

Guest Editor:



Divya Chaurasia

Divya Chaurasia is an industrial designer based in NYC, with a background in engineering and user experience. An expert in user-centered research, sustainable practices and design for manufacturing, she has a Masters in Industrial Design from Pratt Institute, New York and Bachelor's in Technology from Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, India.

Currently, Divya works as a senior industrial designer and user experience lead at Spitfire Industry, a design consultancy based in Brooklyn, New York. She designs products and experiences for brands like Clorox, All Clad, Tefal, Bausch & Lomb, Cook's Direct, Hunter Douglas, GoTrax, and Nectar. Divya's work is inspired by the everyday pursuits of people. She is fascinated by the connection between humans, objects and environments, and captures this relationship in delightfully functional products.

Her work has been exhibited at NYCxDDesign (New York Design Week) and NYC Media Lab Annual Summit and received recognition by Chicago Athenaeum Good Design Award in 2021 and International Design Awards 2023. Being a strong advocate for sustainable practices in design, Divya has given guest talks at the Industrial Design Society of America Technical Deep Dive and North Carolina State University on the topic. Divya also volunteers her time for supporting young designers. She serves as a mentor for Masters students at Virginia Tech University, and the Offsite program.

Design : Beyond the pretty pictures

Divya Chaurasia

10 years ago, when I decided to be an industrial designer, my goal was to learn as many skills as I could. I took any classes, internships or workshops I could get my hands on and focused on the basics - sketching, CAD and rendering, storytelling and presentation. Over the years, I learned more skills and honed the ones I already knew. But it was not until I started working a full-time job that I realized there is a lot more to design than just producing beautiful content.

The purpose of this editorial is to shed some light on various aspects of the design process that are often overlooked. It is true that most of us spend a significant amount of time generating new ideas and bringing them to life, prototyping and rendering photo-realistic images. However, there are several unseen parts of the job.

In this issue, five designers talk about their experience in the design world, focusing on the unconventional responsibilities, tasks and challenges.

Isis Shiffer, founder and design lead at Spitfire Industry talks about engaging with clients and advocating for better design decisions. Her case-study focuses on making sustainable choices during the design process. Sustainability is one of the hardest practices to advocate for as it is often considered to be more expensive, lower in quality and difficult to produce than the alternatives. However, 80%

of decisions about sustainability are made during the design phase. As designers, we hold a crucial responsibility to reduce any product's footprint on the planet.

Whether you run your own studio, as an independent designer, or as part of a larger corporation - the role of a designer can vary significantly. Each role is accompanied by its own set of unique challenges. Daniela Macías, Global Experience Design Manager at Colgate Palmolive shares her story as an immigrant woman-of-color in NYC, as part of a global conglomerate. Her experiences provide valuable insights into the corporate world of design.

As an independent designer, Teddy Atuluku often has to wear many hats. One of those is writing design proposals. A skill often overlooked in formal design education, it is an essential part of any design practice - small or large.

When it comes to product development, sustainability often loses the battle with aesthetics and quality. Chandni Pradhan, a textile designer based in Mumbai, India with over 6 years of experience talks about the importance of aesthetics in sustainable design practices. She shares case studies about unique, innovative production methods for sustainable textiles. Recycled products have notoriously been considered as sub-par, not as good or not as beautiful.

Another part of the design process that doesn't get enough credit is research. More often than not, what we see is the end result of a long, winding road of experiments, usability tests and discarded ideas (Fig. 1). Sahil Dagli, architect and urban designer, shares a case study delving deep into the logistics of last-mile delivery.

Noise / Uncertainty / Patterns / Insights

Clarity / Focus



Research & Synthesis

Concept / Prototype

Design

Fig. 1 - The Process of Design Squiggle by Damien Newman