas are deteriorating, we even see farmland falling back to secondary wilderness. When people complain about loss of landscape in these areas they mean loss of familiar rural scenery.

In the prosperous regions, on the other hand, suburbs quickly spread around the expanding boomtowns. Low density metropolitan areas consume a lot of agricultural land and change the appearance of the traditional cultural landscape even more profoundly. As we all know, urban sprawl contributes to urban traffic problems, because it extends the area that subsequently has to be served by public transportation systems. It causes high costs for the provision and maintenance of all sorts of public infrastructure. The consumption of land is a source of conflict because suburban areas might also be attractive ecological locations. Attempts to curb urban sprawl were not very successful due to competition among communities to attract new business and residents. In this situation people also complain about loss of landscape – and they mean loss of natural scenery and open accessible green spaces.

Obsolete concepts of *landscape*

Up to now we have not been able to steer or manage urban sprawl and landscape transformations in a satisfying way. All conventional planning strategies and tools (development schemes, master plans, zoning plans etc.) have failed and landscape preservation has always had the character of rearguard action. I think that one fundamental misunderstanding was the notion of landscape as a green space between buildings or cities, a pastoral or untouched natural territory. While industrial zones were rapidly

developed and cheap greenfield lots in outlying districts were released by the local authorities everybody desperately tried to preserve the idyllic scenery of former times. The pictures we bear in mind are still scenes of compact cities surrounded by agrarian open spaces – like self-contained figures on blank ground. (Of course this image does not correspond to the current reality at all.)

Furthermore architects always tended to regard landscape as "the Other", a frame or scenic background for architecture, a counterpart, also in the sense of providing services which the city itself could not offer: verdancy, tranquillity, pleasure of nature, fresh air and clean water and so on. Landscape was a sort of repair-shop or service center, where ecological damages caused by the city were corrected.

New and promising concepts of *landscape*

The analysis of different sorts of new city types (cp. the metaphor of the scrambled eggs in Cedric Price's famous series of drawings "the city as an egg") rendered obvious that a distinction between town and country, city and landscape does not make sense any more.

Recently the term *landscape* has been reinterpreted as the superordinate concept for an entity which comprises settlements, infrastructure of all sorts and green spaces as well. The landscape of our time is "die totale Landschaft" ("the total landscape"),

as the environment historian R. P. Sieferle named it, in which different historic layers, pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial, urban and rural elements manifest themselves as different intensities in the cultural transformation of the landscape. This concept of landscape as a superordinate entity changes a lot. Landscape is upgraded. It is no longer "any place that is green" (the parsley in between and on top of the scrambled eggs). It is the unifying factor of it all which could also give the pell-mell some order, structure and sense.

Landscape will play a key role in further organisation and design of the territory. Various attempts have already been made to bring the natural and the built environment to a synthesis. On the city planners', regional and landscape planners' scale the new approach has been called *Landscape Urbanism* (in the United States). On the architects' scale we still lack an appropriate term for this synthesis except for the word *Scape* which Rem Koolhaas invented for his conception of infrastructure, building and green space.

Architecture and landscape planning are converging and influencing each other reciprocally. The current working conditions of both disciplines make it quite plausible that such a convergence should occur. In order to deal with urbanized landscapes their fields of activity overlap. Both disciplines make use of the same design software which promotes formal resemblance.
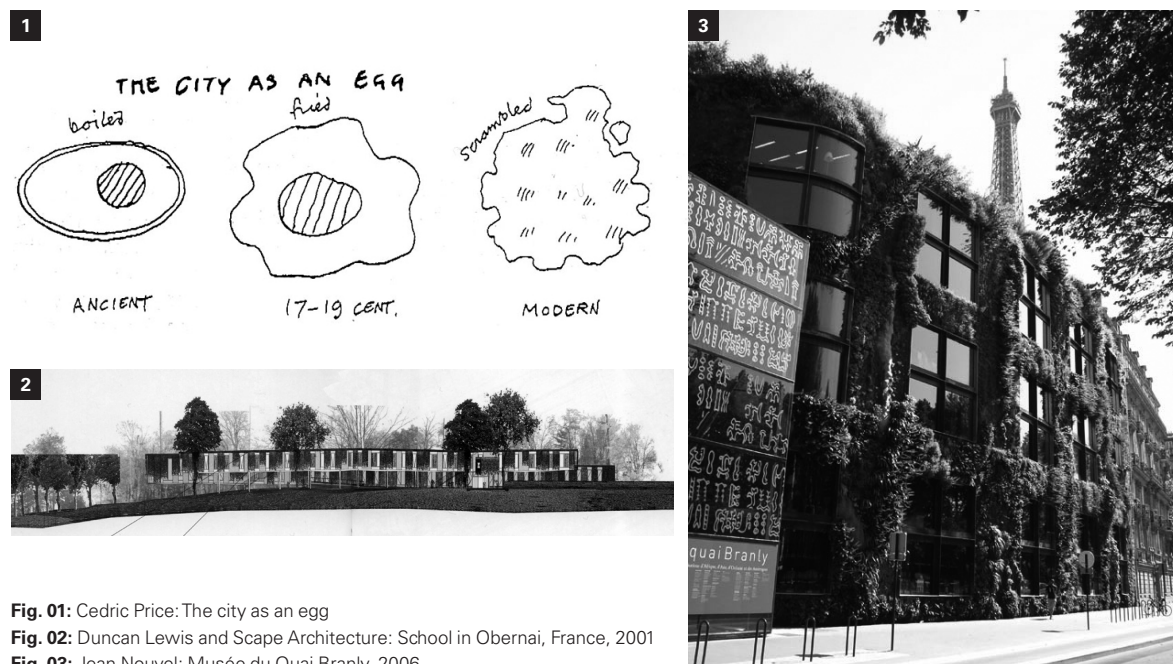

Fig. 01: Cedric Price: The city as an egg
Fig. 02: Duncan Lewis and Scape Architecture: School in Obernai, France, 2001
Fig. 03: Jean Nouvel: Musée du Quai Branly, 2006

Landscape and architecture synthesis

Focussing on the architectural scale a lot of inter-
esting phenomena can be observed in the current
architectural production. They all show some sort
of fusion between architecture and nature, building
and landscape.

1. DISSOLUTION OF THE BORDERS BETWEEN ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE

Numerous buildings have been designed in a way
that architecture merges with the surrounding
landscape, especially green spaces but also other
sorts of environments. An example is the school
in Obernai, France, by Duncan Lewis and Scape
Architecture, 2001. The elongated structure aligns
with the linear allotment pattern; the façades which
are abundantly covered with vegetation blend into
the plantings around the building and are nearly
invisible between the trees.

For the Swiss national exhibition 2002, "Arte-
plage" in the area of the Bieler See and the Neuen-
burger See, Diller & Scofidio conceived a pavilion
named "Blur", which was shaped as a giant artificial
cloud. The construction disappeared behind fog
sprayed from thousands of jets while the pavilion
itself blurred into the natural water landscape,
clouds and fog.

2. PLANTS IN THE ROLE OF ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

Vegetation adopts the role of forming space and
creating surfaces. Artificial building materials and
living plants fuse and are combined. The façade of
the Sociópolis project, Valencia, 2006 (Project for
a City of the Future) by Manuel Gausa is conceived
with a cladding of vegetational elements and plastic
panels which look very much alike. Jean Nouvel's
Guggenheim Museum Project for Tokyo, 2001,
features a planted hill instead of a conventional roof.
Part of his new Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, is coated
with a "living wall", a sort of vertical garden with
plants which are rooted in fibrous material anchored
to the wall (patent Patrick Blanc).

3. RENOUNCING CONTROL AND "COLLABORATING" WITH NATURE

A completely different aspect of the fusion of
architecture and nature can be seen in the decision
to integrate natural processes into the artefact –
processes which run independently and the results
of which are beyond the control of the architects.
In art, experiments in this direction were already
being made in the 1960s, delegating the authorship
of a work of art to a large extent to autonomous
natural processes. In 1969 Robert Smithson placed
such a process at the centre of his work. He poured
different substances down a steep slope and just
documented the results. His role as artist was
limited to arranging the framework conditions,
setting things in motion, observing and documenting
a process, which from a certain point onwards
no longer obeyed his own will, but solely the laws
of nature.

The artwork "Brennen and Gehen" ("Burn and
Walk") by the Austrian artist Lois Weinberger is also
concerned with processes in which the artificial
order collapses and a natural order arises, which is
usually dismissed as "disorder": at Documenta X he
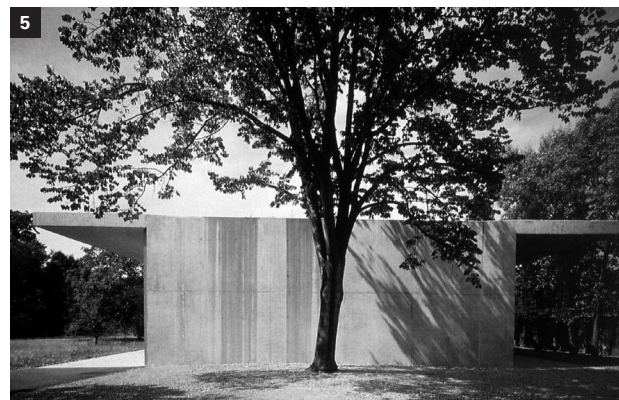allowed spontaneous vegetation to grow through
broken asphalt.

Fig. 04: Robert Smithson: Asphalt Rundown, Rome, 1969
Fig. 05: Herzog & de Meuron: Studio for the artist Remy Zaugg
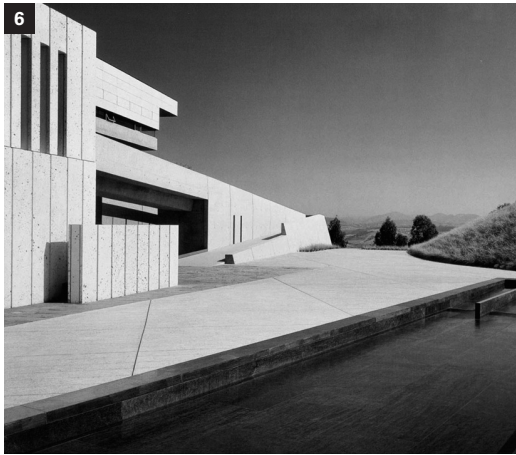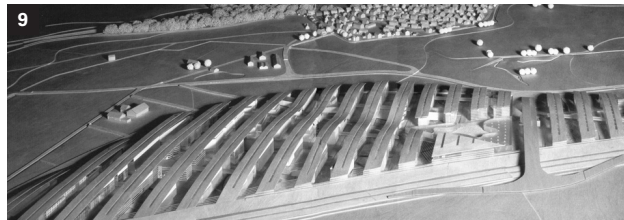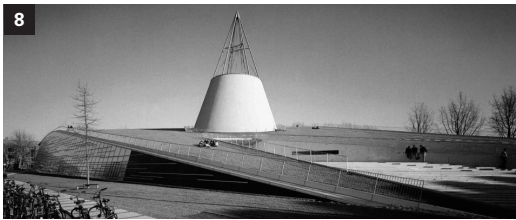in Mulhouse-Pfaffstatt, 1996

Fig. 06: Tod Williams & Billie Tsien: Institute of Neurosciences, San Diego, Cal., 1996
Fig. 07: FOA: Ferry terminal Osanbashi Pier, Yokohama, 2002
Fig. 08: Mecanoo: Library of the Technical University in Delft, 1997
Fig. 09: Herman Hertzberger: "Gebaute Landschaft", Industrial park, Freising near Munich, 1993

In architecture, the formative power of natural manifestations was included by, for example, the Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron in the conception of their buildings. They designed several buildings which activate certain natural processes or which were deliberately made attractive for fauna or flora to take over the artefact. Herzog & de Meuron said: We try to "discover or invent techniques to bring architecture to life (…), in order to bring together and combine the artificial and natural processes in our life."[1] In the case of the studio for the artist Remy Zaugg in Mulhouse-Pfaffstatt they allow the rainfall to run down the facade rather than via a controlled roof drainage system (through gullies or rain pipes). Thus "a fine film of plants, a kind of natural drawing"[2] is created on the wall. Such phenomena were previously condemned as processes of decay, as the dissolution of order, and everything was undertaken to prevent them in order to preserve the immaculate purity of architecture.

4. GEOMORPHIC ARCHITECTURE AND FLUID LANDSCAPE-LIKE SPACES

A lot of projects from the last decade display characteristics which were previously associated with landscape, but not with architecture. There are geomorphic forms and buildings with complex geometries, which remind us of hilly landscapes. Walls, floors and roofs merge. They form continuous surfaces, either becoming softly undulating reliefs or sharp-edged geological formations with rocky faults and fractures.

Diffuse interior-exterior spatial relationships and continuously fluid spaces which are characteristic of open landscapes, are transferred to architectural spaces. Since advanced design tools have made it possible to master very complex geometries and even the most challenging operations of form generation, free-form-surfaces have become part of both architecture and landscape design. But the tool alone has never been the only driving force to conceive of something. There are still other factors responsible for the convergence and interpenetration of architecture and landscape. These phenomena are linked in some way to the more powerful role of landscape and to the new comprehension of the relationship between architecture and nature.

The landscaping of architecture and its motives

Camouflage. Since the end of the last century many attempts have been made to conceal architecture – even in the non-military context – by dissolving it in the surroundings or to make it unrecognisable as an artefact. This goal is also pursued in the case of the Library of the Technical University in Delft, designed by the Dutch office Mecanoo in 1997. The building is situated next to the University main hall and auditorium by van den Broek & Bakema,

a very dominant concrete structure dating from the 1960s. In order not to block the remaining exterior space with another large volume, the lawn has been slightly raised on one side and the volume of the library inserted underneath it. The exterior space was preserved and has even gained additional significance. (In the flat Netherlands a topography like that provides a special quality of experience.) The roof of the building can be walked upon, the library is accessible from all sides and thus is well integrated into the town public. This, together with the attempt to reduce the visible volume of the building, is the actual argument in favour of the landscape-like concept of this building.

Preservation of undeveloped landscape.
Herman Hertzberger pursued a similar goal with his project for a housing, office and industrial park in Freising near Munich entitled "Gebaute Landschaft" ("built landscape"). This is quite an old project (1993), but it is a sort of prototype. While scattered buildings would have contributed to the urban sprawl Hertzberger decided to assemble a dense artificial landscape on the site. He designed a hilly topography, which is cut into regular strips. The roof bands are planted and provide a public pedestrian and recreation area. The roof strips have a supporting structure which is independent of the storeys below, therefore different volumes could be inserted independently to accommodate office space. The deeply cut hollow paths provide lighting and access. Thus the arrangement of the roof strips allows for almost unlimited freedom of the commercial and domestic infill.

The project was not implemented. Nevertheless it is an interesting attempt to reconcile two seemingly incompatible entities: a dense urban development and an open accessible landscape. The project should therefore be seen primarily in connection with the gradual reduction of undeveloped landscape in Europe. And as we see in other parts of the world (for example the Administration City Sejong, South Korea): the issue is quite hot and up to date.

Incorporation of landscape features into the design. Unlike Hertzbergers artificial hill, which is an arbitrary form, Zaha Hadid's "Landscape Formation One", a pavilion for the regional garden exhibition 1999 in Weil am Rhein, evolves from an existing morphology, namely the topology of the

ground. In this way it preserves and transforms the characteristics of the site instead of eradicating them. This is conform with the notion of Landscape Urbanism in the sense that urban development must not take place on a tabula rasa. The characteristics of the site must not be extinguished before building on it. Keeping the existing features, lines and rhythms of the landscape contributes to establish identity in a global monoculture of forms.

Zaha Hadid was one of the first to open up for architecture the landscape qualities, and in particular the aesthetics of topography. Spaces in the natural landscape differ from traditional architectural spaces: they are always open and vague instead of being enclosed and defined. Yet they display differentiated areas and enable a complex arrangement of space that is rich in nuances. In Weil the brief asked for the construction of a new park and an exhibition building as well as a small environmental research center on the site of an abandoned gravel pit. The architect made a lot of drawings and models to study the shape, rhythm and flow of the industrial landscape. She than transferred the formal principles of landscape to architecture. The building evolves from the fluid geometry of the network of paths and gradually rises like an upfold of the ground and sinks back into it again. In this case the landscape-like form is not only a result of working with an extended formal repertoire which integrates the aesthetics of topography, but it is also a sort of metamorphosis of the landscape.

Stacked landscapes. The last example leads us back to landscape urbanism. With the Dutch pavilion for Expo 2000 in Hanover[3] the office MVRDV approached a question which constitutes a pressing subject in Holland and which is also of global interest. Since centuries the Dutch have enlarged their territory through dyke building and drainage. The pavilion explores the possibility of gaining living space not by means of horizontal extension but by growth in a vertical direction. The exhibition pavilion consisted of a mixed stack of artificial landscapes, agricultural areas, public urban spaces, biotopes and leisure areas. Among other things, there was a marsh, a flower plantation, a grotto, a rain storey, a forest and so on, all distributed over various levels. They were connected by a common system of energy and water circulation, heating and watering one another reciprocally, cooling by means of evaporation etc. The plants produced food and organic substances,
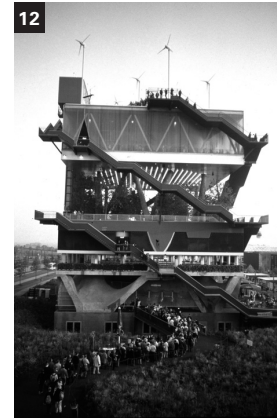
Fig. 10: Balmori Associates, Haeahn Architects, H Associates: Administrative City Sejong, South Korea, 2007
Fig. 11: Zaha Hadid: "Landscape Formation One", pavilion for the regional garden exhibition 1999, Weil am Rhein
Fig. 12: MVRDV: Dutch Pavilion, EXPO 2000, Hanover

they purified water and air. These services were supplemented by the influence of "external" forces of nature (wind power generators, photovoltaic systems). It was a model of an artificial ecological system in a highly condensed package. Programs which are commonly only found in interior spaces were embedded into the various landscapes and overlapping them: an auditorium, a restaurant, offices etc., all without façades and spatial divisions. Was there an office in the forest or a forest in the office? These settings represented in a pointedly condensed way the current dissolution and fusion of the complementary worlds of city and country life, of the pastoral and the urban. The arrangements of landscape and architecture were images of the suburbanised landscape outside of the Expo site. They reflected the razzle-dazzle of industrial, agrarian and architectural elements, the coexistence of emerging types of landscape and relics of traditional ones.

The pavilion also presented the prospect or hope that radical landscape compression could open up the possibility of "thinning out" other areas – of omitting spaces that are close to nature and of not exploiting them economically. This idea was indicated by the Dutch architects in the fact that they took up only a little fraction of the space which had been allocated them on the Hanover exhibition site. They placed their landscape stack in the corner of the plot and planted the remaining large empty area with a nice colourful meadow.

It is a pity that the pavilion was not implemented in all its conceptual pungency. Nevertheless, one did gain a sense of the visionary dimension of this model of a hypothetical world. The project can be seen as a sort of interface to landscape urbanism – especially the idea how the ecological thinking could be extended to the urban landscape and to the field of culture. *"Some years ago […] ecology has been used only in the context of some thing called the 'environment', which is generally thought to be of 'nature and exclusive of the city. Even those who have included the city in the ecological equation have done so only from the perspective of natural systems (hydrology, air-flow, vegetational communities, and so on). We have yet to understand cultural, social, political and economic environments as embedded in and symmetrical with the 'natural' world."* (James Corner, 2006)

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1 Jacques Herzog interviewed by Jeffrey Kipnis, *El Croquis* 84, 1997, p.11ff.
2 *129/130 ARCH+*, 1995, S. 26ff.
3 *ARCH+* 142, 1998, p. 52ff; *El croquis* 86, p. 158ff.

Jan Michl

Am I just seeing things – or is the modernist apartheid regime still in place?

Design sofas

There is no doubt that the modernist visual idiom in architecture and design has been a spectacular success – so much so in fact, that the very word *design* has become a style word. *Design sofas, design fireplaces, design apartments, design boutiques*, and many other design-branded things, obviously refer to a definite style. This definite style is the minimalist aesthetic the public has come to associate with modernism. But the identification of the word design with a particular stylistic idiom is not only a sign of the success of this idiom, but also, at least to my understanding, a sign of a major problem. And I see the problem located at design schools.

3D NORTH

Let me add that this talk relates mainly to the world of three-dimensional design, and not so much to graphic design or textile design where the situation has always been different. And: although I have in mind European design schools in general, I am aware I may be speaking from a limited North European perspective. So please judge for yourself the validity of what follows, in your own context.

NOT ABLE – NOT WILLING

Now the magisterial position of the modernist visual idiom, and the mentioned identification of the term design with a definite style, are obviously related to another fact, hardly ever mentioned in explaining the present modernist dominance. It is a fact that in the past 50 years or so design schools have produced almost exclusively designers trained in only the modernist idiom. Training students in one idiom only has led to practicing one idiom only as well. So the omnipresence of the modernist aesthetic should be explained not only by reference to the fact that it is simply an aesthetic fit for many contexts. A lot is explained also by the fact that the absolute majority of schooled designers and architects that graduated from the modernist design schools in the past 50 years has been neither *able* nor *willing* to design in any of the other stylistic idiom, practiced during the same period.

Other approaches in demand

What am I saying? Other design styles? I suppose you would object that things like present day versions of stylistic historicisms, anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, and other kinds of figurative design, as well as various decorative and ornamental schemes, are no more than fringe phenomena, not worth taking seriously. And you would probably also say why they are not worth taking seriously: because the modernist aesthetic simply represents the proper aesthetic idiom of the modern age, the authentic style pertaining to the modern epoch. Therefore – you might continue – it is supremely right to teach only this one proper idiom. Such answers would at any rate express the unspoken understanding of the status of the modernist idiom at design schools today.

YES: PLURALISM

Nevertheless, whether we like it or not, we have been living at least since the beginning of the 19th century in a situation of stylistic pluralism. Many products around us can remind us that things dressed in non-modernists styles are still very popular and that they never really disappeared. In the 20th century these non-modernist styles have existed alongside the modernist aesthetic for one simple reason: there has always been demand for them. And they have always been in demand because they have given pleasure to many people. We may deplore the fact, but that does not make it go away.

INFERIOR VS. SUPERIOR

But even if some of you would acknowledge the fact of demand and popularity of various non-modernist stylistic idioms, you would probably point out that examples of those idioms, as embodied in concrete products, are mostly much worse than the majority of modernist objects. And it is true. This has to be conceded. But does it mean that it is a sign of inferiority of these non-modernist idioms as such? Why are we surprised by the often low aesthetic quality of these examples, since hardly any school offers instructions to those who would like to meet that kind of demand and design in any of these idioms? As a consequence, those who practice the non-modernist visual design are usually not schooled designers, and this mostly shows. Educated designers come as a rule out of schools without practical knowledge of any non-modernist visual idioms, armed in addition with strong bias against practicing that kind of design. Extremely few of

them are able to overcome the prejudice, knowing they would have to risk subsequent ostracism of the designer community.

WHY ONLY ONE?

Once you start thinking of it, it is certainly odd, that design schools have largely ignored the full scope of aesthetic demands in their societies and that only one particular type of aesthetic, to the exclusions of all others, is chosen to be imparted. Why this apartheid-like approach to design training? To limit the scope of instruction to one aesthetic idiom would be surely less surprising, and more understandable, in *private* design schools, which naturally follow aesthetic orientations of their owners. But our schools are state-run *public* institutions, financed via taxes exacted from all citizens – not only from modernist buffs. So one would expect that being state schools, they would feel obliged to cater not only for the style popular with designers and architects themselves, but also for other categories of existing stylistic and taste preferences that are popular with the people that do not happen to be designers or architects, or design historians or art critics. This is, however, not the case. I would therefore argue *that design schools have for years failed to do their job properly*. I believe we keep letting down vast numbers of ordinary people, who live outside our ghetto-like art world. And I believe that we should do something about this. But hardly anything can be done without first understanding the reasons for this strange situation.

New time insists on new style

The dominant reason for this state of affairs is plainly ideological: majority of present day design schools still seem to be in the grip of a hundred years old modernist vision of one true, all-embracing, authentic, historically necessary, modern style. One hundred years ago modernists argued that in contrast to previous epochs where each epoch had produced its own typical stylistic idiom (Classicism and Gothic would be the chief examples), the present modern time, so enormously different from all previous epochs, has failed to bring about a modern style of its own. Instead, they argued, there is only a chaos of styles based on recycling either Western or exotic historical architecture and design. This was seen by modernists as a disruption which called for healing procedures. They took it upon themselves to bring about the absent aesthetic unity they argued the modern epoch was missing.

BACKWARD-LOOKING NOSTALGIA

Now, please note how strikingly backward-looking this modernist vision is. Modernists demanded that the modern epoch has the same stylistic unity as the pre-industrial historical epochs – that is epochs, where the aesthetic wholeness was a result of narrow groups of rich and powerful people in the position of decision makers in things aesthetic. The modernist architects and designers were fascinated by forms and shapes of the brand new industrial means of production, but they seemed to have no eyes for the pluralist ends these new industrial constructions and new machines were devised to serve. For the really new, the really modern fact was that, mainly due to the rising standard of living, many more people than before, both the expanding bourgeoisie and the growing working classes – not only the rich and powerful – started now to have an aesthetic say in how things looked. Users themselves rejoiced, feeling this was simply wonderful. But a slowly growing number of architects, designers and art people considered this alarming. This eventually resulted in the designer-led efforts known as modernism, to put an end to the pluralist development. The backward-looking, nostalgic fascination with aesthetic unity of previous historical epochs caused the modernist proponents to miss completely the really new and truly modern in the Industrial Revolution – namely the dawn of a radical diversity of lifestyles and of pluralism of aesthetic styles, vogues and trends that was going with it.

No backsliding

Let me mention two characteristic features of the new one-style-only design pedagogy, modeled on the 1920s' Bauhaus and instituted after the Second World War. The aim of these two features was to sustain and reinforce the belief in one, true, and only moral visual language of the modern epoch, and to prevent backsliding.

ONLY ONE TRUTH

The first feature was that students, to begin with always open-minded about the stylistic pluralism around themselves, were gradually conditioned to respect only one taste culture. It was the culture identical with the less-is-more aesthetic preferences of their teachers, as this aesthetic allegedly represented the aesthetic truth of the epoch. At the same time, students were induced to see the current non-modernist styles in contemporary use as ridiculous and even morally repugnant.

SUBVERTED BY MARKET

The second feature, which characterizes the atmosphere at design schools to the present day, is the so called critical attitude to the capitalist free market economy. Although many aspects of the market economy invite legitimate criticism, the wholesale modernist cultivation of negative, rather than positive, aspects of the market seems to be mainly self-serving. Market economy – by empowering not only tastes of the richest and most powerful in a society, but practically all taste cultures, including those who do not share the minimalist orientation – kept undermining the modernist project of a single style of the epoch. The market can be seen as a ballot, or a referendum, about what is at any time in demand, based on consumer responses to the creative experiments of business. Modernists wanted to do away with this ballot system, because it kept providing mainly the non-modernist idioms, at the expense of their own, new, allegedly historically necessary less-is-more style. This negative view of the market mechanisms probably also explains why a great number of pre-World War II modernists were strongly attracted to socialism. As socialism promised to abolish the market forces, in the modernist eyes it represented high hopes for their vision of one all-embracing, authentic style of the epoch.

THREE MEASURES

All this, one-style-only pedagogy, the moral concept of design as truth, as well as rejection of the market, were measures devised to bring about the modernist aim: the unified style of the new epoch. Or, to put it from the skeptical perspective of this talk: to achieve a simulation of aesthetic unity, in face of the epoch's unredeemable stylistic diversity.

Design theory or pep talk?

We are now in a situation where the modernist aesthetic is firmly established. There is no doubt, that this new, fresh, non-historicist, matter-of-fact, naked-like stylistic idiom, developed in the 1920s on the achievements of post-cubist abstract painters and sculptors, has truly enriched the stylistic means at hand for the modern designer and architect. But the idiom has been successful not because it was a historically necessary style bound to replace all other styles. It has been a success because there was indeed a room for such an elementarist kind of aesthetic, until then largely missing among the earlier, established visual sign of status, prestige and wealth.

Now that there is no longer any need to defend the survival of the modernist idiom, we ought to see the modernist ideology for what it was: a set of arguments, aimed, to begin with, at dynamiting the established historicist positions, and, later, at marketing the strikingly new visual idioms. As far as the nature of design is concerned, the key modernist claims that the new epochs demand its own historically predestined aesthetic expression or that functions contain their own preordained aesthetic solutions (as the form-follows-function slogan asserted), such claims can be said to be entirely empty. They were hardly more than a pep talk.

PERMANENT ATTRACTION

If the above diagnosis is correct, why is the majority of design schools still attached to their stylistic apartheid regime? This, paradoxically, has probably to do with the emptiness of those claims. The modernist designer, in embracing the modern epoch, received in exchange a *carte blanche* – a blank check, signed by History itself, but with nothing written on it. It was up to the designer to do the filling in. Thinking about design in terms of art epochs implicitly amounted to redefining the traditional notion of design. What was earlier considered a heteronomous activity was now seen as an autonomous one. What was earlier done for the sake of markets, clients, buyers, users, was now to be done for its own sake. In other words, modernism invited designers to act as autonomous artists. This historically unique invitation to the designer to do his own modernist things, undisturbed by the allegedly passé demands of the market, seems to be *the* lasting attraction of the modernist ideology.

MALADAPTED

The main reason for why it is important explicitly to give up idea of only one valid stylistic idiom, as well as with the notion of design as an autonomous activity, is simply that both ideas make design schools maladapted to the reality outside these institutions. And what is worse, they produce maladapted students. While we live in an increasingly rich, diverse and pluralist society, design schools keep offering only a one-size-fits-all visual idiom. Although highly refined as an aesthetic, to most people this idiom seems to be able to communicate our present day wealth – wealth in the broad sense of that term – in only one manner: through sophisticated signs of fictitious poverty. In addition, whenever the designer sees his idiom as truth, rather than as a stylistic convention, the result tends to be free for any traces of humor. As schools refuse to teach, cultivate, refine and fine-tune any non-modernist aesthetic strategies, in addition the modernist idiom, the monopoly of the modernist idiom seems to make only one kind of innovative steps legitimate, both for design students and practicing designers: to move further away from the heteronomy, towards more and more autonomy, i.e. further towards fine art, appealing more and more to art insiders only. If such a direction looks like a cul de sac to you, where else to put the blame than at the door of design schools? I believe strongly we do our students a great disservice by continuing to condition them to make light of the non-modernist stylistic idioms in use today, instead of teaching respect, appreciation and ability to tackle these other idioms as well.

POSSIBILITIES

I am convinced that we can fairly easily teach students to exchange the illusory moral gratification of pleasing History, for a non-modernist moral satisfaction of pleasing consumers and users through making their preferred aesthetic idioms richer, more refined, more inventive, more stylish, more up to date, i.e. more satisfactory. The possibilities are vast, but they are left almost entirely undiscovered, because hardly anybody has seriously given them a try.

MARKET CREATIVITY

We should go beyond ritualized critiques of the capitalist society, and conventionalized attacks on the consumer culture, and also beyond limiting the notion of creativity to the art world, and a private, personal, exclusively individual dimension. This may open for discovering, understanding and appreciating the enormous inventiveness of the free market organization, and the fact that creative designers are in reality riding on the back of a larger arrangement enabling their individual creative contributions to materialize. There is in other words a case for not only criticizing but also for admiring the capitalist organization of production, and the consumer society which gave birth to the design profession, without which it would hardly have come about, and without which visual design would be often considered an unnecessary waste of money – as it tended to be in the pre-1990 socialist alternatives to capitalism.

WASTELESS SOCIETY?

I believe that ditching the modernist ideology is central also for the all-important contemporary focus on the environmental impact of design. Modernists, just as many earlier utopists, seem to have gone in for the possibility of a wasteless society. This is suggested by their belief that there is an intrinsic aesthetic expression pertaining to the new epoch, and that there are innate forms reserved for every function. Choosing the foreordained, intrinsically right solutions, they would say, means avoiding mistakes, and avoiding mistakes means avoiding waste, including the wasteful irrationality of fashions. We should in my opinion start from an opposite thesis: that it is impossible to eliminate waste, and that the notion of a wasteless society is a dangerous delusion – but that it is all the same possible to limit the harmful effects of waste through clearer awareness of the unintended consequences of the solutions designers choose from among endless number of possibilities. The wealth of societies, both within and outside the Western culture, is all the time slowly on the rise, and there is no doubt that more and more goods will be produced, with potentially dire environmental consequences. Therefore a highly realistic, non-modernist, non-utopian view of waste is imperative.

Kicking an open door?

I admit that nobody really promotes the modernist ideology any longer. Two decades ago we had post-modernism – which even attempted to replace modernism altogether. Very many writes, critics and designers have in the past decades pointed out many problems with modernism. As a consequence, reality has made inroads into the practice of design schools. We speak about product semantics, emotional design and products telling stories, and we teach students the marketing aspects of design. All this can be seen as signs of a departure from the previous monopolist modernism. But still: design semantics is mostly limited to the modernist abstract aesthetic, as if the world of forms commenced with the Bauhaus. Emotional design is often discussed as if non-modern and pre-modern design never existed. Marketing courses run in parallel with standard platitudes about the consumer society still at home in other courses. The schools still largely keep to their one-style-fits-all modernist idea. And one still feels that those users who want new things, but prefer non-modernist or pre-modernist forms, still have the same status as homosexuals had 50 years ago: if not completely ignored they are considered queer, and probably in need of reeducation. The modernist design ideology, now fully internalized, is still quietly humming in the background.

Modernism pre-modern

Let me round up: Things will probably truly change only when we have understood that our inherited picture of modernism in general and of functionalism in particular is almost entirely wrong: that modernism was not about modernity, and functionalism was not about functioning. On the contrary: modernists rejected the very heart of modernity: its diversity, its individualism and its pluralism, while functionalists were consumed by their formalist desires. We should understand that in their thinking modernists and functionalists were distinctly pre-pluralist, pre-tolerant – and in many ways pre-modern.

THE SAME HISTORICIST METHOD

We have to understand as well, that the claimed radical distinction between the historicist and modernist approach to the design process never really materialized. Modernists, for all their novel forms, never came with any new design method. In an important sense they worked exactly as their historicist predecessors before them did – always starting from yesterday's solutions.

EMBRACING PLURALISM

We should then see, and teach also our students to see, the modernist aesthetic for what it all the time has been: namely a strikingly novel, creative contribution to the stylistic pluralism of this age. It is the fact of this pluralism – not just its latest manifestation – that design schools should embrace. Embracing pluralism would abolish the only thing wrong with the modernist aesthetic – namely its apartheid ambition. This would finally open for *modern* – as against *modernist* – design schools.

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Slovak companies after 1990

Transformation of old companies
and establishing of new ones

In my short lecture, I would like to point out specific phenomenon which is typical for Slovakia and countries where new socio – political situation after 1989 started radical changes in industry. In years after this big change the ideas and intensive personal involvement did not have any limits. I would like to mention some positive examples.

During the 90s the newly established companies as well as the old ones experienced many changes that ran in short time periods, instead of moths in weeks, days or hours. Even today, after more than 15 years we cannot say that this fast development is over, it has only slowed down. Entrepreneurs who established new companies in the 90s gained the experiences that entrepreneurs in other European countries must gradually work for whole decades. From one day to another the free market was established, old huge manufacturing complexes either accepted the new situation or closed. New companies emerged but they were small or medium size companies which had not existed in Slovakia before. In today's structure of industry they make up 90%.

Together with my collogue, Adriena Pekárová, we decided to record this specific period in the form of interviews with founders of successful companies which create the core of this lecture and which were published by AFAD under the title: Design and Companies – Brands- History and Present of Slovak Companies. Our interviews with 15 companies' founders uncovered an extraordinary dynamics of companies' development in 90s of the 20th century. We were interested in number of topics, such as: how was the company established or what changes has it undergone. Materials on development of industrial sphere were created. We also recorded the opinions and views of designers.

On the bases of this experience we can summarize that there is significant personal potential that is able to enter the international market and be successful in very competitive environment. We also found out that prosperous companies can exist only because of personal ambitions and great enthusiasm.

Design structure in Slovakia

First of all we approached companies that use design it their business strategy. But it is also important to realize that Slovakia is small market and does not have properly developed structure of industrial production. Unexpectedly we can see the high level design in manufacturing of ultra light planes, outdoor sport items or electric instant heaters. Above mentioned production does not have any tradition in Slovakia and they were created in environment were this kind of products were not expected. Every new entrepreneur had to enter into completely unknown relationships and had to solve new situations but on the other hand all new ideas were easier to realize than today.

We were interested also in opinions of entrepreneurs on profession of designer. We observed that there are unfulfilled expectations on both sides – producer and designer. Misunderstandings happen especially regarding the question of salaries and realizations of designer products that creates mutual alertness. Another problem is young designers – students who very often think their work is privileged and their attitude discourages many producers from cooperation. On the other hand, lack of trust in the part of producers does not have any grounds, it is mere inexperience. Some producers even think that design is unnecessary luxury that only a big company can afford. Those producers who cooperate with at least one designer are convinced of the importance of design as a part of business strategy and corporate identity. All companies appreciate that Slovakia became an EU member. It is easier to communicate and work with suppliers and they see the potential chance for the Slovak industry.

About companies

"If I had known at the beginning what was waiting for me, I would not have gone into it".

Similar words were expressed by nearly everybody we spoke to. This frequent complain expresses the difficulty of the whole process but also the disappointments from failed promises of the state authorities to support entrepreneurs. The responsibility of employer for employees in the case of bankruptcy or company's failure is huge motivational factor.

I will name only few examples of companies which were established on different bases in 90s.

Often there were experiences gained from co-operation with a foreign partner when later the Slovak company started to work alone or the production started as a "garage project" without any previous experiences. There are few companies with tradition that were able to survive through the transformation but usually it was possible thank to a foreign capital.

LIFELINE SLOVAKIA, S. R. O.
Rakovec nad Ondavou
www.life-line.sk, 1994
"Good designer does not copy because he/she values the work of others"

In relatively short time the company went through the development from a producer for foreign mark to the company with its own production of designer line. Since the first half of the 90s the company has been successfully producing the original fashion line for young and older ones. The company management relied on the power of design in difficult competitive conditions in the field of fashion. It is important to stress the positive example of business idea in economicly challenging region of the eastern Slovakia.

Company LIFELINE was founded in 1994 as Danish – Slovak producer of brand T-shirts. In 10 years of its existence the company transformed from a producer of T-shirts for foreign markets into a progressive international fashion mark. The team of Slovak designers succeeded in business concept creation that is successfully expanding onto international markets and because of its quality, style and price policy is successfully competing with famous foreign names.

Designers Designers of the company are 4 graduates of AFAD, the Department of Textile Design. Team of designers from the partner company UTG (United Textile Group) in Danish Ikaste is also taking part in the preparation of fashion collections.

Company's department of design is providing the whole preparation of production, which means from designs and technical plans, cuts, technological methodology to size tables. Ľudmila Bolešová is a sales director and chief designer who has been working for the company since 2002 and whose professional experiences helped the company to develop successfully.

The competition that the company LIFELINE organized last year and which is aimed to support

young fashion designers is an original form that can crate good name of a company. The winner got the possibility to produce her or his own collection in a company Lifeline. This is the only competition of this kind in Slovakia.

HAKL, SPOL. S.R.O.
www.hakl.sk, 1991
"Reputation of company cannot be gained easily"

Company produces electric instant heaters that can be mounted directly to water batteries and lately the company has started the production of electric heating mats. Heater saves space, electricity and money.

Company's founder Dušan Hakl started with 4 employees in 1991. In 1996 they began to build their own company's facilities in Ivánka pri Bratislava, were 37 employees produce 6 types of electric instant heaters.

Beginnings weren't easy because in the time of the company's establishment nobody needed to save energy. Also the company's employees didn't trust the business program. Situation has changed and the company is prosperous now because people started to learn to save electricity when it got more expensive and has been ever since.

Designers The first experience of the company's owner with design was not very encouraging. He cooperated with students of AFAD because he heard that the school had excellent quality. Very impressive heater in the shape of egg was designed but it was not possible to put it on the floor and it could easily slip out of hands. The company had to take it off the market after few years. Fortunately, they were not discouraged and now they have been successfully cooperating with one designer, Tóno Bendis more than 7 years. At least once a year a new model is developed without any subventions or state support.

TREK SPORT S.R.O.
www.treksport.sk, 1995
"Everything needs time"

Trek Sport is one of few Slovak companies that were established exclusively from domestic sources. They utilized the opportunity after 1989 and started the production of completely new product that had not had any tradition in Slovakia and were able to break through also at international market. The company is known mainly as a producer of sport backpacks that develops original design, uses high – quality materials and provides thorough checking of producing process. Later, they added the outdoor clothes and underwear for hiking and mountain sports and sleeping backs into their assortment. Company wants to start the production of tents in the future. Beginnings of this company are typical example of "garage project".

They started to construct backpacks for their friends. Later they were sewing two types of backpacks but most experiences they got when one of the owners was preparing for his polar expedition. There was no tradition of this kind of production in Slovakia. Only American or French climbing equipment was sold here. In 2002 they started to sew also underwear and all kind of clothes. It was a milestone of the company's development. They were now producing twice as many products but the dynamical development of the company was also very dangerous. The year of 2003 was critical and when they analyzed the company's problems they found out that one of the reasons was also fact that although the products were made according the most up to date international trends but Slovak customers were not prepared for it – light and soft jackets were considered not to be durable enough. Company TREK SPORT TRADE, s. r. o., was established in August 2004 as a successor of entrepreneur activities of the company Trek Sport, s. r. o, which was established in 1995.

They use the most modern accessible materials and technologies and cuts are adjusted by digital-izing software. The most successful and best selling products of the company Trek Sport are backpacks and sleeping bags. The life cycle of the outdoor clothes is approximately 2 years then it is necessary to redesign them. For outdoor backpacks it is approximately 4 years.

Designers Designer, Martin Šucháň has been working for the company since the beginning. He gradually specialized in backpack designing. At this time company TrekSport Trade employs only two designers and two designers externally. At the time when Trek Sport was starting with outdoor clothes it was awarded the prize for Liqud Ice clothes in 2003.
DESIGNERS: Jana Kvočiková, Barbora Cigánová,
EXTERNAL DESIGNERS: Ing. Juraj Ondreáš, Šucháň)

BRIK, A.S.

www.brik.sk, 1993
"We did not work for money, we wanted to see if
we could do it"

Furniture company Brik is another example of
how the company can dynamically develop thanks
to the personal effort of its founders. Its success
was caused also by good business strategy – line
of modules and furniture sets for mass production
were created in the time when other furniture
producers were working for banks, hotels and many
of them despite of excellent technological equipment
and experiences vanished during the last years.
Furniture production is generally considered to
be the most developed in Slovakia. Paradoxically,
Slovakia has lot of lumber but producers often
import it.

    Two enthusiasts from Kremnica started with
the production in the space of 100m^2 and to get first
money they got mortgage for the family house. They
did not know anything about surface treatment of
wood or polishes. One of them was a civil engineer
and the second one was a carpenter. By creating
their own retail net they secured the stability of the
company. Widening of the services led to complex
interior solutions. In 2003 they began to produce
kitchens and a year later also upholstered furniture.

Designers Designer Ivan Čobej started to cooperate
with Brik in 1995 and in 1996 company introduced
its own furniture collection Ferdinand at the fair in
Nitra. In their shops they employ interior architects.
For many Slovak producers is characteristic that they
cooperate with only one designer.

    Brik was as a first company awarded the Special
Prize of the Ministry of Industry, as a part of award-
ing ceremony of National Prize for Design, for con-
tinual usage of design in business strategy in 2005.

CHIRANA MEDICAL, A.S.

www.chirana.eu, 1935
"We have been carrying the advantage of economic
thinking since socialism"

Company has been systematically working on devel-
opment of new generations of dental kits, chairs and
dental tools. Chirana Stará Turá has been developing
excellent traditions of industrial production since
the 30s of the 20th century in highly sophisticated
and technically demanding field of dental equip-
ments. In the conditions of new industrial relations
in the 90th the company succeeded to utilize the past
experiences and to catch up with the newest devel-
opment in the field. The essential decision to invest
into the development of new line of dental kits SMILE
in the middle of 90s is the basis of the success which
provided for the competitiveness and the potential
of the company. Company's strategy is built on the
complex innovation of production program and
in company's huge potential which resides in expe-
rienced labor, know-how and especially in the tradi-
tion of production.

    In 2006 company invested more than 1 mil. EUR
into technologies. Company is planning to invest
the similar amount also in future. Investments into
technologies cause the advantage of cheap Slovak
labor to diminish.

    In 1935 an entrepreneur František Micher laid
the basis of engineering production in Stará Turá.
In these times, the production was oriented to water
meters and gas meters. In the 50s the portfolio was
enriched by the production of medical equipment
and at the beginning of the 60s the production
of dental equipment was started. Since 2001 the
company Chirana Medical a.s. has been continuing
in the production of dental equipments.

Designers Company CHIRANA Medical has its
own Department of Development which in the
development of new products actively cooperates
with the designer Doc. Ferdinand Chrenko as well
as with relevant dental centres. This cooperation
guarantees that the production respect the most up
to date conditions for technical parameters, users'
features, ergonomics and design of technologies
used in dental medicine. The most important
success of the company is the colour revolution
that Chirana started in the conservative field of
stomatology and it has been typical for the compa-
ny's production ever since. In 1999 and 2001 the
company was awarded the prize of NCD for dental
chairs of the line Smile.

    The small companies with 2–5 employees with
the production of one product were established
after the year 2000. These companies were estab-
lished by universities' graduates who had their
own projects – products but they did not have pro-
ducers so they started to produce them on their own.
These are the examples of new – very challenging
way of new company establishment.

POPULAR
www. gopopular.sk, 2002
"We want to be human"

Fashion brand of bags, T-shirts and accessories, Popular was established in 2002 by a student of textile design and a graphic designer. It is small company which produces limited editions and has not developed the marketing or advertising background yet. Collection of bags was created as a diploma work and only when produced in the company the product can show its potential for market. So far they are successful.

K-1 ENGINEERING, S.R.O.
Bratislava, 2004
"You should try to join your life with life of a project, not only since the first line but also through development, production to feedback from the customers"

Project of original sport Kit car was created in cooperation of the company owner and a student of transport design, Juraj Mitro. Nearly amateur project became the founding stone of a new sport car brand Attack 2003. At the beginning it was a diploma work

– or product and only later the business project emerged.

These are the examples of designers' business projects that do not want to adjust to industry but are looking for their own way.

Conclusion

It is and certainly will be very difficult to keep the competitiveness of Slovak companies on foreign markets. It requires the ability to quickly adapt to changed conditions, development in technology and products, knowledge of market needs. Creativity is not only the requirement needed for successful marketing of a product but is also the basis of every change. Creativity is visible at schools but not so much in business. One of the tasks which are waiting for us s the question how can be the creative potential used for competitiveness of the Slovak economics.

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Zdeno Kolesár

From the hermetic towards the interested

New Slovak graphic design

Recently the press has informed about the resolution passed by representatives of a Dutch city of Drachten in which they have agreed upon a cancellation of traffic lights and traffic signs. The author of this idea is Hans Modermann, a Dutch traffic specialist. Aim of this resolution was to reduce the number of accidents and make the life of pedestrians easier. Modermann's idea of a "shared space"[1] is supported also by the European Union. Is this beginning of a gradual removal of graphic symbols representing prohibition and command as well as removal of information systems and other expressions of graphic design from the public life – all in the name of democracy and of state control elimination? Will advertisement remain the only implementation of the graphic design[2]? The point of my article is a conviction of the opposite – I believe graphic design will influence the public life even more intensively, but strictly defined symbols will be replaced by the more civil ones, maybe even by almost invisible forms of visual communication. Perhaps the so called "human age of design" is approaching, the age John Mitchell dreamed up more than twenty years ago.[3] My article is a hypothesis which I will try to support by the analyses of the graphic design development in Slovakia in the period of the past two decades. It contains a notable amount of utopia, but it is known that utopias that did not come to pass shifted the trend at least a little bit forward.

Infosystem 2007. Lucia Šimeková.

Regarding a considerable number of foreign participants in Cumulus conference I will take the liberty to make a short trip to the history. The starting position of Slovakia in the sphere of graphic design was quite sound – proper technical background in typography built since the 16th century and advanced lithographic workshops of the 19th century. At the turn of the 19th century the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Slovakia was part of it until the ww I) represented one of the important centers of the European art nouveau. The newly established state – Czechoslovakia – belonged to prominent centers of interwar modernism. In the years 1928 through 1938 in Bratislava there was a School of Arts and Crafts at which internationally well-known adherents of local avant-garde like Zdeněk Rossmann or Ľudovít Fulla were teaching. Bauhaus protagonists László Moholy-Nagy and Hannes Mayer were lecturing at this school as well.

World War II created a dividing line. After this time the graphic design in Slovakia was developing in different conditions. After the takeover of the renewed Czechoslovakia by the monopolistic Communist Party, only the areas usable in the political propaganda were preferred and massively supported. This was namely a political poster. Other areas of graphic design competed against the political poster in a very timid manner. Since mid 50ies it was a cultural poster and later a wider horizon of graphic design disciplines developed in the 60ies. In 1968, after the repression of all efforts to humanize the communist regime, once again prevailed the design "fighting" in line with the communist party. Slowly, it degraded into empty clichés and filled up the streets, however, it was invisible for general public.

The revolutionary year 1989 revived, for a short time, the meaning of a political poster that (in technically improvised solutions) was helping towards the fall of the communist supremacy. Streets were filled with posters and in minds of the middle age population this recalled remembrance of the year 1968. This time, fortunately, neither occupation nor the restoration of communist regime followed. Democracy was established and the transformation of economics, industry and public life followed.

In the 90ies, change of economic conditions brought about a graphic design boom in the post-communist countries. A dramatic increase of demand for commercial graphics (which became a dominant area of graphic designers' employment) combined with arrival of new information technologies opened a new era of graphic design development also in Slovakia. Its traditional applications (poster, traffic sign, packaging and next) have been modified and became a part of wider formulated programs. The quantitative increase did not, however, automatically bring along higher quality: lack of invention was many times hiding itself behind the anonymity of advertising agencies production.

The anti-pole of the commercially directed graphic design known for its smoothness and non-conflict position was represented by the experimental formation. Its most important centers became educational institutions. Before 1989, there were approximately 20 students of graphic design completing Slovak secondary schools but only 5–6 students graduated from universities. After this breakthrough year the existing schools went through a fundamental reorganization, several new schools were established and the number of graduates started to grow manifoldly.

It seems the post-revolutionary generation, which played a major role in the turn from the old regime, wanted to compensate all that had been considered taboo for previous generations. The so-called socialistic realism, under the wardship of the communist party, took a stand on a univocal and clear legibility of information. If we look apart from the contentual stupidity of the empty slogans with symbols presenting the building of "our motherland", we can speak (under reservations) of the modernistic concept of production. On the other hand, the formal experiments in the Slovak graphic design in the beginning of the 90ies corresponded with the culminant international stream of postmodernism. The energy accumulated in the revolutionary fermentation has been transformed into authentic positions of emotive saturation and at the same time into an intellectual distance typical for the works from the studio of Ľubomír Longauer at Academy of Fine Arts and Design (všvu) in Bratislava. In the post-revolutionary years Mr. Longauer was fulfilling the role of a "Slovak Tomaszewski". Ľubomír Longauer, similarly to the key person of the polish school of poster (Tomaszewski) became the catalyst of energy springing from young. Some of them, like the superb art master Emil Drličiak, partly continued the polish poster virtues which were developed in the Slovak environment due to the above mentioned Ľubomír Longauer and his contemporaries Pavel Choma, Jozef Dóka and Vladislav Rostoka. In the

beginning of the 90ies most of Longauer's students started to depart from the expressive position of the cartoon picture and hand lettering. Typical of these students was an intellectual humor or practically sarcasm, due to which the field of their activity was many times restricted to school presentations for a limited circle of spectators and to small exhibitions. The ironical detachment is very well expressed by the name of Longauer's students clump: *New Awkwardness*. The finishing touches to a dadaistic atmosphere of this studio is put by the act of awarding professor Longauer a honorary doctorate of New Awkwardness.

Soon the hermetism of form started to compete the intellectual hermetism. The hermetism of form was supported by the entry of digital technologies, which in Slovakia happened approximately five years later than in the western world. Peter Biľak in his study from 1995 called *Illegibility* points out: "As soon as we have got ridden of the primary technical problems, we have found ourselves close to the borders of a computer mannerism."[4] The study originated during his stay in the USA, where it was also published in a book. We can say that thanks to Biľak's work and his theoretical reflections the Slovak scene of graphic design in the mid 90ies kept abreast with the world. Peter Biľak says in the above mentioned study that after a "primitive" period when products of a computer graphics were limited by technical possibilities, a period of perfectionism followed, in which designers were completely faded behind the sophisticated forms of their works. After this the endeavor after humanization of a design work with the aim to revive the "…complexity, randomness or imperfection of manual work followed. Computers were used in this way to create a deliberate disorder and accidentality."[5] Biľak's book *Illegibility*, its contents as well as layout, is an erb work of hermetism in graphic design. The young designer has already defined limits of hermetism because formal experiments often made the function of visual communication problematic.

After the mid 90ies the stream of graphic design that was not dominantly oriented at commercial offers headed rather towards feeling than reading. This stream represented a dominant part of the alternative Slovak graphic design. The structure of this stream varied – designers made use of poetry of comics, punk, graffiti, techno and other kinds of underground expressions, but they also paraphrased an official culture of the communist era. Common

sign of authors in this stream was a principled separation from the tradition. The middle and older generation felt embarrassed over this kind of work: a big part of this generation was a legitimate integral part of the anticommunist subversive culture and yet, young stopped feeling any respect towards them. Martin Šútovec, one of the leading representatives of the young generation, writes in his essay named *Comical Situation:* "The older generation has to get used to the fact, that at the end of the 90ies young people are more interested in Japanese manga strip cartoons than polish posters from the 60ies. From our point of view, the 60ies is not a period of "warming up", but a period of LSD and smelly hippies. Not polish posters but Robert Crumb and his magazine Zap"[6]. The alternative aesthetics in his approach and in works of his colleagues applied mostly in the promotion of underground music and theater, in books often published by their own circulation and in magazines that deserve a special attention. Magazines as *Park* produced by Filip Vančo, Pavol Bálik and Richard Čisárik, or *Hugo* by Martin Šútovec and Pavol Bálik, or *Vlna (Wave)* by Ján Šicko as well as other regular or occasional periodicals brought the alternative graphic design to wider public. The production of magazines represented a platform on which the romanticism and enthusiasm of young was confronted by traditional problems of graphic design, such as creation of lettering or page layout. The typographic expressionism gained an appreciable status in the layout of Slovak magazines but the radical anarchies in David Carson style were applied just in a limited measure.

In the international context of graphic design in the mid 90ies a shift towards modern neoclassicism started to be implemented. This can be seen on the development of fonts by, a star of Californian "new wave" Zuzana Ličko (by the way born in Bratislava). Obviously, this was not the return towards the classic modernism. We can simply speak of the formation of hybrid and paradoxical post-modern modernism or modern post-modernism. The tranquilization of rampant emotions and over inflated decorativism took place, but the post-modern emphasis on humanization of cultural production stayed in full force. It is worth mentioning that in contrast to the architecture or three-dimensional design, the graphic design used the most modern technical tool, a computer, to attain radical post-modern positions. Thus buds of synthesis of modern and post-modern

principles appeared in graphic design earlier than in other art disciplines.

The beginnings of critical approach towards postmodernism in Slovakia can be seen in the above-mentioned publication by Peter Biľak – *Illegibility*. This approach is more developed in the essay *Transparency* written in 1997 by the same author. It discusses an eternal dilemma of graphic design: "Should a graphic designer have a neutral position towards the message? Does a graphic designer have right to interpret the message critically? The accent is put on the purity in communication. Do we attain this purity by the neutral approach of the designer or, on the contrary, by a visual translation of the message?" [7]

The comeback from a 'design for feeling' to a 'design for reading' after mid 90ies evoked in Slovakia an increased interest in the most traditional graphic design discipline – the type design. This discipline did not have much tradition in Slovakia. The key person was Andrej Krátky who, in the beginning of 90ies, was a student of Jan Solpera, a representative of strong Czech school of type design in Prague. A dynamic linear lettering (called *Bradlo)* designed by Andrej Krátky in 1995, won an international recognition. A renowned company FontShop provided for its distribution. Mr. Krátky, during his function at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava, became an advisor of other young type designers – let us mention for example Peter Biľak, whose lettering *Eureka* won laurels on the international scene. The same is true for the lettering called Jigsaw designed by Johanna Biľak-Balušíková, Biľak's wife. Three years ago Biľak-Balušíková together with the Czech graphic designer Alan Záruba organized a presentation platform e-a-t (experiment and typography), which resumed the typography of the last twenty years in both countries, the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic. It demonstrated that during the twenty-year period Slovak type designers developed their skills and became equal partners to Czech type designers.

The name of Peter Biľak, a Slovak graphic designer, appeared in this article several times already. He has been acting in the Netherlands for a decade but still keeps in touch with his country of origin. This can be seen in his effort to adjust fonts to language specifications of Slavonic languages (e.g. *Greta* font). Biľak's activities reach beyond the frame of problems typical for graphic design.[8] He gives attention not only to general questions on communicating the message, but in part of his work

we can also see that he uproots the traditional border line between the design and fine arts. In 1999 at the Slovak National Gallery exhibition in Bratislava he introduced a "typographic ballet" where the lettering projected on the screen was changing. Later he directly co-operated on a dance-choreography. Another distinct personality of young Slovak graphic design, Ján Šicko, co-founder of a multimedial grouping called *Signall*, is also intensively working in overlaps between graphic design and theater. In Šicko's works a linear and mostly static medium of graphic design is being changed to a dynamic discipline which is characterized by interdisciplinary overlaps and includes movement and sound. Time media bring erosion of material substance of graphic design. Whether we call Šicko's work a graphic design in motion or an untraditional scenography, what is important is its communicativeness with the public that is pulled in active participation on the final product. Designers are professional communicators, thus design, according to Wolfgang Welsh, could become an art of the 21st century, even though it is obvious that he is not talking about a conventional design.[9]

We can find many examples of work where graphic designers refuse to be limited to traditional roles of this discipline and they express themselves with self-confidence when dealing with fundamental problems of artwork or life itself. A good example is a work of Andrej Gavalda, this year's prizewinner of the Students' National Prize for Design.

In the 70ies the term "total football" was introduced to name a game of a Dutch football team in which limitations of individual players' activities were removed. I would suggest the term "total design" to be used for the current expansion of designers' activities. The interest to make use of creative designing strategies whose primary strength consists in communicativeness towards the common public can be seen also from the fine art. In 2001 Mira Keratová and Richard Fajnor initialized the project called Billboard Gallery, in which visual arts was presented on billboards first in Bratislava and later in other European cities. This shift from the advertisement to the artistic expression activated a large response. Among the artists participating at this project, graphic designers were markedly present. They were able to get beyond the traditional utilitarian limits and move towards provoking messages.

At the beginning of the new millennium a grouping of new generation started to form in the

Slovak graphic design. The substantial part of this grouping refuses "sweet money poisoning" in the commercial sphere. It also refuses to be concerned mostly with conventionally defined aesthetic issues in design. We can simply state, that while in the mid 90ies of the past century the dominant position in Slovak graphic design was taken by a form without content, with the beginning of the new millennium it is content without form. Marcel Benčík, a speaker of this generation, states: "A current Slovak designer has to be an activist, organizer, propagator, theorist and journalist in one person."[10]

The entry of the new generation was accompanied by feelings of frustration coming from the lack of recognition in the society in which the general public associates a graphic designer with an advertisement agent. The first year of designers' conference called *Kupé* took place in the city of Žilina in 2005. Its topic, "Self-defense of a graphic designer", was addressing mostly the internal part of the designers' community, in order to set their own space of existence. A move towards broader interventions to a socio-cultural environment could be seen at workshop *Living Underground* which took place in the same year as well as in the project *Design on wheels* in 2006. In this project young graphic designers traveling in their mobile studio were offering their services to towns and non-profit organizations in Slovakia. A trend towards "Bauhaus" effort to improve life of ordinary people can be seen in the continuing projects of conferences called *Kupé* and workshops called *Living Underground* (third year of both these conferences is taking place this year). Even though a certain measure of narcissism is still present, it is certain that the youngest generation wants to leave the "ghetto" of graphic design. It plans to transfer the basis of its activities from hedonism and hermetic self-centeredness to broadly defined involvement in positive changes of things in this world. As in the ex-communist countries these words stink of leftism or even of communist ideology, I will help myself by the quotation from an English graphic designer John Barnbrook: "Design STILL has the potential to change the society and we should start by recalling this afresh."[11]

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Notes

1 http://www.shared-space.org/

2 In 1999 a British designer and critic Rick Poynor published a regenerated manifest *First Things First* originally written in 1964. In its commentary he states that from the times when his older colleague Ken Garland warned before the excessive commercialism of graphic design the process advanced insomuch, that instead of sociality beneficial activities the overwhelming majority of graphic designers is oriented towards debatable commercial orders such as promotion of dog biscuits, setting-lotions or cigarettes. He calls attention to probably the last opportunity to thoroughly think of the substance of graphic design and utilize its potential for meaningful tasks. The Manifest with Poynor's commentary was published in 1999 in the following magazines: Adbusters, AIGA Journal, Blueprint, Emigre, Eye and Items. It was published also by the Slovak magazine DeSignUm, No. 4/2000, p. 35.

3 Tom Mitchell defines the "human age" of design as the stage following the "age of hardware" and the "age of software". (T. Mitchell: Product as Illusion. In: J. Thackara (ed.): Design After Modernism. Thames and Hudson, London, New York 1988, p. 208.

4 P. Biľak: Illegibility. Reese Brothers Inc., Pittsburgh 1995. Quoted in DeSignUm, No. 2/1996, p. 46.

5 P. Biľak: Ibid. p. 46.

6 M. Šútovec: Comical Situation. DeSignUm, No. 1/1999, p. 54.

7 P. Biľak: Transparency. Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Bratislava 1997, p. 46 –47.

8 Peter Biľak is also a co-editor of the leading Dutch periodical *dot dot dot*.

9 According to W. Welsch, "…just like the 20th century was the century of art, the 21st century could become the century of design." W. Welsch: Aesthetic thinking. Archa (the Arch), Bratislava 1993, p. 159.

10 M. Benčík: Agglomeration. Network of Graphic Design in Slovakia. Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Bratislava 2007, p. 14.

11 John Barnbrook quoted in Ch. & P. Fiell: Graphic Design Now. Taschen, Köln 2003. p. 70.

Vit Halada

Architecture and landscape

Bratislava – Vienna: in-between space

My contribution to the theme of landscape and architecture concentrates on one specific site/landscape and on three projects for this landscape/site by three, in that time wannabe architects, students of Laboratory of Architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava who were trying to get their diploma. They are Martina Repova, Barbara Zavarska and myself. In the academic year 2003/4 we were attending the last year of our studies and we were confronted by our tutors – Imro Vasko and specifically for this project by Jan Tabor – with a theme and a site which was for us behind our idea and expectation of an architectural project.

The title was simple and modest Bratislava – Vienna. The program was of enormous scale. Ten million people on a site of approximately 60 km in length and 30 km width. Bratislava and Vienna as border points and the vast empty space in-between as our site. A site which is no more a building site but a landscape. A landscape which thanks to the ideas of architects becomes a building site… A site which should be developed. A new urban mass for 10 million people which should emerge. Such a goal seemed unimaginable. But there were some indications for a possible future development in the area between Bratislava and Vienna. First of

01.1 analysis by exploring
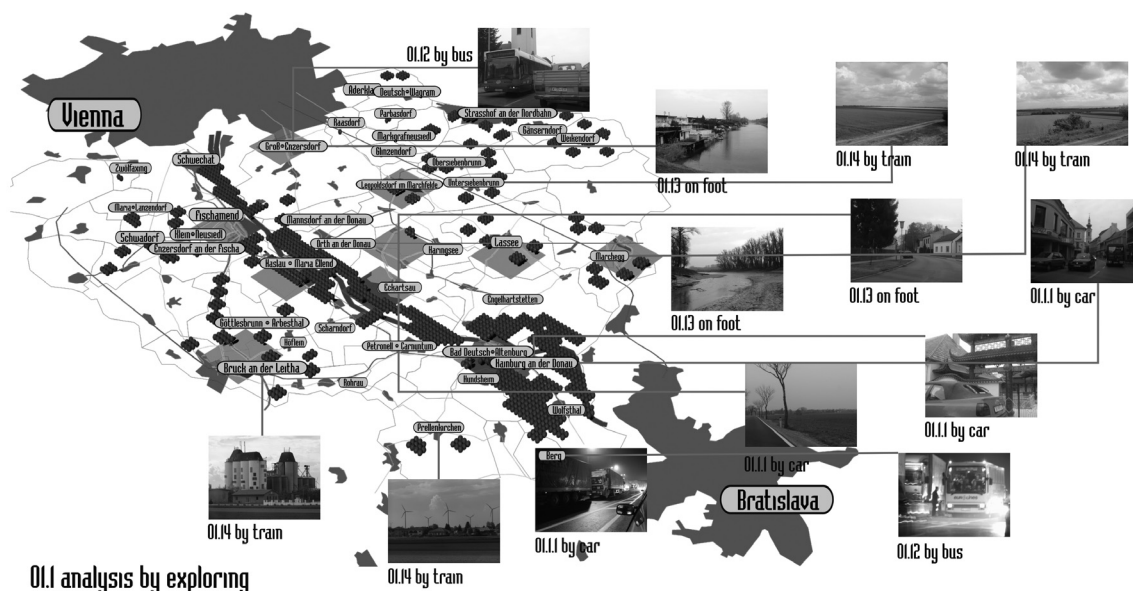
all, Slovakia was few months before its becoming a European union member state. The border between Austria and Slovakia was to disappear again. The historic nostalgias were to become real. Bratislava as a cozy rural suburb of Vienna which you can easily reach by a tram. 19th century viennasians enjoying wine cellars and restaurants of Pressburg and the pressburgers having sacherdort on Sunday afternoons in Vienna. But the reality was different. Bratislava's real estate market discovered cheap plots, sites and estates behind the border in the Austrian villages as Kittsee, Wolfsthal, Marchegg … the prices were in some cases half of the prices on the Slovakian side. Bratislava discovered a new direction for its development. Vienna expanded its development in the east direction – Schwechat, Marchfeld. New low height suburb development is a reality until now around both of the cities. The proximity of two capitals, the border between old European union and the new member states – between West and East, one of the biggest airports in Europe, dense transport net of various kinds of European importance (Danube river, planned high speed train line from Paris to Budapest via Vienna and Bratislava), the know how of transnational corporations concentrated in Vienna office towers and the cheapness of Bratislava …. These were the indications that gave birth to an idea that two cities could possibly start to get closer and closer, eventually to become a twin city, or one megalopolis. For us as architects, wannabe architects, these were not the anchor points from which we could start our thinking. It was too far from our experience, not from our field, and it gave us only a few weak arguments to start to believe in such a huge development. We were forced to look elsewhere for our points of departure.

One of the most important fields which we tried to research was the physical site, the landscape, the space in-between Bratislava and Vienna. First tries, mostly done with a camera or photo camera, by car or by train, just confirmed the vastness of the landscape and our inability to grasp its character as a whole. It was too wide spread, too empty. It was rural, too less of urban fabric to start to develop. Just villages, points of low density in areas of agri-culture. But at least something. And even some particularities. An old water canal not far away from Vienna in the East, which in its ambitious planned length should connect Danube river with the Czech river Oder and so the Black Sea with the Baltic Sea, but from which only four kilometers were realized.

Or a rapidly increasing field of wind power plants near Parndorf and Kittsee. These particularities, manmade interventions were due to their character and scale aliens or mistakes in the regularities of the rural landscape in-between Bratislava and Vienna. Together with the research done via statistical data, growth and density simulations, analysis of patterns of historic growth of Bratislava and Vienna, or by analysis of existing transport ways and not to forget together with the idea of an urban development for 10 million people we came to a stage were architecture in Bratislava – Vienna landscape could be imagined.

This process of research and of looking for ideas was common for all three projects I would like to show you now. First let me introduce two proposals of my colleagues Martina Repova and Barbara Zavarska.

First project was developed by Martina Repova. She was inspired by the fields of wind mill power plants in South-East region of Bratislava – Vienna landscape. Because of the flatness of the Panonia basin there is a suitable wind circulation which is used to produce clean power. However the amount of windmills needed, drastically changes the character of the flat and open landscape. The fields of corn and grain become fields of towers and rotors. The night atmosphere of hundreds of blinking rot lights is even more surreal. City skyline without the yellow lights of streets and windows. Martina takes the existing situation and pushes the idea of the urbanism of thin high poles and rotors further and proposes a high density vertical living towers which are at the same time wind mill power plants. The rotor blades are 8 m thin apartment blocks with 3 m wide flats on both sides. The flats are enjoying spectacular 360 degrees views on the landscape via a full glazed side walls, because of the never-ending slow rotation of the building/power plant. The dislocation of the apartment windmills in the landscape follows artificial rules of a regular grid generated out of a needed population density and the minimal distances between neighboring tower so that the lives behind the glass facades are not visible from the flats in the nearest tower.

Next project, designed by Barbara Zavarska, amplifies the found condition of an old water canal which was never used in its planned condition as a vital transport route. Instead because of its apparent unfunctionality it became an anchor point for a housing development. Its alien nature
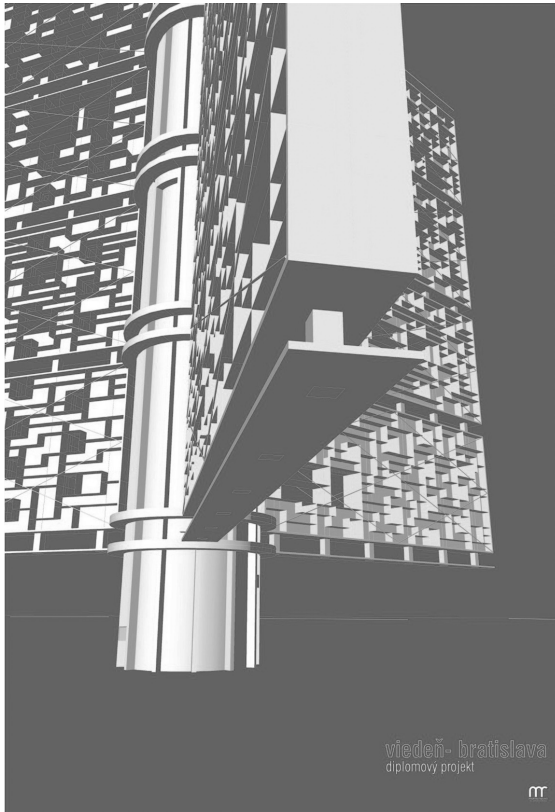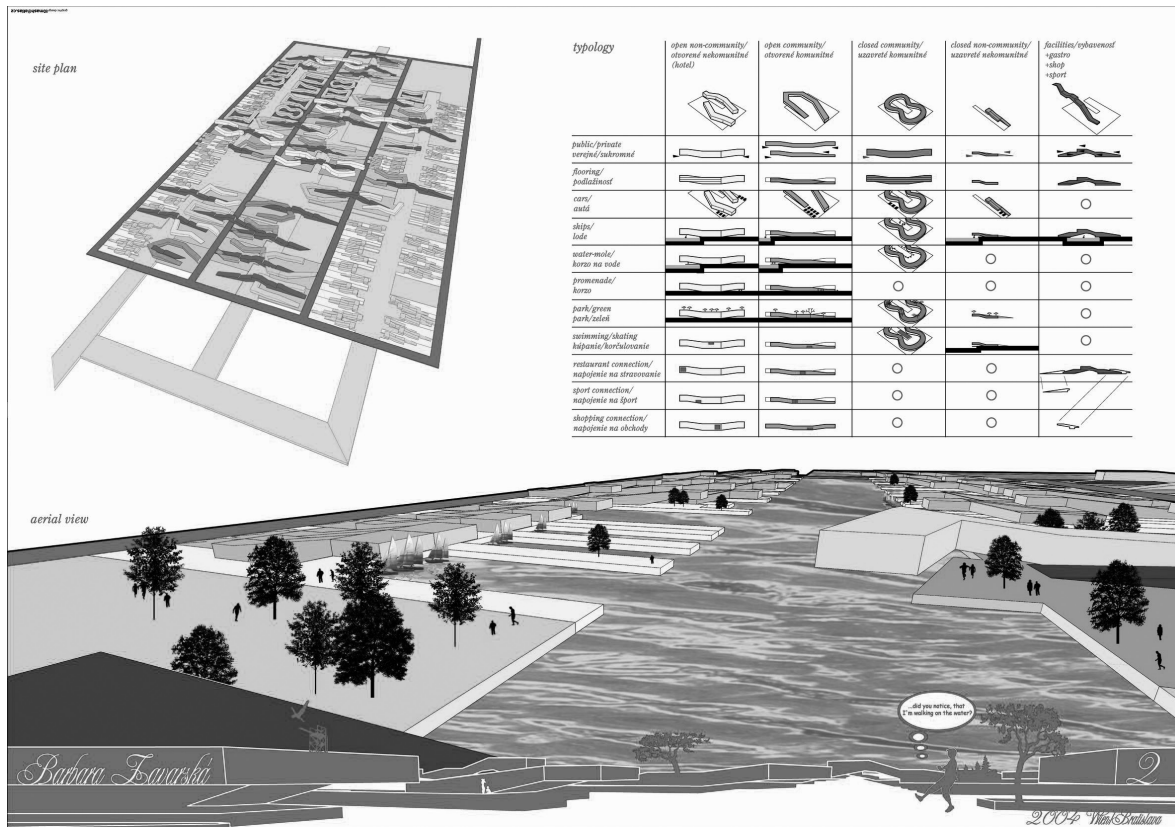
Vienna–Bratislava -diploma project. Martina Repova.

in the landscape gave birth to a very specific type of living which is not common in the area between Bratislava and Vienna. Living at the Danube river was not possible because of frequent high water and floods. Even Bratislava and Vienna as cities on the river do not really live with it. The riverfronts are not used as public spaces for walks or rest. They are mostly used as transport veins – roads, highways, railways, shipyards. The controlled state of an artificial water canal is more living friendly and is exploited in Barbara's proposal as she draws a new web of canals into the agricultural landscape South and North of the Danube river. The national park Danube Wetlands or Auland stays untouched and becomes the "central park" in the proposed system of new urban development. Water brought into the urban fabric plays not only a role of an element of leisure and luxury but its also used as a way of transportation for people who do work in the centers of the both cities Vienna and Bratislava and live on the canals in the space in-between. The urbanism of water canals follows rules that are trying to maximize the public waterfronts and minimize the private owned access to the water. The canals meander into, next to or under the buildings which

typologies are also designed in accordance to these rules. Buildings which are over bridging the canals, which are cantilevering the shores, or buildings which parts act as piers for ship parking.

The last project I would like to present is my idea of how a flat rural vast, on first sight empty land-scape, could develop a sort of new urbanity. My first notions of the landscape in the in-between space of Bratislava and Vienna were notions of emptiness and absence. I was looking for mass and volumes, for density, which were present in the two border cities, but which were absent in this landscape. I was attracted to agricultural buildings, to the grain silos, which were alien to the flat landscape or maybe not alien but which were able to somehow stand out or to establish relationships with its scale to the vast-ness and emptiness of the landscape. The near to zero density of agricultural land was compared to urban densities of Vienna and Bratislava and several density/area ratio analyzes were done. The low den-sity concept of urban sprawl was rejected in favor of high density concept of small dense urban points in the landscape in order to minimize the impact on the character of landscape. Maybe a naïve idea. Inspired by the utopian proposal by Hans Hollein who col-laged an aircraft carrier into the landscape. The next step was to localize the sites, areas with dimensions of approximately 5×5 km; sites which were fragments of the in-between landscape, areas which scale could be analyzed on present functions. The apparent vast-ness and emptiness of the landscape was rewritten by statistical data which were then visualized into sets of schemes and diagrams showing different features and potentials of the emptiness which were unseen by using cameras and eyes. Several sites with various potentials were identified according to existent functions. For example a site near crossings of various transport systems was identified as suit-able to commerce or industry development, or a site with low density agriculture and in proximity to existing border cities was identified as suitable for living… the architects work with the landscape in this proposal was mainly guided by the idea of the minimum impact by a 3D dense urban points instead of low density wide spread, landscape consuming urban sprawl. The other idea would be to upgrade the existing undeveloped, invisible potentials by enhancing them or by combining them with other missing urban features.
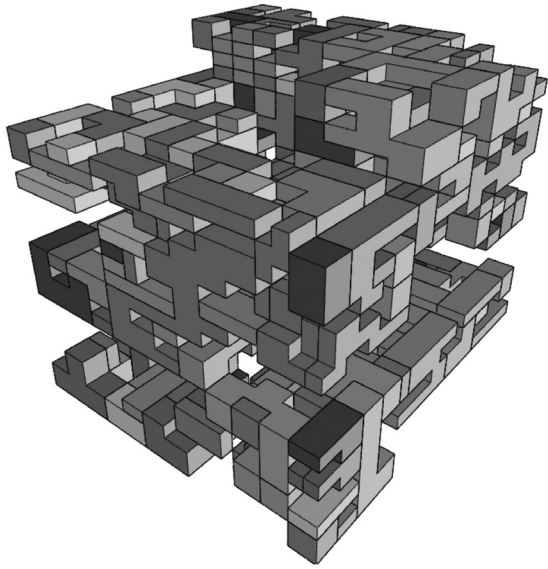
Rural landscape is locally transformed into urban points. Low dense monofunctional "patchworked"

Vienna–Bratislava -diploma project. Barbara Zavarska.
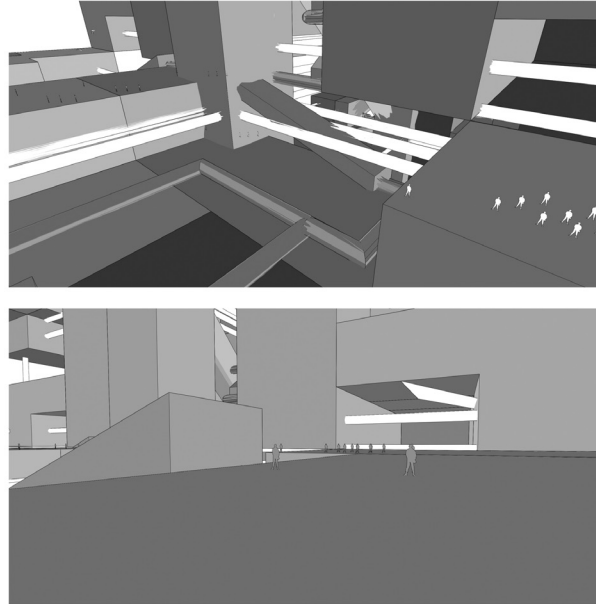
03.6 cubicities_dominant functions
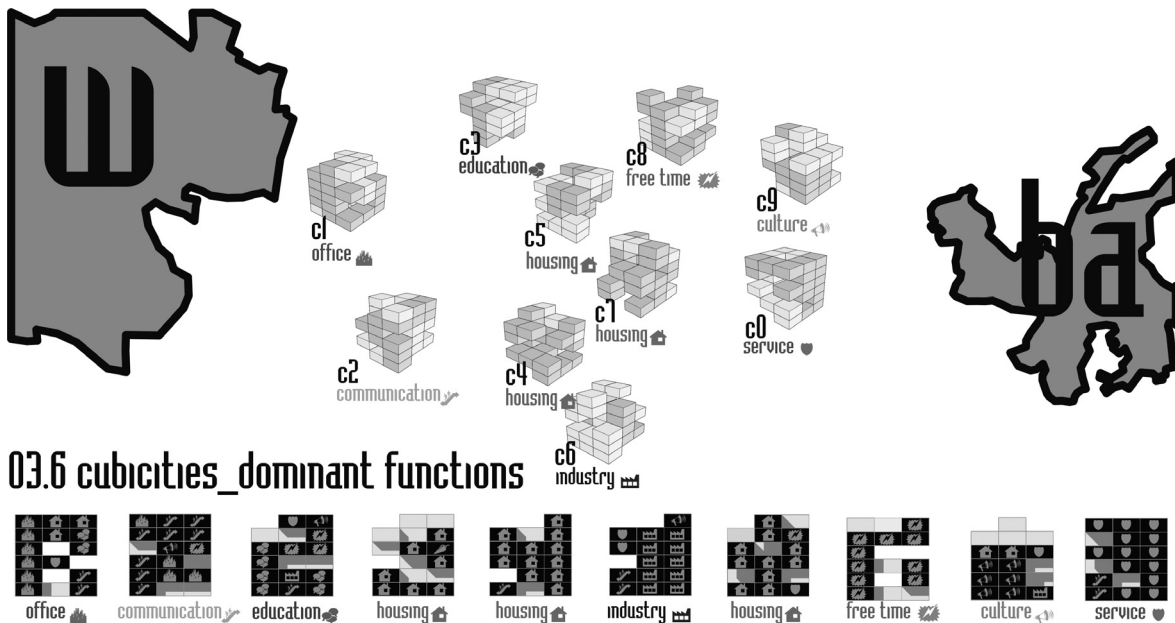
Vienna–Bratislava -diploma project. Vit Halada.

Vienna–Bratislava -diploma project. Vit Halada.

landscape is locally multifunctioned, densified and multilayered. The rural as one extreme and the urban as the other, meet in a small space to create new quality – "the rurban". Or the "Cubicity". 3D dense artificial organized urban point set in rural landscape which is locally urbanized and in the same time the urban density of the 3D point is grafted in its interior by the low density, small scale, and disorganization of the rural.

"The Cubicity" is a new kind of spatial organization because the third dimension is introduced in a scale which is comparable to two other directions. New systems of designing in all three dimensions at once had to be researched. Systems that would be able to deal with problems of light and air conditions, of functional distribution, of communication and transport systems, of structure… Looking for such a principle, the field of "occupying" games was studied, because of their use of playing stones (mass) to occupy space (void) following certain rules and strategies according to the type of game. Domino game was, with its principle of adjoining (functional distribution) and mass/void ratio(porosity, light, air), after introducing the third dimension, transforming the stones and the rules, renamed and changed into cubicity – a game on 3D urbanism. The game

was played on the specified sites and several spatial organizations and functional distributions were generated. Each of the ten proposed 3D points – cubicities had one dominant function according to which the percentage of other functions was set. The ten cubicities proposed for the landscape in-between Bratislava – Vienna were meant to act as one, web like, system in which each point is functionally specific (but still self-sufficient) and they supplement each other.

In the end, I would like to thank CUMULUS organizers for the opportunity to show the way of our thinking on architecture and landscape which was materialized in the shown three projects. We are and were aware that these projects are problematic; they do not solve problems in an absolutely complex way. But still we do hope that these by some called utopian or futuristic projects could stimulate other ways of thinking, planning and building in the landscape.
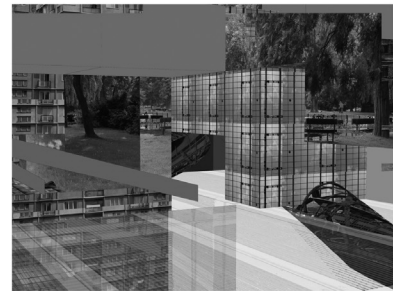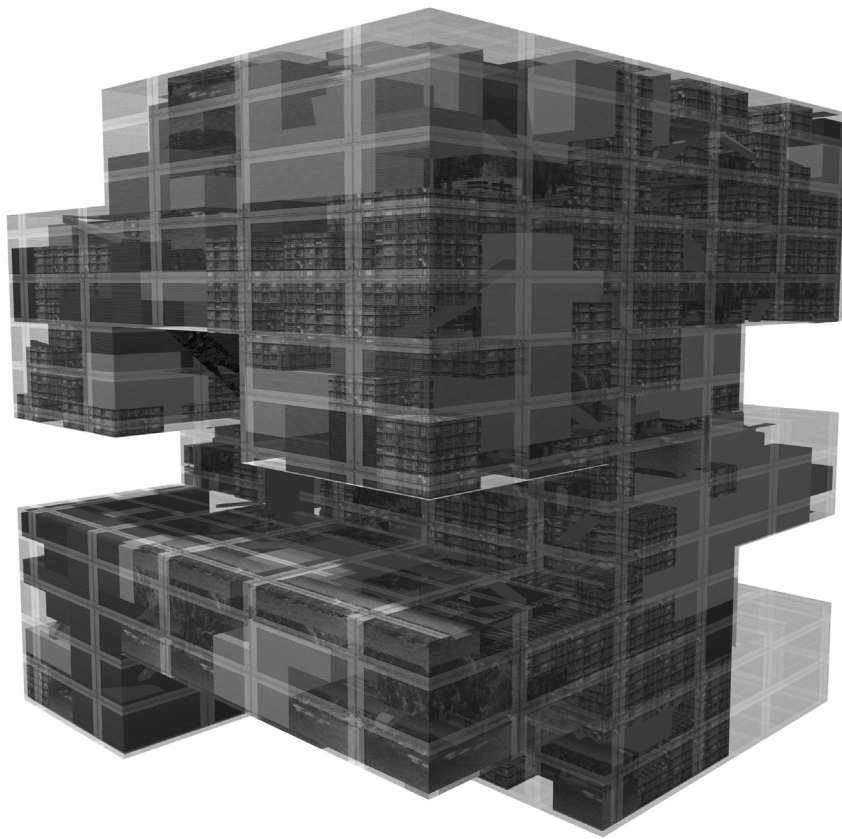
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Vienna–Bratislava -diploma project. Vit Halada.

Klemens Rossnagel

Quality through adaptation

The new challenges for industrial design using the example of the automotive industry

Last weekend the Munich Oktoberfest came to an end. I was surprised by the number of visitors to the Oktoberfest wearing the traditional Bavarian costume – a "Dirndl" for the women or "Lederhosen" for the men. Younger visitors in particular consider this cool. For some years now, traditional Bavarian clothing has been growing in popularity.

What makes young non-Bavarians dress in this way and adapt to this traditional setting? Can we as designers learn something here?

Adapting to new conditions and acknowledging new rules are important for survival. This is not an aesthetic neo-Darwinism. It's a matter of understanding the role of design time and time again.

To make this clearer it's worth taking a look at the automotive industry. Up to now it has been not only the master of adaptation but also an active promoter of change.

Students will be the first ones to pick up changes and experiment with them.

Students On my visits to design colleges I frequently come across a surprising notion among industrial design students, who see their creations as singular pieces or as an art-oriented original. That is to say, the idea of industrial mass production is lacking – or even rejected.

And I ask myself: is this attitude merely naive or is something new emerging here? New customer requirements perhaps?

Industry It seems paradox for industrial designers to reject industrial mass production. The word *industrial* implies an industrial context that by definition presupposes high volumes or mass production.

Luxury item Only with industrial mass production were better and cheaper products possible. In the early years, the automobile was still a handcrafted luxury item, but mass production made it affordable to the general public. Even today, despite its increasing complexity, an automobile is a mass-produced product.

Gap Mass production created a "mental" gap between manufacturer or designer and customer. We don't understand our customer's needs and desires any more.

What we lack is direct contact and the ability to relate to the customer.

It has become extremely difficult to design for "the" customer, someone who exists only as an abstract figure in our imagination. We need more information about him or her.

- Trend scouting
- Psychological in-depth interviews
- College projects with design students
- Milieu models
- Scenario techniques

attempt to bridge the gap in understanding. Yet it is not enough to determine the status quo, to ask what the customer wants right now. This information is retrospective. It would be a major error to simply apply past preferences to the future. No one is able to tell what they will want in the distant future, what they will find fascinating or appealing.

Design Research It is therefore important to look for traces of the future in the present. Unfortunately, we do not have a crystal ball to predict the future. But we are currently developing a new instrument: Design Research.

Design Research attempts to recognise changes and to use the changes observed to anticipate a future whose goals were formulated in the past, i.e. today's present. As the cyberneticist Heinz von Foerster said: "The cause lies in the future."

Uniformity Mass production does not just change the industry – it changes customers, too. If many people buy the same product, this leads to uniformity. In view of the loss of individuality this levelling process is regarded as negative.

Security The positive aspect for the customer is the security offered by mass-produced products. To consume also means to select and communicate. If I have chosen something that also appeals to many others, I know I am in tune with my social environment.

This means that difficult decision-making processes concerning social acceptance, aesthetic competence or political responsibility are simply delegated to the manufacturers in the form of brand awareness and brand credibility. Similar mechanisms although relating to fashion were discovered in 1895 by the Viennese sociologist Georg Simmel: "Fashion is the ideal realm for individuals who inwardly lack independence and need support, yet whose self-awareness nonetheless requires

a certain amount of distinction, attention and singularity."[1] If a brand acts wrongly this is punished by consumer's restraint. The buyer turns to another brand – it was not his mistake after all.

Individual The group of consumers who want to be part of the crowd is becoming smaller and smaller. At the same time, the group of customers who express their individuality is growing. As global markets encompass many individuals and cultures the distinguishing features of the products are becoming more and more important.

The unifying sameness is challenged by the individual differentness.

This trend in the customer's attitude is also apparent when it comes to the automobile.

One for all In the early years of the automotive industry, the notion of "One for all" was still fascinating. A product produced in huge quantities was sold worldwide.

Built to order Gradually, customers were able to choose from various colour ranges, items of equipment and engines. As a consequence, development, production and sales became more complex.

Individualisation Due to constantly rising customer demands in terms of equipment for their vehicles, the customisation process developed further.

Modular strategy Nowadays modules, platforms and technical modular construction systems offer the opportunity to develop many new derivatives cost-effectively. This represents a new challenge – for car designers, too.

Customers want to distinguish themselves through their products and consequently demand diversity.

This results in a situation we describe as fragmentation. Instead of one product for all there are many diverse products in ever-decreasing quantities.

Niche products Companies respond to this fragmentation of the markets with niche products, special versions and limited editions.

Globalisation The automotive industry has extended its product portfolios as well as its markets and number of locations.

Individual car brands are being combined into car groups. Only in this way they can survive in the long term. Large groups use their global resources:

- Global sourcing
- Global production network
- Global financing
- Global design network

Design The design departments of car manufac-turers also respond with appropriate measures that make better use of the creative and intuitive skills of the designers.

- External design studios (global design network)
- International design team
- Job rotation (global locations)
- Cultural competence (sensitivity, interest, perception, understanding, processing)
- Design strategy
- The aforementioned Design Research
- Intellectual and aesthetic focus on the global markets

Brand – Nation Global factors are becoming more important, whereas national influences are disappearing. As national features become less and less significant, the brand gains in importance.

The only sad aspect is that in many cases national – or rather cultural – references in the design are slowly disappearing. Design is no longer an expres-sion of typical national values but of brand values.

Identity Identity is a part of the cultural reference. Identity refers not only to people but also to brands and products: the brand is viewed as a person.

Identity is defined in different ways. For us de-signers, three aspects are of prime importance: one's own history, long-term values and social roles. One identity can be distinguished from other identities. This makes it identifiable. Another aspect is that I can also identify *with* something. For instance, I can identify with a vehicle. In this way an object extends my identity. The automotive industry lives from this premise: my car is an extension of my identity.

Another example of people identifying with a brand is presented by internationally successful football clubs.

All have an extremely strong local connection which is the mainstay of their identity. Still the fans are not bothered by the fact that local players are not picked very often. The fact that many foreigners play for the team is not only tolerated, it is regarded as a sign of international success and appeal.

Brand The brand therefore stands for identity and not for local or national values. Globally successful brands and products have their own appeal: the attractiveness of success, power, the cosmopolitan, the uniting and the familiar.

A globally successful product is like a good friend whom one is keen to introduce to (local) friends, someone who is rather exotic but who can adapt to the different culture: a cultured foreigner with international experience and an air of sophistication. Even Confucius succumbed to the charm of the exotic when he asked: "Is it not delightful to have a friend, coming from distant quarters?"

Cultivating design The appeal of the exotic is cou-pled with various problems. An exotic product comes from another culture, which of course is part of its very appeal. However, it requires consumers to accept compromises, to adjust. Our global mass culture offers another option: the exotic adapts to the "new" cus-tomer, a process that brings with it its own problems.

Flattery Since the original, i.e. the authentic, is highly popular it is clear that any adaptation is often denounced as flattery. Design, however, has a serving function for company, society and customer. The focus is not only on the self-realisation of the designer – an industrial designer is also obliged to achieve economic success.

Success "Good" design is successful. However, caution is advised when it comes to the reverse of this – everything that is successful is good – although we often speak of the wisdom of the masses or swarm intelligence in this context.

Swarm intelligence Time and again we see beau-tiful images on the subject of swarm intelligence. But "collective intelligence" does not only have its positive examples. Who wants be a part of the swarm intelligence of locusts or traffic jams?

Choice Choosing from a huge colourful world of goods requires a tremendous effort on the part of the customers. To be truly able to make a choice the customers must be well-informed and educated. They must have acquired some degree of design competence for themselves.

Only then can consumers emancipate them-selves from the dictates of the media, fashion, design experts, and "good form".

Design should abide by democratic rules, even if we sometimes find that hard to accept from an aesthetic viewpoint.

Customers decide The customer will then decide himself which of our products best meets his or her wishes and requirements.

Adaptation So that our product, our design, suits the customer we must adapt our design to the customer. *Adapt instead of change* is the magic formula. Adapt means retaining substance and identity. The contact area, not the substance, is concerned. After all, also the customer adapts to the product.

Even though I personally lived in Asia for several years and often adapted accordingly, I have nevertheless kept my own identity.

When in contact with other cultures there is a process of experience and adjustment. Every person, every product, and every process can be optimised or cultivated.

"Cultivate" means adapting oneself or something to a new environment and new conditions making it usable.

It also means enhancing or refining the product or the design. In this way it becomes a premium product.

Adapting the design to the customers does not produce an aesthetic lie. It gives rise to a new level of design quality.

My observation of young people at the Oktoberfest, who adapt by wearing a traditional dress, shows that a global adaptation process is underway. Visitors like to adapt and obviously have a great deal of fun doing so.

Contemporary fashion takes up the theme of traditional costume and develops it further.

The adaptation process is extremely enjoyable, arouses respect for other cultures and clearly shows that – even when it comes to design – globalisation has its own laws.

Conclusion

§1 THE GLOBAL DESIGN PROCESS
The globalisation process – also in terms of design – is in full swing. Whether we currently see this process as positive or negative is of secondary importance.

§2 THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DESIGNER
It is the responsibility of the designer to contribute to this process.

§3 LOSS OF LOCAL CHARACTER
We lose the diversity based on regional and cultural characteristics.

§4 THE BRAND REPLACES LOCAL CHARACTER
The brand serves as a mainstay of identity and replaces local and national aspects with global characteristics.

§5 LOCAL BECOMES EXOTIC
Through global distribution local goods become exotic goods and thus a premium product.

§6 IMPROVED GLOBAL STANDARDS
We benefit from globally competitive products that fulfil the highest standards. Economies of scale ensure that these products become affordable for many.

§7 NEW CHOICES
If the range of local goods is declining, the range of global goods is increasing. This represents cultural exchange and global aesthetics. A wide choice helps to prevent an aesthetic dictate.

§8 THE EDUCATED CUSTOMER
Only customers who make their choices consciously and responsibly can make the "right" choice for themselves and their cultural group. Customers must acquire design competence.

§9 GAP WIDENS
The gap between manufacturers, developers, designers, and customers will increase.
This gap will be narrowed by new communication and working processes, however.

§10 GLOBAL DESIGN = GLOBAL CONCERN
Design must mentally grasp the world in its incredible complexity. Aesthetics is the mediator. The new structure of power and new dependencies affect customers as well as companies.

§11 CULTIVATING DESIGN
Respect and consideration for other cultures enrich the quality of the design more than this loses in terms of authenticity.
Today, creativity means cultivating design – i.e. allowing access to all in respect of aesthetics issues.

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Bjorn Kierulf
A vision

I am not a native Slovak. But I have lived here longer than anywhere else in my life, so I can proudly call it my home. My first visit to Slovakia was educational: my older brother wanted to show me how bad communist socialism is so that I would not dream having any similar aspirations myself. He got one thing wrong though: you might have noticed the outstanding design of pretty young Slovak girls… Even at that time good design won me over.

The appeal of the opportunity to create something new, to build a new order after the iron curtain came down has kept me here ever since.

Last year I had the pleasure to step in as a Teacher for 1 year at AFAD. What a wonderful experience – I now envy all with an educational vocation. Working with young people really lets you feel quite a few years younger.

In my brief presentation I want to address two areas of industrial design:
- First I want to address the absence of competition (this is a purely national problem). This problem causes a low public awareness about industrial design.
- Second, I want to pinpoint a serious absence of direction – or let's call it focus (and this is definitely an international problem). This problem is caused by poor professional foresight.

Let's have a look at the national problem, a problem of low competition:

In Slovakia we have a few handfuls of industrial designers, no real industrial design companies and therefore also a very low impact on industry. Mostly, companies do not know about the role of design. Most (gifted) students find work in other areas (graphic design, interior architecture, crafts) or leave for abroad.

And we have a problem of quality – bad design is often a burden to companies as well as other designers. I was part of the National Design Award jury, and although some good design was represented, a lot of designs with basic flaws had to be disqualified – definitely not something that makes me jump out of joy, because every flawed design makes life harder for all the others of us.

Finally, few products are engineered and developed in Slovakia, so you have to look deep into the haystack to find the occasional needle you can design.

What Slovakia needs is a strong community of designers with a record of good products – that is good material for publishing and marketing of "industrial design".

What can be done? We need:
- Added interest of the industry – we need examples of best practice
- Added competition – giving young designers a hand starting up their own business

But more than anything else, and that is where I come to the second part of my presentation:

Giving design a focus that makes sense – and this is as well an international problem. I strongly believe that industrial design has not yet had enough foresight to see what will come in the future. The question of long-term sustainable production and long-term economic success has not been properly addressed in schools, nor in the professional practice.

There is not one day that passes without some headlines of global heating and resulting natural catastrophes. We know that our footprint is far too big for our planet to sustain.
- Can we guarantee creative freedom for us designers in future, if we have to work in such a limited environment?
- Do we want to be restricted by ever higher oil and commodity prices?
- Do we want our creativity to be compromised by quotas and regulations?
- Do we want ourselves to become a target of eco-fighters?

Definitely not me: I want to retain my creative independence and produce whatever our customer's desire – I say it again: not what customers need, but desire.

Designer is the catalyst in every product.

The designer is by definition a visionary and is able to bring a vision to life – we can influence the product from the very core to the final surface.

It is our responsibility and it is in our interest to influence the development of new products in a way where we can keep our creative freedom and provide a sustainable base for production.

Are there any solutions? Can ecology and business have one common denominator? Can we find any long-term sustainable model that can be broadly accepted and implemented?

Yes, and the answer is rather simple, the implementation difficult, long term but inevitable.

Probably most of you recognize the concept called "Cradle to cradle", proposed by William McDonough and Michael Braungart, a principle that has a huge potential. Long-term sustainability is only possible if we are able to let a product become a part of a closed cycle. This cycle can be technological or biological. The technological cycle is re-winning materials that can not be returned to nature. The biological cycle assures that materials can be returned to our environment without long term damages.

I am not going into details of the "cradle to cradle" principle, as this would be a whole new presentation. For you who don't know about the concept from before, please Google it.

This concept it is embraced not only by environmentalists, but especially by the industry itself. This makes it a long term winning strategy. What makes it so interesting to both parts?
- Consequent and thorough in its analysis and solutions
- Creates independence from resources because of up-cycled materials
- Assures freedom to consume – no more restrictions
- No waste, no pollution – long-term.

I don't want to go into details of the "Cradle to cradle" principle, that has been well documented, but just giving you an idea of the concept.

Just take the way a cherry tree works:

Let's have a look at how nature works – for example at the overproduction of cherries – a beautiful sight, but what a waste? Maybe one cherry will become another tree, despite the abundance. But the abundance is nourishment for all the other species that thrive thanks to what we otherwise would call waste.

We can do the same with our industrial production – we are able to produce in abundance and at the same time not produce any wasteful waste. It just needs rethinking of materials, technologies, design and behavioral patterns to incorporate all into closed cycles

An example to provide you with an idea of the concept: James – brush and dustpan

Designed by myself as a student when I had no knowledge about the "Cradle to cradle" concept. The brush is produced entirely from natural products that can be composted (biological cycle) and aluminum that can be used over and over again (technological cycle). Some details have to be solved by technological and materials specialists to ensure clean production, but theoretically only energy is necessary to turn one product into another.

There is a long and thorny path in front of us – but with the right vision, we can make this happen sooner rather than later. If we look at the development of our industrialized society we know that this development is inevitable – that is why the "cradle to cradle" idea is so strong.

Here are the opportunities that can be turned to our benefit:
- Development of new technologies
- Development of new materials
- New products and services

We know that new developments that are inter-disciplinary are usually the most successful. We just need to give it a small push to start rolling.

We can do our part of the work: Let young designers learn what a good product needs to be if he wants to design something with long-term sustainability in mind. Let us not only use available materials, but demand new materials that fit our concept of the product. Let us design in a way so we can reuse or up-cycle parts. Let us invent new ways to engage the customer. Let us design products that will not only look good, but do well to our environment.

Let's come back where we started: here we are in Slovakia, a small country with a lot of potential – we just gained freedom a few years back. Industrial design (and many other disciplines) is in similar situation as this poor fish here. Why not make "Cradle to cradle" principle to a national focus and engage interdisciplinary teams into research, education and development of suitable materials, technologies and products. Why not make it a commodity that can be exported? The French did it with nuclear power and TGV; The Danes did it with windmills and biomass. Slovakia has a knowledge based economy – but without a vision that can engage all kinds of people the gained freedom will be poorly used. And as a natural result of this effort, industrial design in Slovakia will achieve a renaissance never seen before.

Visions are only visions, but without them there is no reality.

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Per Gyllenspetz

The creation of car concepts in small vs large organizations

Introduction:

Is letting loose the creative spirit *of experienced designer teams a threat to the huge, tightly controlled organizations? Are billion euro product and market plans with clinics and focus groups replaceable with a bunch of daredevil artist souls?*

Consider the great energy provided using the fun-factor *combined with a hard-working autonomous staff, like in a small hungry company. Let the team create ideas with their hands, dust on your clothes is status! If they have fun, the product they create will radiate attraction.*

Are there ways to produce much more inspiring cars *and at the same time avoid massive production investments? Are there already commercial technologies for* small-volume production? *Looking from the shareholder perspective there are no reasons why any organization should not provide itself with the power to create and deliver the* best ideas for their customers. *That power is not measured in size, but in creativity and smart speed.*

Small teams

There are mostly good experiences gained from working in Swedish democratic type groups, by designing and leading projects for the smallest as well as the largest manufacturers in the automotive industry. Here, all viewpoints on the model or the invention prototypes are discussed. Small teams share ideas and improvement options; at the same time they are able to master the different responsibilities. In this way they may advance very quickly through subjective decisions. Good teamworking is cash.

Let lose the creative spirit, have fun…

Working in companies is fashion… The current paradigm:

Uniform clothing and hard shoes on hard floors, overflow of mailing, untimely use of computer systems. Look at history then and now from above and compare 18th century warfare with its choreographed stiff attire, and today's corporate work environment and office activities and you will discover a lot of similarities.

Free up creative initiative to make amazing commercial products. Consider the great energy provided using the fun-factor combined with a hard-working autonomous staff. If the development staff has fun and a good time, the product they will have created shall radiate attraction to the buying customers. The magic of creation. Save lots of development money because the workers are taking the straightest way. Believing that hard work must be boring is looking at business the wrong way.

Looking from the owner and shareholder perspective why should an organization not provide itself with the power to create the best ideas?

When it comes to getting new things done fast, I would have more reliance in the Jack Sparrows of the large organizations than in Admiral Tom Hollander's methodology (Ref "Pirates of the Caribbean"). The bullshit factor is always a treacherous threat in any job force involved in creative assumptions of the future, like in buccaneering – and in car design.

The small creative groups – designers, or for that matter the musicians, filmmakers, artists – in the world are often the trendsetters. They are passionate about their ideas and this creates great energy. Is it possible that also within the large companies there are many hidden talents among individuals and groups, who really should be put to creating more of those passionate and lucrative products?

Are clinics and focus groups replaceable with daredevil artists?

If we now create new and different products responding to customer wishes, how can we trust the customer on the street that they will buy the things some years later? Well, we probably need the smart marketing people here to convince the customers that this is what they asked for.

Compare:

- **Crocs;** colored soft shoes would never have passed a product planning departments with hundreds of employees trying to act professionally. "Too ugly, too easy to copy."
- **Very expensive worn-look jeans;** can you imagine the laughs in the boardroom?
- **Smart;** it took many years to get people to buy the vehicles

It's a good idea to start with a concept
Relative costs

Small and big ways of working:
A TRADITIONAL LARGE COMPANY CONCEPT PROJECT

- Corporate project matrix systems
- Project manning positions to be fulfilled, sometimes regardless of actual need, f ex controller functions.
- Ideas must comply with brand and marketing strategy
- Elaborate and dated product planning customer target needs.
- Platform and production facility limitations
- White collar staff not allowed in workshops
- Competitor matching.
- Current testing fad in motor press has rule
- Focus groups.
- Continuous marketing staff influence.
- Design department is a management playhouse
  TYPICAL PROJECT: 9 months, 40 people, EUR 4 M

DISADVANTAGES:

- Departmental oppositions
- Internal hierarchy
- More people means more meetings
- Creativity disturbed by exaggerated influence and control
- Less time for real work

A TYPICAL SMALL GROUP PROJECT

- Present a short and clear wish-list of what you want the concept to do for your company.
- Let individuals present their own ideas of how they would fulfill the task.
- Spend some fun and creative hours discussing the prospect
- Select a really creative environment, it sure pays off.
- Let the master designer chose the co-workers and craftsmen he likes to work with.
- Begin creative work by using a mix of rough CAD/sketching and fast wire and cardboard experiments
- Keep project owner informed, who should avoid excessive control.
- Respect that really good creative work may look like it is totally out of control; 'artists' at work…
- Juggle these factors and the project should be very successful
- Have fun, work hard no more than 500h per quarter

- Throw away, redo, refine. Nothing is holy until it FEELS really good.
- Let the few meetings needed be working meetings with markers or machines at hand

A good project group formed by both highly experienced as well as energetic young talents:
- 1 Designer and project leader, 2 designer/ (3D)modelers, 1 concept engineer, 1 mill and machine operator, 2 crafters/modelers/ mechanics, 1 finish modeler/painter
- ALL team members should be capable craftsmen and not fear getting dust on their hands. TYPICAL PROJECT: 12 months, 7 people EUR 2 M

DISADVANTAGES
- "Not invented here" syndrome may happen when the concept is presented within the company
- Hard to lead the traditional way
- Takes longer time

Car making now

Most car companies do use the creativity of small groups at their concept centers, which are sometimes placed at inspiring locations around the world. In-house design departments as well as in-house specialty brands and racing departments may also enjoy some creative freedom. But that is usually where the power of small creative groups stop. Historically the iconic Corvettes at GM have only survived thanks to elaborate un-approved small-scale skunkworks. They were able to pioneer automotive technology, which is quite un-American, such as high quality polymer body panels, hydro-formed beams, etc.

"All Corvettes Are Red" By: James Schefter

In large scale production projects, team members may count by the thousand, many of them only installed to keep order and control. How about letting many of those development people take their own responsibility for their part, their budget, the delivery dates? Small teams are also benefitting and increasing productiveness when creating bootlids, seat upholstery, etc.

Production

In the current system, development must work in symbiosis with mass produced technology platforms. Power plants, chassis, electrical systems as well as testing and industrial lines are expensive stuff. Small specialist car companies would not exist

if there weren't affordable deliveries of engines, transmissions and parts.

If the assembling automotive brand industries want a change towards more innovation, it has to deal with that they are very much in the hands of the big supplier corporations. These supplier corporations not only produce the dashboards, transmissions or headlamps for the cars – they also develop them with the methods that they have invested in. That may not always mean to the best level of design innovation.

Much of it boils down to a "Catch 22" for the automotive industry: The production overcapacity that the mainstream auto-industry is plagued with makes the price competition fierce. That in its turn makes the purchasing departments ruthless in finding the cheapest supplier bargains. A supplier that can deliver good quality parts with traditional methods and very little R & D overhead costs wins the bidding. But look at the day the auto-industry knocks the door saying for example:

"We have ½ million customers out there who in 5 years want super lightweight composite structure, CO_2 50 gram, all-luminescent body polymer panel and semi customer tailored midsize cars; please can you help us?" What will the suppliers say? "Sorry we have 100 year old, highly refined mass production methods. That is what you have wanted to pay for".

Low volume carmaking next

The new markets opening in the world are probably the possibility for a change through the whole chain. A fairly large customer group of daring "early adopters" may be the ones breaking the bad spell in the cash end. In the other end, suppliers allied with auto manufacturers willing to risk on investing in new short-series or direct production, may be the big winners.

Coming up are new technologies, f ex electrical drivetrains that are simpler and more flexible and can be tailored to lower cost for small volume production. Composites in car structures, bodies and components offer great possibilities in low- to mid-volume production. Industrial composites usually provide considerable weight reduction, part number reduction as well as greater flexibility for short series due to much lower tooling investment. This technology exists today but has yet to enter the true industrial stage. When it does, we will see happier customers on the road.

Then a word on aesthetics.

A lot of customers on the street are tired of too many cars looking and feeling the same.

Novel, clever and attractive design is something that people love. Products that have a combination of beautiful form and intelligent function are a joy to look at and use time after time because they appeal to both senses and thought – the same way the designer did when creating the product.

Why shouldn't any car match a beautiful building by which it is parked? *Street litter* or *Street art* …

In order to create better joint advancement in the special profession of designing, I think there is a need for a developed form vocabulary. This must not be mistaken for word-pooping academia. No, this should be a way for aesthetic professionals to communicate and advance as a group, at design schools and in the industry. Just the way orchestras and conductors have a very precise and useful set of words universally understood, designers should also clearly profit from having their own unifying language. This should be one of few a crucial means to be able to surprise buyers of form with some fantastic creations.

Sum:

DESIGNING SUCCESSFUL CONCEPTS

A. Make sure to have the defined goal clear, including a fix budget and a ready-date. Keep to those.

B. Use computer aided systems when they provide a shortcut, not otherwise. Be daring, have fun and in a group explore attractive form *combined* with smart functions

C. Use a looser project scheme than is used in product projects. Expel the controllers, make time and money accounts stupid simple and accessible to all team members, trust everyone in the team to handle accounts for the best of the project. Rely on experience and daring individuals.

PRODUCING CARS LIKE THOSE CONCEPTS

1. Make many small series that do not need heavy industrial investment, a failure does not mean forbidding capital loss. (Instead use and support development of new small-scale production methods.)

2. Use handcrafted custom made details or entities, that are well visible and that may be touched.

3. Remember that a car is at least 50% fashion-pleasure.

Combined with well-known brands and creative marketing, this road may be very successful – customers hearts can be won.

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Koen De Winter

Art and design – the vision of a thinking performer

Before conducting Brahms first piano concerto with the legendary pianist Glenn Gould, Leonard Bernstein turned to his 1962 New York audience and told them that he disagreed with Glenn Gould on his innovative interpretation of the Brahms classic. His collaboration as a conductor, he said, was neither based on a consensus nor on a compromise but on respect and friendship for Gould and on the fact that Glenn Gould was in his eyes a "thinking performer"

I can not claim Glenn Gould's talent but I consider myself a thinking performer. I am neither an academic, nor did I do extensive research in any aspect of design. I was fortunate enough to be asked to design well over 400 products of which some have been on the market for more than 30 years, others have been less and some have not been successful at all but were selected into the usual museum collections. In spite of what appears to be a useful career I have always questioned both the validity of my own work and the role of design in our societies. In questioning the role of design it is almost impossible to dissociate that role from the wider role the arts and the crafts are playing. A few aspects of that relationship between art and design seen from the particular vantage point of a thinking performer are what I want to share with you today.

Art and design are both part of the same human capacity to creatively improve our lives beyond pure necessity, strict needs or, basic conditions of survival. Products of art and design are the result of a unique combination of a rational process and an intuitive one. It is our innate capacity for synthesis that allows us to imagine concepts that first appear as un-related experiences and knowledge but find in a previously unknown product a new balance between function, technology and culture. As a result of this capability, we have collectively developed a wide range of artefacts that in scope vary from beauty deeply embedded in function and necessity, to powerful expressions of art, unrelated to function or need. They vary in scale from large man made spaces and systems to the elusive and short lived sound of music.

This first statement would indicate that design and art are closely related but if we take the product

apart we see some important differences. I would like to start with just that. I will do it quickly because this is well known terrain.

All concepts have in common that it remains difficult even in retrospect to separate what was generated intuitively from the rational part of the process. Although functional performance, proper engineering and adequate production are important product qualities, real quality in design is measured by the effectiveness in reaching beyond real or perceived necessity into wider areas of human emotions, expressions and ethics. In some cases reaching into these areas is actually seen as far more important than the fact that the solution works. Recently in Copenhagen a 100.000 Euro design award was given to a lower leg prosthesis for land mine victims. Strangely enough the jury never checked if the concept would work, nor did they question the assumptions on which the young designer based his solution. Obviously the fact that it was a charitable project based on strong ethical considerations, made further functional concerns un-important in the eyes of the jurors.

In design the satisfaction of needs and the proper functioning is the basis on which that extra quality is build. Art, on the other hand is not concerned with material needs at all, unless the works of art are seen as investment objects. Art serves first and foremost the need of the talented individual to express emotions and the artist's need to comment on a large spectrum of society's behaviour and achievements and believes. In doing so the artist finds within that society those who sympathize with both his criticism, comment or vision and the way of expressing it. Although numerous artists are ignored, the level of mutual satisfaction reached within that confrontation between the artist and the public is very high. There is hardly any doubt that this high level of personal satisfaction and the visibility that comes with it, is increasingly tempting designers to walk the same path. Those who do so are often compared with their colleagues in the arts and referred to as pop-stars, media darlings etc. This attraction and the possible benefits or harm to the profession obviously deserves our attention.

Many lessons learned in the past century are related to the cultural components, so it might be useful to review them to.

After years of exploring the extent by which aesthetic satisfaction could be reached through a combination of well understood function and appropriate use of materials and technology, the validity of that modernist principle has been questioned effectively ands I will not waste your valuable time on the widely known arguments. Two important lessons have been learned. One is that function in most consumer products is only a minor part of the raison d être of a product. The other is that there are no rational links between function and aesthetics. In spite of this, one could continue to argue that, if useful objects are the natural extensions of our own physical capabilities, as we learned from Marchal Mc Luhan, there must be an obvious natural form as universal as the hands and arms, as ears and eyes or as the brain that it extends. Fortunately that perfect link between the shape of an object and its extending function is an utopian goal in which production and its limitations is an "un-natural" factor in the equation. The growing number of so-called design-war-products, devices that shut off all cell phone use in a limited area or that can shut off TV screens in public spaces show that extensions of our physical abilities also have the tendency to invade other people's space, and that the extension as such might already have an over-reaching function.

We also learned that design is more than just an integrated part of economic and technological activity that produces concepts of objects intended for consumption.

The famous Margaret Thatcher definition enriched with promises of expanding national economies is a simplistic socio-economic vision that has been challenged in one way by the un-reliable economical results of cultural component of the design process and in an other by the much wider role design has been playing in the twenty-five years since that famous foreword to the design policy conference at the Royal College of Art.

Design concepts explore needs well beyond function and technology is no longer a limiting guideline but a set of tools that challenges the imagination. As companies like Materialise in Leuven, Belgium and "Freedom of Creation" (foc) in Amsterdam, Holland demonstrate, it becomes more difficult to imagine products that can not be made than products that can be produced. The fact that these stereo-lithographic or laser sintered productions are expensive is not as relevant as one would expect. Media attention has never taken quantity into account and many significant

products in design history were never made in large quantities. As you know there are more original castings of the "thinker" by August Rodin than "Carleton" bookshelves, the emblematic piece of Memphis furniture by Ettore Sotsass and in spite of overwhelming media exposure the "lit clos" bed of the Bourroulec brothers was never produced beyond the prototype that was shown in Cappellini's show room for three years, before being sold at a Paris auction.

We also learned that a number of well intended attempts to understand the culture of the object through a better understanding of the structure and language of form, initiated by Reinhart Butter and Klaus Krippendorff and warmly embraced by Michael McCoy at Cranbrook and so many others has mostly failed in connecting the message of the designer with the message received by the users. Along with the metaphors and paradoxes, with irony and humour, the message send was different from the message received. It is undeniable that there is a message, but the study of semantics of form have hardly succeeded in disclosing it, nor has it giving us designers early insight in how the user understands the message. One could hope that more research in that area would shed more light on our ignorance, but nothing seems so elusive as significance. The in-stability of the ever changing meaning of form makes it almost impossible to even develop a proper protocol for such research.

So, only a few years away from the hundred anniversary of the 1914 meeting of the Deutsche Werkbund in Köln, we still face the same question so eloquently disputed between the former bureaucrat Hermann Muthesius who pleaded for the social project that would be initiated by far reaching normalization through rational solutions and the often passionate Henri Van De Velde who, unmoved by Muthesius' skilful political play, defended the role of the artist and the rightness of intuition, the strength of creativity, the uniqueness of talent and the freedom to use it. Although we should acknowledge that Muthesius out-manoeuvred Van De Velde by using Van de Velde's own well known and widely published rational arguments, it was clear that Van De Velde found in this political game the strength to defend ferociously the artist's point of view.

It was generally accepted that history gave Muthesius the upper hand. If so, looking at Droog in the Netherlands and similar productions in neighbouring Flanders, looking at Ron Arad,

Konstantin Grcic, Marc Newson, Noato Fukasawa and so many others, I think that history is trying desperately to correct itself.

So….what if Van de Velde was right? So what if the young German architect Walter Gropius, who, to support Van De Velde send him a letter from the front in Moussey, was right. What if this Prussian under-lieutenant, who was so critical of Muthesius' position, had been able to safe the early Bauhaus ideals from slow auto-destruction?

I am not a design historian, but in discussing the relationship between art and design or between the intuitive and the rational tradition in design it is unavoidable to re-consider the far too homogenous vision we have of modernism and re-consider the nature of some divisions that ran through the modern movement. In doing that, one would soon discover that those who gave a more humane face to modernist design and in many ways contributed to its popularity were those who did not come from a modernist tradition. In North America particularly, the face of modernism in design are Ray and Charles Eames, Eero Saarinen, Harry Bertoia, Florence Knoll, etc. In Europe the same role has been played by many Scandinavian and later Italian designers.

Both these groups have in common that they did not come from a rational functionalist tradition; in fact many of them were openly critical of the Bauhaus tradition. The Eames', Bertoia, Knoll, Rowland and Saarinen studied at Cranbrook, a North American bastion of the Scandinavian crafts tradition, founded by Eliel Saarinen. The Eames' repeatedly declared that they considered Maija Grotell as their most influential teacher. Maija Grotell had studied at the Helsinki Atheneum, central school of Industrial arts with the Belgian/English member of the group of XX and friend of Van De Velde, Alfred William Finch who co-founded the Helsinki school. I do not want to stretch the direct historical chain and personal links between the Cranbrook tradition and the importance given by Van De Velde to the artistic freedom, intuition and sensibility, but the ideological link is strong and undeniable. In spite of the strategically important choices that put Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer at MIT in Boston, Moholy Nagy and Mies Van der Rohe in Chicago and Anni Fleischmann-Albers and her husband Jozef Albers in Black Mountain college North Carolina, the Bauhaus tradition in design was never as influential in North America as this artistic and crafts tradition.

Similar arguments apply to many of the most important Scandinavian designers. I already mentioned the importance of the Central school for applied Art in Helsinki where Kaj Franck graduated in 1930 and Annti Nurmesniemi and Timo Sarpaneva in 1950 and so many others. None of the Scandinavian designers was as outspoken anti-functionalist as Georg Jensen's career long designer Henning Koppel, but from Carl Malmsten to Hans Wegner, from Bruno Mattson to Borje Mogensen or Eric Magnussen, just to mention one that is still alive, they all worked outside the pure rationalist tradition. Those, like Poul Kjaerholm whose ideology was closer to the Bauhaus preachers were often objects for derision and mockery.

It was a standing joke at the Royal Academy in Copenhagen where he was teaching to ask why Poul Kjaerholm was limping. The answer was that he hurt himself on his angular stainless steel furniture.

But more than any historical consideration, it is the overlap of design into art that seems to raise most of the questions and supports a variety of both rational and irrational positions. As shown previously there are deep differences between design and art but the difference between a designer, an artisan or an artist is a personal choice based on perceived or real talent, motivation and chosen education. In other words I am suggesting that the differences between the choices of the designer or the artist are not of the same nature as the difference between design and art.

Instead of abusing other people's work allow me to use some of mine as examples for different proportions between the functional, technological and cultural component of different products.

A similar scale of changing proportions could be made with works of art. Some of you might know a sculpture in a village close to Heilbron where the handrail along a flight of public stairs is the rope that is held by a small boy on the base of the stairs and a reluctant goat on the top.

One of my conclusions is that both art and design are living in continuity with each other. It is only when the distinction is made between particular projects that the differences are clear. Very much like for design and art the distinction that we perceive between the designer and the artist can only be seen if one compares the un-existing "average" designer with the "average" artist. A closer look will reveal that some artists work extremely close to design and some designers chose to exercise

their profession in an area that is difficult to distinguish from art.

It is division of labour, not personal choice, that has professionalized quite a number of human activities and design and art did not succeed in remaining an exception. Division of labour is mainly inspired by two intertwined factors. One is efficiency and the other the fast growing volume of knowledge and skills needed to successfully complete a particular task. The process of professionalisation has the tendency to reduce the original scope of the activity creating gaps that are left un-occupied. Allow me to step out of the design/art field with an example. The care for the sick and all reasonable attempts to make them healthy again requires a number of skills and knowledge. Division of labour has created a number of professions that makes these complex interventions possible. We are all familiar with that division and know the difference between a doctor, a surgeon, a nurse, or a dentist. If someone's face has been damaged in an accident, we know that it is the plastic surgeon's task to restore it as well as possible, but when someone is unhappy with the way his or her genetic code has influenced the shape of his or her nose, we are not sure if it is a "case" for a plastic surgeon or a psychiatrist. Is over-eating a medical, social, or a psychological condition? We also know that in specializing we created overlaps between the professions. Doctors are often reminded to pay more attention to social conditions of some of their patients, not because they fail, but because their profession encourages them to prefer a "medical" solution over the more obvious social one. Social workers from their side do the same and look for social solutions when an aspirin would do. Most often one chooses to solve a given problem within the means of one's own profession. Faced with an over-active child a doctor might prefer to prescribe a drug, whereas the dietician solves the problem by reducing the huge amounts of soft drinks and juices that makes children addicted to sugar and over active. In other words for someone with a hammer in his hands every problem looks like a nail....

One of my conclusions to part of the topic would be that the individual choices are more important that artificial divisions imposed by "professional" streamlining.

A few years ago I realized that my contribution as a designer had come to a point where the scope of that contribution was too narrow for my own good. It had

gone through this before and had tried to fill the gap by adding teaching to my other professional duties. Unfortunately it was too heavy a task and so I dedicated my time to give young un-experienced designers that much needed 'first' experience and hopefully some self confidence. Living through the same experience again, I came to the conclusion that my real problem was not design related but came from too narrow a vision of what design is. A combination of a more critical attitude toward considering China as the world's workshop, social problems in some of the regions of Québec, the believe that there is a more environmental friendly future in smaller scale production for local markets etc. made me step outside of the traditional boundaries of my profession. I am now, designing and producing on a small but innovative scale, products for what is considered a "local" market. To do so, I moved to the region that has the lowest success rate in secondary education in Quebec (Canada) This year the success rate of the local school commission is at a low 39%. Girls reach over 50% so for boys it is even lower. The people that work with me work in a pleasant environment enjoy full freedom in choosing working hours as long as they work a minimum of 20 hrs per week and work somewhere between seven in the morning and seven at night etc. Is it design? Social activism? Enlightened entrepreneurship? I do not know, and I do not care either because to me it is simply the best use of

my few talents, given the challenges I see around me.

One of the ideas I hope to leave you with is illustrated in two images. The first one shows the development of the arts in different cultures over a long period of time. It shows how, based on individual and innovative steps the possibilities to express oneself have increased. The central figure is the relatively slower expansion of technology in the arts. The next image is actually the same but less colourful. It shows the development of design. In this case the largest expanding figure over time is technology. The smaller one our ability to include all the cultural components. It is my hope that design and design education merges both images. Yes, there are fundamental differences between the rational and the intuitive, but they are all located on a sliding scale between collective and personal expression.

There is no need to reconsider the definitions of design and art in order for artists to get involved in design and for designers to get involved in making beautiful and meaningful objects.

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- Faculty of Design, Swinburne University of Technology

AUSTRIA
- FH-JOANNEUM Industrial Design, FH JOANNEUM University of Applied Sciences
- Media Design, Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences
- Salzburg University of Applied Sciences
- University of Applied Arts Vienna
- University of Art and Design Linz

BELGIUM
- Departement Audiovisuele en Beeldende Kunsten, Media and Design Academy, Katholieke Hogeschool Limburg

BRAZIL
- Department of Arts & Design, Pontificia Universidade Catolica do Rio de Janeiro – PUC-Rio

CANADA
- Emily Carr Institute of Art + Design
- Ontario College of Art & Design

CHILE
- Facultad de Arquitectura, Diseño y Estudios Urbanos (FADEU), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC Chile)
- School of Design & School of Communication, Instituto Profesional DUOCUC

CHINA
- College of Architecture and Urban planning, Tongji University
- School of Design, Hunan University
- School of Design, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
- School of Design, Central Academy of Fine Arts CAFA
- Shandong University of Art and Design

CZECH REPUBLIC
- Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design Prague

DENMARK
- Aarhus School of Architecture
- Danmarks Designskole
- Designskolen Kolding
- School of Architecture, Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts

ESTONIA
- Estonian Academy of Arts

FINLAND
- Degree Programme in Design, Wetterhoff, HAMK University of Applied Sciences
- EVTEK Institute of Art and Design, EVTEK University of Applied Sciences
- Faculty of Art and Design, University of Lapland
- Institute of Design, Lahti University of Applied Sciences
- University of Art and Design Helsinki TaiK

FRANCE
- Departments of Design and Art, Ecole Supérieure d'Art & Design de Reims / Reims School of Art & Design
- Design en réseau/Art and design department, University of Toulouse Le Mirail
- Ecole Boulle, Paris Institute of Art and Design
- Ecole d'Art Maryse Eloy
- Ecole de Communication Visuelle (ECV)
- Ecole Duperré, Paris Institute of Art and Design
- École Estienne, Paris Institute of Art and Design
- Ecole Internationale de Design (EID), Groupe Ecole Supérieure de Commerce et Technologie / Ecole Internationale de Design
- École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Appliqués et des Métiers d'Arts (ENSAAMA) Olivier de Serres
- Ecole Supérieure d'Art et Design de Saint-Etienne (ESADSE)
- Ecole Superieure d'Arts Graphiques et d'Architecture Interieure-Design ESAG Penninghen
- ENSCI/Les Ateliers – Ecole Nationale Superieure de Creation Industrielle
- Institut d'Arts Visuels d'Orléans (IAV), Ecole supérieure d'Art et de Design / School of Higher Education in Art and Design
- L'École de design Nantes Atlantique
- Strate Collège Designers

GERMANY
- Faculty of Art and Design, University of Duisburg-Essen (October 2007: FOLKWANG University)
- Faculty of Design, Burg Giebichenstein University of Art and Design Halle
- Fakultät Gestaltung (Faculty of Design), University of Applied Sciences Würzburg
- Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach am Main
- Hochschule für Gestaltung Schwäbisch Gmünd
- Köln International School of Design (KISD), University of Applied Science Cologne
- School of Design, Pforzheim University of Applied Sciences

GREAT BRITAIN
- Department of Art, Media and Design, London Metropolitan University, Sir John Cass
- Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication
- Royal College of Art
- School of Art & Design, University of Salford
- School of Creative Industries, Napier University Edinburgh
- The Arts Institute at Bournemouth
- The Glasgow School of Art

GREECE
- Faculty of Art & Design, Technological Educational Institution (T.E.I.) of Athens

HUNGARY
- Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest

ICELAND
- The Iceland Academy of the Arts

IRELAND
- National College of Art and Design Dublin
- School of Art, Design and Printing, Faculty of Applied Arts, Dublin Institute of Technology

ITALY
- Domus Academy
- Facoltà del Design, Politecnico di Milano
- Faculty of Design and Art, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano
- Istituto Europeo di Design – IED Group
- University Degree of Industrial Design, University of Rome "La Sapienza"

JAPAN
- Faculty of Art, Design and Manga, Kyoto Seika University
- Tokyo Zokei University

LATVIA
- Art Academy of Latvia

LEBANON
- Lebanese American University

LITHUANIA
- Vilnius Academy of Fine Art

MEXICO
- Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

NEW ZEALAND
- Faculty of Architecture and Design, Victoria University of Wellington
- School of Design, Unitec New Zealand

NORWAY
- Bergen National Academy of the Arts (KHiB)
- Department of Product Design, Akershus University College
- Faculty of Art, Design and Drama, Oslo University College
- Faculty of Design, Oslo National Academy of the Arts (KHiO)
- Oslo School of Architecture and Design

POLAND
- Faculty of Industrial Design, Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw
- Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow

PORTUGAL
- ESAD – Escola Superior de Artes e Design
- Escola Superior de Design, IADE – Instituto de Artes Visuais Design e Marketing

REPUBLIC OF KOREA
- Department of Industrial Design, Korea Advanced Institute for Science and Technology (KAIST)
- Graduate School of Techno Design, Kookmin University
- IDAS (International Design school of Advanced Studies), Hongik University

RUSSIA
- Department of Design, St. Petersburg State University of Technology and Design
- Moscow State University of Design and Technology, Novosibirsk Technological Institute

SINGAPORE
- Temasek Design School, Temasek Polytechnic

SLOVAKIA
- Academy of Fine Arts and Design Bratislava

SLOVENIA
- Academy of Fine Art & Design, University of Ljubljana
- Department of Textiles, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering, University of Ljubljana

SOUTH AFRICA
- Greenside Design Center College of Design

SPAIN
- Escola Superior de Disseny Elisava, Fundació Privada Elisava Escola Universitaria
- Mechanical Department, Chair of Industrial Design, Mondragon Goi Eskola Politeknikoa, Jose Mª Arizmendiarrieta, S. Coop – Fac of Engineering at Mondrag
- The School of Design, Universidad Cardenal Herrera – CEU

SWEDEN
- Beckmans College of Design
- Department of Product and Production Development, Chalmers University of Technology
- HDK – School of Design and Crafts, Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Arts, Göteborg University
- HDK Stenebyskolan (School of Design & Craft), Gothenburg University
- Industrial design programme – LTH, Lund University
- Konstfack
- School of Design, University of Kalmar
- The Swedish School of Textiles, University College of Borås
- Umeå Institute of Design, Umeå University

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- Hochschule Luzern – Design und Kunst, Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts
- University of Art and Design, University of Applied Sciences, Nordwestschweiz
- University of Art and Design Lausanne ECAL
- Zürcher Hochschule der Künste

TAIWAN
- College of Design, National Yunlin University of Science and Technology (YunTech)

THE NETHERLANDS
- Design Academy Eindhoven
- Faculty of Visual Art and Design, Utrecht School of the Arts
- Royal Academy of Art
- Willem de Kooning Academy, Hogeschool Rotterdam / Rotterdam University

TURKEY
- Anadolu University
- Visual Communication Design Department, İstanbul Bilgi Universitesi

USA
- Art Center College of Design
- Maryland Institute College of Art
- Parsons The New School for Design, The New School
- Rhode Island School of Design
- Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design