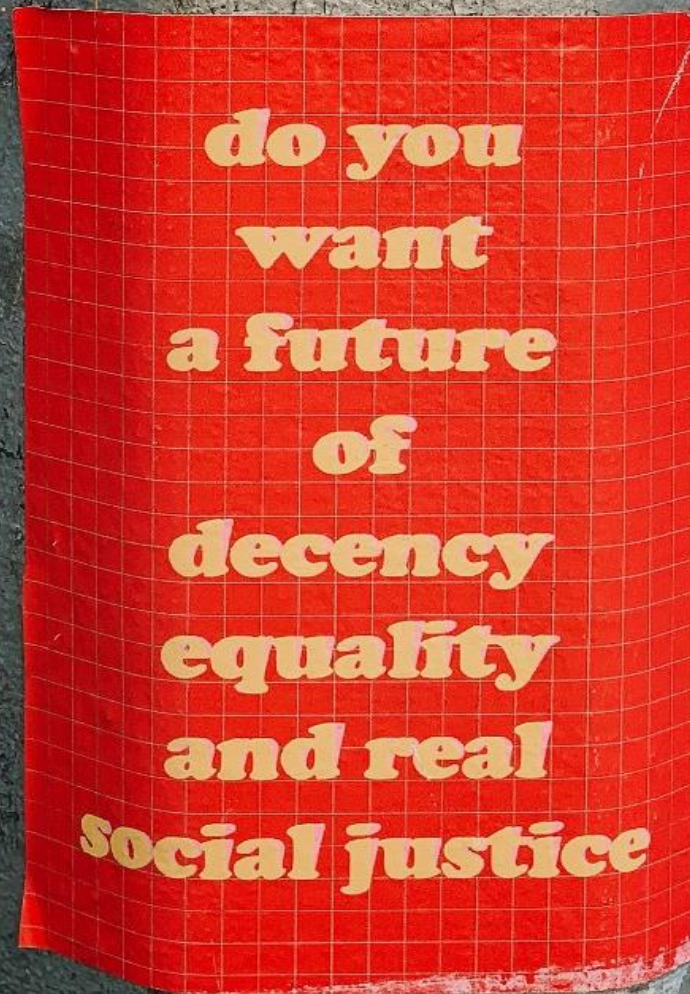


# Design for All



**Challenging the Boundaries of Design for All in a Challenged World**

**Guest editor: Steinar Valade-Amland, Tjeinsj by Three Point Zero**

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**Guest Editor:**  
**Steinar Valade-Amland**



***Steinar is a market economist, and after more than 30 years of professional practice, he has accumulated extensive and valuable experience from a wide range of industries and managerial roles within marketing and sales, communication, PR and advocacy - leading to the design industry as an account director and later CEO of one of Denmark's leading brand design agencies, culminating in the role of spokesperson for the Danish design community as CEO of Danish Designers - parallel with holding numerous honorary positions.***

***His primary role today is helping organisations and management teams to establish the best possible baseline for business development and change processes - through stakeholder engagement and moderated processes, through organisational learning and co-creation. He claims to be rather agnostic when it***

***comes to models and methods, but design thinking and processes inspired by design methodologies are part of his DNA after 30 years in and closely connected to the industry.***

***He authored numerous articles and book contributions, amongst others with 15 articles to the Bloomsbury Encyclopaedia of Design, out in 2015. His latest book, "DESIGN: A BUSINESS CASE - Thinking, Leading, and Managing by Design" written together with Brigitte Borja de Mozota, is out in English and Korean, as well as in a "toolbox" version developed in collaboration with Hervé Collignon under the name "Strategic Design for a Responsible Future".***

# **Challenging the boundaries of Design for All in a challenged world**

*Steinar Valade-Amland*

**Almost a decade has passed since leaders from 193 countries, at a historic UN summit, adopted a series of ambitious goals on behalf of the planet and humanity; the UN Sustainable Development Goals – also referred to as the SDGs. Seventeen overall ambitions, each relating to an area under pressure, and each one of them broken down into measurable targets – 169 in all – a gallery of assumingly attainable solutions to the most imminent challenges we face as a world community.**

**While our attention during the last decade has revolved around climate change, biodiversity and planetary health, reflected in five out of the seventeen goals, the remaining twelve goals are all human-centered – whether on an individual or communal level. In parallel with the SDG's focus on the physical, mental and social needs of human beings, and during the same space of time, some of the same issues – however not new in themselves – have been framed in a concept, often referred to as DE&I – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. This framework has – in particular - captured an important role in policymaking and management circles.**

**While applauding such a massive attention to the gaps between our desires for a world, where all human beings have their most basic needs fulfilled – material as well as emotional, and where their rights and their dignity are guarded, the most recent report from the UN**

shows that aspirations and massive investments in communication, are not enough. The report clearly states that halfway to the deadline for the 2030 Agenda – and despite the “tagline” for the Sustainable Development Goals being “*Leaving no-one behind*”, we actually leave more than half the world behind. While celebrating progress on some of the targets, the progress related to more than 50 per cent of the targets is weak and insufficient. As a matter of fact, for almost as many targets where progress has been seen, the reality is that progress has actually stalled or gone into reverse. These include key targets on poverty, hunger and *climate*. The report triggered the UN Secretary general to conclude that “Unless we act now, the 2030 Agenda could become an epitaph for *a world that might have been*,” adding that what the world needs, right here and right now is a “*Rescue Plan for People and Planet*.”

In Europe, the cultural and creative sectors are comprised of all sectors whose activities are based on cultural values, or on artistic or creative expressions - individual or collective - as defined in the legal basis of the Creative Europe Programme. The cultural and creative industries (CCIs) ecosystem, covering the audiovisual, cultural and creative sectors, represents close to 4% of EU value creation (about the same as the energy sector) and employs around 8 million people (more than agriculture, forestry and fishing combined), including around 1.2 million firms, over 99.9% of which are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Design is one of these professional disciplines, and one of the most obvious levers in the pursuit of better lives and a better world. “In the design of new processes, products and services, we often design for ‘preferred behavior’. Application areas are manifold, varying from healthy living and de-escalating aggressive behavior, to airports and

shopping malls. Based on the existing and growing evidence about effective interventions, the potential for creative industries is both relevant and substantial.” Cultural and creative activities, and in particular design, can support this change of behaviour, as well as the transition to a green economy by promoting sustainability and environmental awareness, and by promoting sustainable means of transport and environmentally responsible behaviour. Moreover, research shows that 80% of the environmental impact of physical products is decided in the design phase. Clever design and production decisions optimizing how much material is needed, a products durability and its after-life, all with huge impact on its footprint and energy efficiency. Through the introduction of New European Bauhaus, the EU and its presidency has – more overtly and formally than ever before – appointed the creative industries and its legacy, based on ingenuity and cross-disciplinarity, to play a central role in reaching Europe’s sustainability goals;

*- as a bridge between the world of science and technology, art and culture*

*- as a means to leverage our green and digital challenges to transform our lives for the better*

*- as an invitation to address complex societal problems together through co-creation*

By creating bridges between different backgrounds, cutting across disciplines and building on participation at all levels, the New European Bauhaus inspires a movement to facilitate and steer the transformation of our societies along three inseparable values:

- *sustainability, from climate goals to circularity, zero pollution, and biodiversity*
- *aesthetics, quality of experience and style beyond functionality*
- *inclusion, from valuing diversity to securing accessibility and affordability*

If we truly believe that design thinking is an invaluable source of insight, inspiration and empowerment, while design management is an equally valuable key to enabling great solutions, and design is a means to embody such solutions intelligently; then New European Bauhaus is not only a mandate, but an obligation to mobilize.

However, there are several stumbling blocks, and not everyone sees the same potential in the creative industries. Historically, creative professionals and artists have been undervalued and under-exploited both in business and vis-a-vis political processes, social and environmental challenges, and in the context of systemic change - despite overwhelming evidence that the creative industries make up a cornerstone in the developed world's economies. Until now, what the creative industries represent, has more often been used as "spice and glamour" than as a serious and potentially powerful tool for change. And - while the UN Sustainable Development Goals are being shamelessly ridden by companies as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations all over the world - the creative communities have until now failed to effectively respond to the call for action that the SDG's are.

*An imminent challenge, thus, is to bridge the abundance of resources present and available in the creative sectors, namely design in particular, with the unresolved gaps between the sustainable*



***development goals and the harsh and brutal realities that people all over the world have to cope with on a daily basis.***

**Out of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals, “only” five – without diminishing their importance – are aimed at planetary issues, our physical environments or our exploitation of same; sustainable cities and environments (11), responsible consumption and production (12), climate action (13), life below water (14) and life on land (15). Two of the goals are organisational, as peace, justice and strong institutions, (16) and partnerships for the goals (17). And the rest – 10 out of 17 – are aimed directly at solving challenges related to the quality of life and the living conditions of individuals; of creating a world, where all its individual habitants experience an acceptable and fair level related to diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as the sufficient affluence, courage, happiness and dignity to be able to lead fulfilling and meaningful lives. Purpose for all requires design for all.**

**Design for all has often been framed as – or rather, perhaps, limited to – a means to secure equal rights and equal access to built environments, products and services, indifferent of age, physical or mental stature and related capabilities. Could the reason for this rather restrictive scope of the concept be a one-to-one reflection of how design was framed for decades, as giving form and shape and functionality to physical objects? One might admit that within such a paradigm, the historical take on design for all makes all kinds of sense. However, over the last three decades, design has widened its scope significantly, encompassing services and experiences, systems and organizations, spanning physical as well as digital environments, serving private, public and third sectors alike, and increasingly latching up onto environmental, social and political agendas. With such a fundamental change in what design is – for whom and to which**

**ends – the question is whether we can – and whether we can afford to – hold on to design for all’s historical and somewhat anachronistic confines.**

**Hence, in this issue of Design for All Magazine, the perimeters of “all” are extended to encompass human needs across the entire scope, as addressed in the Sustainable Development Goals – as well as the possible barriers acknowledged to hinder their achievement. Those might be individual, communal and societal, economical, legislative or political, or merely based on faith or tradition. At least in spirit, we will address poverty (1), hunger (2), health and well-being (3), education (4), gender equality (5), access to clean water and sanitation (6), affordable and clean energy (7), decent work and economic growth (8), innovation and infrastructure (9), and reduced inequalities – no matter for which reason, and regardless of possible controversies related to their solution (10).**

**Moreover, as the planetary issues referred to earlier, are intimately intertwined with human existence and to the degree of free choice to pursue our human needs in the future, we generously also include the search for viable solutions to those as a precondition to discuss design for all in a meaningful and contemporary fashion. Whether this will have any bearing on the way in which we discuss design for all going forward or not remains to be seen, but for here and now – please accept this as a point of departure for the reflections to which you will be exposed in this issue of Design for All Magazine.**

### **Design for all is simply good design**

**In an earlier contribution to this chronicle, I claimed that Design for All is simply good design, advocating to “embrace the idea that Design for All is merely good design, and ride on the global wave of**

**campaigns, pondering into the minds of this world's business leaders that good design is good business. Let us substantiate that Design for All is obviously the right path to follow - also in a shareholder value perspective." I am still convinced that Design for All is the most responsible approach to designing. However, I seem to have overestimated the extent to which extent this would resonate among business leaders.**

**The truth, though, probably is that sustainable design – and design for all, for that matter – would have had a really rough time surviving if it weren't because a few global community organisations like World Health Organization and the United Nations, NGOs like the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, individuals like Helen Hamley – and Ursula van der Leyen, for that matter – and forward-looking corporations like Patagonia and Interface, had latched their own agendas up onto design as a vehicle. With their help, though, and combined with the inherent urge among designers to do good, the design community's need to justify their own existence, and, perhaps not least, people around the world with great ideas and points of departure, who would earlier not have been heard, but who suddenly were able to enrich the conversation as a direct consequence of the access to wide audiences provided by social media – design as a life raft and a force for good has prevailed.**

**The job, though, isn't even half done yet.**

**SDG 1: Almost 700 million people still live in extreme poverty**

**SDG 2: Almost 800 million people are facing chronic hunger**

**SDG 3: 99% of the world population live in and breath unhealthy air, and almost 40% are obese**

**SDG 4: Close to 250 million kids between the ages of 6 and 18 have no school to go to**

**SDG 5: At the current rate, it will take over 140 years to reach gender parity in managerial positions**

**SDG 6: Over 2 billion people lack safe drinking water and 3.5 billion people lack safe sanitation**

**SDG 7: Around 675 million people lack electricity and 2 billion rely on inefficient and polluting cooking systems**

**SDG 8: Twice as many young women are of education, employment or training, as young men**

**SDG 9: CO2 emissions from energy combustion and industrial processes keep growing**

**SDG 10: One in six has experienced discrimination due to gender, marital status, race or ethnicity, age, religion or political views.**

**The design community faces – together with the rest of those of us who have the means and capabilities, as well as the appropriate vehicles, to make a difference – a historical opportunity to prove its unique capacity and its power to foster change. And, as a community, it has accepted this challenge – as expressed in the Montreal Design Declaration from 2017, where 22 international organisations representing professional urban planners, architects, landscape architects and designers from over 90 countries united in a pledge, which encapsulates the very idea of Design for All:**

***Cognisant* of the diverse range of contexts, both formal and informal, where design has an impact;**

***Mindful* of the immeasurable value of local and traditional knowledge for appropriate and innovative design solutions;**

***Sentient* of the demand of communities, large or small, local or global, for decent living conditions and which design can help address;**

***In recognition of* the need for strategic leadership on design matters at local, regional, national and international levels and with this, the need for governance models, political agendas and policy to take design into account;**

***In recognition of* the need for sufficient fiscal and human resources and capacity;**

***Acknowledging* the intrinsic capacity of design to serve as an agent of change and a source of creative transformation;**

***Acknowledging* the fundamental and critical role of design to create a world that is environmentally sustainable, economically viable, socially equitable, and culturally diverse; and**

***Confirming* the value of working in a collaborative, holistic and integrated way to foster design of common benefit.**

**To contribute to casting some light over this extended take on Design for All, I have encouraged a handful of extremely dedicated scholars and practitioners to contemplate on how a better designed and more inclusive – hence also a more sustainable – future can be achieved through the endeavours of design professionals.**

**Dragan Calovic holds a PhD in Art Science from University of Arts in Belgrade and is currently a Full Professor at the Faculty of Contemporary Arts and at the Faculty of Philology at University of Arts**

in Belgrade. He teaches – amongst other – Contemporary Theories of Art and Design. In his article, he discusses design for all as a component of democracy-based design, while stressing the importance of the empathic sublime to safeguard the values, represented by design, which are not purely utilitarian.

Dorrit Bøilerehaug, who holds a PhD in Online Fashion Communication from Aarhus University, is currently assistant professor at University of Aarhus, besides being an age advocate and founder of the Silver Starter Initiative, author, influencer and a sought-after model. In her article, she discusses the perception of age and how we judge the book by the cover - or rather individuals by their skin.

Brussels-based Rozina Spinnoy holds a BSc (Hons) in Interior Design from Glasgow Caledonian University and is currently Founding Director of BIDs Belgium and Managing Director of Belgium Design Council. As a designer, social entrepreneur and thought leader, and with a particular focus on accessibility and inclusion in urban environments, catering for citizens with mental or neurodiversity challenges, she addresses the need to strengthen the representation of minorities and underrepresented groups among design scholars and practitioners, if we truly want to pursue Design for All as a fundamental design principle.

Copenhagen based Sarah Lund Morrison holds an MA in Communication and Psychology from Roskilde University and an MSc in Service Systems Design from Aalborg University. Practicing as change and innovation practitioner through her own company SLUM.nu, her article focuses on the role of visual thinking and creative leadership to foster inclusion and diversity.

**Founding Director of Institute of Advanced Design Studies, ADES, based in Hungary, Karina Vissonova holds a PhD in Philosophy of Design from Royal Academy of the Arts in Copenhagen. She challenges our level of ambition and calls for a quiet shift from design thinking to design dreaming.**

**With gratitude for the contributors' time and dedication, I proudly introduce a series of bold and – possibly – more timely perspectives on Design for All**

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## Dragan Čalović



***Dragan Čalović (Belgrade, Serbia) was born in 1976. He is a Full Professor at the Faculty of Contemporary Arts and at the Faculty of Philology. He teaches Contemporary Theories of Art and Design, Theory of New Media, Spatial Theories and Japanese Art.***

***He was graduated from Faculty of Arts with a Bachelor's degree in Fine arts in 1998, and from Faculty of Philology with a Bachelor's degree in Arabic language and culture in 2006. In 2005 he was graduated from University of Arts in Belgrade, Interdisciplinary studies with a Master's degree in Theory of arts and media. Dragan Čalović obtained his PhD in Science of arts at the University of Arts in Belgrade, in 2008. His main research interest remains in the field of contemporary art, theory of design and oriental art.***

# **The category of empathic sublime within the *Democracy-Based Design* concept**

***Dragan Čalović***

**Full-time professor, Faculty of Contemporary Arts, Belgrade, Serbia  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1072-3256>**

## **Abstract**

**The Democracy-Based Design concept is discussed in the paper from the perspective of its aesthetic and theoretic considerations. The foundations of this concept are related to the line of development of historic avant-gardes whose approach is based on the negotiation of the notion of development with the forces of dominance. Under the social circumstances of the emergence of new political platforms, the avant-garde visions retain their transformative nature, but without a revolutionary dimension. A call to build a new society, whose reflection can be identified in design as well, is a result of revising the dominant ideological paradigm and change of public policies, rather than of the rise of the revolutionary class. Nevertheless, art is provided with capacity for directing, as well as initiating social change by maintaining its negotiating position. The Democracy-Based Design is recognised as one such development concept, but it is threatened by a decline to the politicisation of the revolutionary vision and the ultimate transformation of design into its negative double, due to the strengthening of utilitarian theoretic conceptual approaches in its understanding, based on the functionalistic principles. In that regard, the author emphasises the relevance of further development of this**

concept based on aesthetic and art-theoretical assumptions. Following this direction, the author points to the category of *the empathic sublime* as the central aesthetic category within the Democracy-Based Design concept. In understanding the sublime, the author starts from Kant's considerations, but by analysing this category from the perspective of a different theoretic paradigm, proposes the introduction of the specific *empathic sublime*, as the feeling developed in the process of one's own transcendence in elevating the mind to the sphere of universal humanistic being.

## KEYWORDS:

*Democracy-based design, empathic sublime, aesthetics, design, theory, sublime*

Throughout history, social trends have been directed by new visions of interpersonal relations and development prospects. These concepts have frequently been reflected in art and, more often than not, they might even originate from it. First decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century represent one of such historic moments, as art was marked by the development of avant-garde and emergence of progressive theoretical poetical concepts. It was the period when the central cultural trends were guided by the idea of a radical social change, aimed at breaking *the fetters of tradition*, which became too tight for further spiritual development of mankind. Despite lack of a unique concept of a new culture and a social transformation program, the vision of the *new* gained its own features, based on the plurality of searching for a better, more humane society. Even though the historic events caused by confronting the repressive ideologies of the time impeded the expansion of the vision of building a more humane

society, they did not cancel it completely. In the decades that followed, relentless social forces formed a social context by strengthening the ideals of equity, empathy, and the vision of setting foundations for a responsible social development.

Owing to the development of avant-garde movements and subsequent renewal of revolutionary strategies in artistic trends at the beginning of the second half of the century, as well as the emergence of activist tendencies in the decades that followed, art assumed one of the central fields within a wider plan of the overall cultural and social transformation. Avant-garde artists drew attention to the social role of artists in directing development trends, raised the question of a level of spiritual advancement and opportunities for progress, advocated for intertwining art and daily life, underlined the relevance of art in building visions of future and the strength of art reviewing on the change of social practices. Although we may easily recognise the origins of the listed concepts in the previous trends of human thought, their formation in the area of art seems to have entered its mature phase with the emergence of historical avant-gardes.

Even though all areas of artistic expression were influenced by the overall revolutionary trends, such perceptions were most evident in fine arts, literature, poetry and theatre. In the field of design, transformative perceptions inspired by revolutionary ideas and the vision of comprehensive social transformation gained their full form by establishing Bauhaus as a school of thought. However, the battle line set by Bauhaus assumed a significantly more pragmatic approach compared to the central trends of artistic avant-gardes, which did not *preach* radical negation of institutions and values of modern society,

but advocated for their compromising harmonisation with the avant-garde vision of the *new*. Under the conditions of weakening of the socio-political edge of the revolutionary avant-garde thought, owing to its significantly more moderate position, the avant-garde assumptions of design have continued their steady development a whole century after their historical commencement.

Historical trends, shaped by the political turmoil throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, opened up three development directions of the avant-garde artistic perceptions, marking the period of deteriorating social force that served as the foundation of the vision of comprehensive social transformation. *Politicisation of the revolutionary vision*, undertaken by the most radical revolutionary forces, ended in its self-destruction. Art was overpowered by politics, with the avant-garde thought modified by ideological assumptions based on political, rather than humane objectives. We find such an outcome in development trends of Russian avant-garde and futurism. *Transformation of revolution into social criticism*, which identified conditions for its development outside the framework of totalitarian social systems, or under the conditions of a historic decline of the strength of their realisation, but still not within frameworks of enabling seamless development of revolutionary perceptions. Over time, demands for a comprehensive social transformation by distancing from wider political ambitions grew into social criticism, diverting the focus to the issues of particular relevance. Occasional forms of radical guerrilla actions were not cancelled as a result, but their effect most often remained on the margins of wider cultural trends. Such a diversion still did not mean cancellation of revolutionary perceptions, but, despite a strong socially engaged vision, their positive effect was reduced to gradual and noncomprehensive overcoming of injustices and opposition to the

repression mechanisms, yet without their thorough destabilisation. We recognise developments within this trend in artistic approaches that retain a critical dimension within the modern and contemporary art, whether direct or subversive, as well as activist artistic expressions common to collectivism, street art or progressive concepts that remain without a strong social recognition. And finally, *negotiation of the social development vision* represents, as previously mentioned, the continuation of the direction set by Bauhaus as a school of thought. This development path assumes collaboration of avant-garde with the forces of domination, in the aim of defining social and cultural development objectives jointly, without threatening the principle of the *popular* (Fiske). The manifestation of this movement found the strongest acceptance in those arts in which the basic principles of industrial society met the weakest resistance - design, architecture and film.

The social context and political and historical trends in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century drew attention to the necessity of tackling specific social issues that could not exclusively be resolved by political actions. Based on the avant-garde assumptions, tackling the issues of today requires a wider-scale action, which cannot exclude the areas of culture and spiritual development. Under such circumstances, politics created room for the emergence of new visions of society, facilitating the renewal of avant-garde conceptions in art. The strongest reaction to these new perspectives in modern art is evident within the course of development of avant-garde visions that base their approach on the negotiation of the development notion with the forces of dominance. Facilitated by the new political platforms, avant-garde visions retain their transformative nature, but with no revolutionary dimension. A call to build a new society is a result of

revising the dominant ideological paradigm and change in public policies, rather than of the rise of the revolutionary class. Nevertheless, by retaining its negotiating position, art is provided with capacity for both directing and initiating social change.

Such a course of design development has created room for the emergence of separate, yet often closely related theoretic concepts, sometimes originating from the program of historical avant-garde. However, as previously mentioned, they lack a revolutionary dimension and are not necessarily initiated within design and architecture, but entered these areas via public policies.

Strengthening of the humanistic approach in the design theory and adoption of the democratic society principles has opened up new perspectives in design consideration, process of its validation and establishment of development visions. It has led to the development of the modern design theory in a theoretical interspace. Specific circumstances in the theoretical conceptualisation of design have largely created room for such an interpretative shift. Namely, design represents one of those areas in the modern art system that has received little or no attention in the traditional aesthetic and theoretic considerations. Except for the theories related to the development of the avant-garde art, design has generally not raised any major interest in thinkers, who have focused their attention to the issue of art. Contrary to this theoretical development, in ancient thought, which set the foundations for the Western art considerations, activities of applied artists (and the forms of artwork that belong to design today), were not neglected within wider considerations of *téchne* activities. As a result, applied arts and design entered the philosophical-aesthetic discourse early on and, engaged in dynamic

processes of shaping the modern system of art, they remained connected with the aesthetic and art-theoretic perceptions, but never reached the level of theoretical focus attributed to literature, music, architecture, or fine arts. Thus, the central aesthetic and theoretic perceptions included design as well, but not to a level where a solid design theory could be established. Therefore, development of stronger theoretic interest in design in the modern age, although not without a foundation in aesthetic considerations and art theory, encountered an unexplored problem area that was seemingly positioned outside the established disciplinary frameworks, representing an area that was occupied by discourses developed outside the art considerations.

Such circumstances of founding a general design theory created numerous challenges, primarily in regard to perceiving design from an economistic perspective. While literature and fine arts, for instance, were relatively protected from a decline of their theoretic considerations to the discourse of economy, owing to strong conceptual frameworks grounded in aesthetics and art theory, the area of design was largely exposed to a threat of compensating for lack of strong theoretical thought related to this segment of artistic development with an influence of considerations that belonged to a discipline that essentially was not related to design. The dominance of such an approach would eventually lead to total deterioration of the design theory, namely its transformation into a monstrous dogma that would conceal its essence and values under a veil of design discourse.

However, despite a notable influence of economic principles, modern design considerations, based on wider interdisciplinary foundations,



did not break ties with the principles of aesthetics and the art theory, thus creating frameworks for establishing a general design theory from a humanistic aspect. Such a theoretical perspective provided an opportunity for overcoming economistic argumentation, while not completely rejecting the concepts whose introduction, partially or to a significant extent, was guided by economic interests. Such concepts of modern design are also encompassed by the umbrella term of the Democracy-Based Design. But, before focusing on considerations of the concepts encompassed by this term from the humanistic aspect, namely criticism of economistic assumptions that pose a threat of transforming a humanistic vision into its industrial surrogate, below is a review of the socio-historical framework of their development.

Development of the Democracy-Based Design was facilitated by perceiving a need to provide a wider access to the opportunities offered by design by changing concepts. This refers to the expansion of the targeted functions to those groups that remained excluded due to specific restrictions within the proposed solution. Such a shift was mainly encouraged by the economic and political reasons, but, over time, with strengthening of democratic awareness and anti-discriminatory platforms, development of such a concept was also recognised as a method of transforming physical environment and social context in accordance with the altered values of society. Nevertheless, this provisional democratic-political vision (as well as economic motives), expressed in expanding availability, still did not mean uniform understanding of content covered by the term of availability. As noted by Persson et al., the term of *accessibility* is contextually applied in so many different manners that the meanings it receives may be highly heterogeneous (Persson et al. 2014:2). Thus, many authors develop special, closely related conceptions

based on this term without defining its meaning, while others avoid using this term and rely on those whose meaning largely overlaps with it, or add more significance to specific meaning potential in its use (Persson et al. 2014:2), thus directing a focus of the established theoretic concept.

In the modern design theory, the shift of attention to the accessibility issue gained its earliest form with the development of the Barrier-Free Design. It is a concept developed in the 1950s, initiated with an aim to respond to social needs perceived in the public sphere of the time with new design solutions. The change of attitude was facilitated by a large number of injured soldiers, who returned from the Vietnam War to the United States with severe body injuries. The issue of limited ability of movement and participation in daily activities of persons with disabilities became visible to the general public due to the unfortunate war circumstances. In order to provide persons with disabilities with simpler execution of daily activities, it was necessary to change the approach to design, whose planning and evaluation required wider foundations. This shift resulted in further considerations of the functionality of design solutions and their suitability in more general terms, expanding the issue of persons with disabilities to persons with mobility problems, persons under medical care, etc., and introducing a more democratic attitude in the design valorisation process.<sup>1</sup>

The new approach to design considerations paved a way to the concepts that based design values on a wider democratic vision of inclusive society. These are closely related approaches that overlap or

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<sup>1</sup> *One of the central acts aimed at providing standards for developing the new design is ANSI A117.1 – Making Buildings Accessible to and Usable by the Physically Handicapped, publicised by the American National Standard Institute.*

accept similar theoretical assumptions in many aspects, such as the *Design for All, Universal Design, Inclusive Design, Accessible Design, Universal Access*, etc. The pivotal assumption that unifies all the listed approaches is the creation of design solutions that can meet needs of the widest circle of users, but without adopting the standpoint in such tendencies that it is possible to reach a universal solution that will equally suit everyone. The listed concepts, mainly observed at the level of design approach in the areas of product design, urban design, interior design and architecture, regardless of a more widely spread applicability in these areas, maintain the idea of design concept development that resists exclusion of any social group based on any criteria.

The core value shared by all the listed concepts is the creation of solutions that support diversity, social inclusion and equity. Not intending to negate differences between these separate concepts and specific features of each of them, we will encompass them by the proposed umbrella term of **Democracy-Based Design**, as they stem from democratic assumptions. Hence, we will not use this term to describe any specific direction within the above mentioned tradition, but as a complex concept that encompasses various listed approaches in all their uniqueness.

At the level of the existing schools of thought and developed concepts which can be included in such a broadly defined term due to their prominent inclusivity, aspiration towards equity and respect of diversity, the **Democracy-Based Design** stems from a democratic vision of comprehensive design solutions that accomplish the highest level of compliance with the widely perceived frameworks of separate individual needs. However, despite progressive political ideological

foundations of the design vision that opposes *the policy of difference*, the core of the covered concepts is based on a functional principle, inevitably leading to outcomes of estranged nature. Furthermore, the essential aspect of design defining the very type of this activity remains completely marginalised. Thus, political economic principles of design development threaten to pave the way for negative design, namely its simulative double, due to its political economic pretensions, rather than its program nature. Namely, the issue of design development never remains at the level of its functional dimension. The value of usability, although inseparable from this art, is part of its technical aspect, but it is far from representing a cornerstone of its development. The very history of design and applied arts testifies in favour of such a perception. By observing the development of creative approaches within this area, we undoubtedly recognise an aesthetic dimension as the central cornerstone of their development, despite the fact that the functional aspect might facilitate development visions. Otherwise, the history of development of applied arts and design could never have prospered in the manner it did throughout its long-standing development.

Hence, the development of concept encompassed by the term of Democracy-Based Design, purely on the functionalistic foundations, leads to the negation of design as its ultimate outcome, namely to its transformation into something we might call negative design, or in other words mirror antipode to design itself. Certainly, it still does not mean that these perceptions should be rejected or *a priori* perceived as opposite to design. As previously mentioned, functionality is part of the technical aspect of design and therefore remains inseparable from it. In fact, the technical aspect often facilitated the development of new design approaches and solutions, thus remaining a relevant

aspect of the historic development of design visions and concepts. In that respect, we may perceive the central trends of the Democracy-Based Design so far as a generator of a new development vision that, following such a dynamic line of historical development, starts from the transformation of perception at the functionalistic level. However, to attain their fullest expression, these trends have to overcome this initial impulse and raise the principles of the new concept to a higher level of thought and vision in the aesthetic sphere.

Therefore, further development of the Democracy-Based Design should be based on considerations of aesthetic categories. However, as these concepts stem from the political program vision of democratic social development, their considerations from the aesthetic perspective have to move beyond the sphere of the mere sensory senses.

The term of sublime encompasses one of the central aesthetic categories, where Kant's contribution should particularly be noted in its interpretation. Discussing the sublime, Kant underlines that the sublime, in its true sense, cannot be contained in any sensory form, but is only related to ideas of the mind (Kant 1991: 136-137). Namely, a sensory perceivable form in itself cannot be sublime, and its sensory perception may provoke various feelings. However, according to Kant, one phenomenon can motivate the soul that has already been filled with various ideas to distance itself from the senses and focus on the ideas containing more sublime purposiveness (Kant 1991: 137). Contrary to the term of beautiful, Kant does not attribute the power to the sublime in nature to anything purposive in nature, but emphasises that this term points to the purposiveness in potential use of its perceptions to feel purposiveness that is fully independent from

nature (Kant 1991: 137). Namely, as he continues, unlike the beautiful in nature, where it is necessary to search for a basis outside us, it is possible to find the basis for the sublime in ourselves only, as well as in the manner of thought that adds the sublime to the perception of nature.

Following Kant's notions, namely shifting them to a different theoretical paradigm, we can assume the existence of the specific *empathic sublime*. It is the feeling developed in the process of one's own transcendence during the mind elevation to the sphere of universally humanistic being. The feeling discussed here, as defined by the term of sublime, does not belong to a phenomenon, but to the ideas of the mind which, in an interaction with a phenomenon, force the mind to leave the realm of the senses in order to find awe in the purposiveness that transcends it. However, the awe discussed here is not what we feel in the interaction of the mind with nature or assumptions that go beyond the term of humanity. It is the pleasure developed in liberating the mind from particular identifications. We call this special feeling *empathic sublime* as it originates in sensations that do not fully belong to us in their complexity. Unlike Kant's dynamic sublimity in nature, which assumes even a certain feeling of one's own superiority over nature (comp. Kant 1991: 152), *the empathic sublime* is generated in realising that the fear from abandoning all particular identifications that the very inclination towards superiority stems from is unfounded. Only after this fear is overcome, development of pleasure in the process of enriching the mind in its transcendence to the sphere of universal humanistic being is possible.

It would be incorrect to assume that the empathic sublime is a category characteristic exclusively of the concept encompassed by the term of Democratic-Based Design, as well as to think that these concepts do not have a potential to provoke other/different feelings, namely those that do not belong to this category. However, it seems that *the empathic sublime* is the central category in the listed concepts, representing a cornerstone of all other aesthetic sensations that activities based on the Democracy-Based Design principles may provoke. Why is that the case? As stated, the Democracy-Based Design is founded on the democratic principle of availability, namely adaptability of solutions, as well as on the assumed potential of provoking aesthetic sensations in the widest terms. It is important to reiterate that we need to exclude economistic reasons here, as well as any relation of the listed concepts with mass production needs and the market expansion rules, since any inclination of the Democracy-Based Design considerations towards this direction would mean a betrayal of its essence and its transformation into something that it is not. Subduing design to economic demands would mean its distancing from the sphere of art to the ultimate transformation into an activity that we might call a capital accumulation servant. And finally, such a development direction would mean the separation of the Democracy-Based Design from the sphere of art, as well as an ultimate betrayal of the very principles that are the foundations of the listed concepts. It is possible to ensure accessibility to proposed solutions and provoke sensory pleasure with artistic visions in the presumed framework of the universal human community if such a tendency is guided by humane principles only. Harmonisation of this vision or its negotiations with the laws of market profitability would definitely lead to the exclusion of those with smaller or marginal participation

**in capital accumulation, evaluated from the perspective of the global market development.**

**The previous standpoint is valid not only at the level of perceiving technical solutions, which remain part of complementary features, but equally (within the proposed problem framework), represents the core principle of considerations of the aesthetic dimension of the Democracy-Based Design. As the evaluation of an aesthetic experience cannot rely on mediocrity, which finds its confirmation in statistics only, and as an artistic vision cannot be guided by uniformity of the spirit, we have to search for that sensory pleasure characterising the listed concepts in higher spheres of the mind, entering the realm of general human self-awareness. Sensory pleasure in this sense is possible in the process of separating from one's own individuality only and the elevation of the mind to the spheres of its dynamic development in an endless perspective of general human totality.**

**A prerequisite for achieving such an experience is to abandon individuality, not for the purpose of depleting the mind in order to adapt it the proposed equity policy, but for its dialectical rise in order to exceed its own limitations and reach universal humane multifoldness. It is possible to find aesthetic pleasure that can stand outside it at lower levels of the individual mind development only by intertwining it with the totality of the mind. Reaching this universal humane feeling also means creating a path towards an overall experience of sensory sensations, which shift from individual to general. However, aesthetic pleasure is not a consequence of experiential identification with the particular one. Instead, it rises on the foundation of awareness about its multifoldness. This feeling that**



we named *empathic sublime* is the only one that can represent the central aesthetic category that the value of the Democracy-Based Design is based upon. Particularity covered by the total vision can achieve its only artistic impression in provoking a feeling that, rising above the individual, finds satisfaction in realising multifoldness at the general human level. A prerequisite of sensory openness for achieving such an experience is to abandon the individual in order to intertwine with the general human. It is a pure rise of self-awareness, free from any program frameworks, but it reaches its reflection in the rise of democratic principles in the realm of political ideological reality.

Due to the relative marginalisation of design and applied arts within the aesthetic thought and art theory, these areas of artistic expression became a subject of theoretic scientific considerations, based on the disciplinary principles inadequate for understanding those dimensions of special human activities we can use to attribute to them the status of art. Such a noncritical expansion of the field of specific disciplines, conducted under the veil of expanding knowledge, led to the very opposite – the emergence of misconceptions perpetuating various ideological assumptions. The same as other concepts of modern design, the Democracy-Based Design is not spared from such discourse interpretative side tracks. Strengthening of utilitarian theoretic conceptual approaches in its understanding, based on the functionalistic principles, creates a threat of sliding into the politicisation of the revolutionary vision, whose ultimate outcome would be the transformation of design into its negative double.

Although related to the socio-economic trends at its technical level, design, as well as applied arts, cannot be reduced to their utilitarian

**dimension perceived from the economic aspect only. The social role of design is not exhausted in satisfying lower-level needs, and any reduction of the interpretation of its value to this lowest level leads to the emergence of misconceptions that shift the focus to peripheral features, thus diverting attention from the essence to banalities. The same as the purpose of an art painting is not merely to make an empty space on a wall less monotonous and the same as the value of a literary work is not in a narrative where the hollow mind finds self-denial, design is not a pure means in achieving economic political programs. Degradation of its function to such defined assumptions would mean its transformation into a conceptual chimera that would fill it with negative content by annihilating the essence. A result of such a discourse transformation is what we named negative design – a mirror double which finds its place in the world of simulacrum only.**

**Overcoming such a perspective of the design thought lies only in renewing/expanding the theoretic opinion about design from the aesthetical and art-theoretical perspective. This is the direction that bases reflections on the perspective of understanding design at the level of its general human values, rather than on affirmation of its marginal features or presentation of the forms of misuse as its social functions. Such a thought shift assumes discourse purification of the design theory and redefining of the term apparatus that has more often than not been non-critically borrowed from the disciplines unprepared to include art into their scope.**

**Based on such a theoretic position, it is necessary to consider the concepts encompassed by the Democracy-Based Design from the perspective of their understanding through relying on aesthetic (and art-theoretical) categories. The central category, although not the**

**only one, which should serve as the foundation for building reflexions on this design approach and understanding the values that the development of such a vision stem from, can only be the one that explains the development of aesthetic experience created in the process of overcoming the individual in the dynamic elevation of the mind to the general human totality. Only in the process of identification with the dynamic elevation of the mind that overpowers the individual is it possible to achieve aesthetic pleasure protected from any decline to particularity, which would ultimately negate the Democracy-Based Design concept, and outside an eclectic experience that can only lead to short-term delight.**

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## **Dorrit Bøilerehaug**



***Dorrit Bøilerehaug is an Assistant Professor at Aarhus University in Denmark. Her research has a focus on fashion, age, aesthetics and social media in branding, and she has amongst others contributed with the following publications:***

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**<https://rdcu.be/b07WKdb@cc.au.dk>**

# **The design of skin for all – apart from the mature, or what?**

***Dorrit Bøilerehaug, PhD***

## **Abstract**

How comfortable are you in your skin? If it is mature and showing the natural signs of age, you may be at ease but probably also aware that your skin is little eligible for marketing publication. In the aesthetic monoculture of smoothness this article sets off to reflect on its social and cultural origin and explore the values attached to smoothness in general and smooth skin in particular. After contemplations of the prevailing connotations of mature skin, it progresses towards the presentation of a renewed look on mature skin inspired by findings of the mature cohort's self-identities. With the construction of a balanced overview of skin connotations, the article contributes to the formation of a more varied aesthetic communication design presenting skin with a texture closer to reality than to fiction.

## **KEYWORDS:**

***Mature skin, visual design, age, skin aesthetics, smoothness, marketing.***

## **Introduction**

When designing visual marketing communication, every inch is the result of many considerations and choices. The purpose is most often

commercial and as people appeal to people, they are often part of the picture. The models are casted, staged and styled in the chosen contexts which are carefully decorated to support the mood of the production. All visual elements are open for the immediate experience but often the details of texture and surface escape our attention. One of the major surfaces is skin often taking up a great percentage of the presentation, but when we study skin, there is a lot more to it than meets the eye.

For digging deeper into the many angles on skin and texture, the comprehensive work on visual representation by Borgerson and Schroeder (2018) is a rich source illustrating a wide variety of angles. According to them, skin may be regarded as our personal container but in marketing skin becomes a communicator of lifestyle and a signifier of a person's perceived worth to society. This is the case since skin works as a metaphor for a set of values and characteristics much larger than the surface displayed. It connotes the identity of a person and signals ideals of a lifestyle often hosting the most admired traits of the times.

As skin holds a special position being the interface between the person and the outside world, it has the dual function of both representing and positioning the person. The condition or state of the skin places the person in webs of cultural meanings and structures of values and possibilities, and these in turn determine the established possibilities for the individual's agency. Moreover, the outside world engages in interpretations of the person's identity based on the condition of the skin. A condition which is increasingly subject to cosmetic change and outside modification to accommodate the trends rather than the turn of the times. Furthermore, skin's central position as a communicator of age renders it also as precarious one when



aging is an unwanted state. Finally, it may be regarded as a site for commodified expression and as being an object of scrutiny with the potential for gaining increased cultural power or merely surviving in the tensions of social control (Farber 2006 in Patterson and Schroeder 2010, p. 254).

The condensed perspectives outlined above present an introductory overview of the social and cultural perceptions and functions of skin, and work as a point of departure for mapping out a structured elaboration of the implications of skin and its aesthetic design. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to outline a framework for contemplation of the meanings and significances of skin and the construction of its attractiveness in lifestyle marketing. The framework will support a discussion of the characteristics of what is socially and culturally considered to be attractive skin especially with a view to age. It will continue with reflections of the positive aspects with a potential connotation to mature skin but largely ignored by lifestyle marketing. It is the purpose of the article to create a framework and contribute to the discourse enabling a discussion of the perceptions of age and appearance. An aim which is relevant also for designers of communication, professionals in the lifestyle industries, and scholars with aesthetic interests. The article does not pretend to be exhaustive but rather selective and resting on interpretative work with its limited range of materials for highlighting the boarder scope of implications.

Consequently, the article begins with a focus on smoothness as a concept and ideal from an interdisciplinary perspective and continues with considerations regarding smooth and mature skin. Subsequently, it will consider what we are deprived of in the present visual monoculture of skin surface and point towards future perspectives of

a more diverse skin presentation. As the article does not include any visual material, the reader is encouraged to recall the marketing of any lifestyle product while reading. Be it marketing of skincare, cars, make-up, household appliances, fashion, industrial design and tourism. The world is rich in examples with people depicted for drawing our attention to products and services with the hope that we will fancy what we see.

### **Smoothness as a condition**

Smoothness is power. It is the ideal and the aim of many processes of production and refinement. In commercial photography any element disturbing the smooth impression is photoshopped. Blemishes and stray hairs disappear as do any sign of age. But what are the origins of the ideals of marketing and the application of visual technological tools to produce the shining armour of a wide range of commercial presentations? What is the basis of smoothness as a social and cultural concept and ideal?

As stipulated by Iqani (2012), the idealisation of smoothness can be traced as far back as 1756 with Burke's stipulation of smoothness being a prerequisite for beauty. Iqani points to the historical transfer of the social status of smoothness in depictions and evaluations of skin. One example of this is when European cultures and colonisers idealised middle-class skin in contrast to the rough and scarred skin of people in less fortunate positions and thus placed smooth skin on top in the hierarchies of meaning and status according to texture (p. 316).

Iqani (2012) presents a preliminary but illustrative typology of the connotations of smooth and rough textures on a range of objects

including skin (p. 313). The typology outlines smoothness as connotating civilization, safety, culture and a refined state whereas roughness connotes wildness, danger and the unrefined. In other words, the desired versus the avoided. Even though classifications of surfaces may be criticized for leading to stereotypical readings, they have continued to function as an established approach in a range of practices. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001) add another dimension to the signal of smoothness when pointing out that a smooth and even glossy surface as seen on the covers of magazines sends a message of seduction and luxury (p.122). This is opposed to the more practical and matter-of-fact connotations of matte paper. Also the surfaces of textiles can be contemplated in this perspective where the surface of silk satin communicates its social status. Given that these signs of smoothness indicate its ideological function serving as markers of elevated status, it is crucial to recognize that higher positions carry not only admiration but also power.

In the field of marketing, power entails the power to attract and to seduce, and skin seems like a natural inhabitant in the landscape of seduction. But not any skin goes. Reinforced by the social construction of the status of smoothness and its close affinity to the concept of beauty, the preferred strategic resource for marketing is smooth skin. Skin which in Connor's terms has "skinshine" and appears as "a kind of visual immune system" making it similar to an endless surface and an empty space (Connor 2004, p. 55 in Borgerson and Schroeder 2028). And as the design of surface and skin has been refined and developed based on these the intrinsic understandings for decades, the reflections on the aesthetic alternatives to marketing's display of the desirable and smooth remain rarely challenged or

**considered in detail. Nor are the wider cultural and social implications of the smooth landscapes.**

## **Smooth skin**

**Narrowing the focus from a wider range of surfaces to that of skin allows considerations regarding another set of aspects moving from values in general to the values connoted to people and age. Apart from the basic biological fact that smooth skin in its natural state is closely connected to the reproductive phase in life, there are numerous other understandings of what smooth skin brings along. It may be regarded as representing the present and the future, which in commercial and cultural terms is often understood as central when it comes to development and progress.**

**Apart from these inherent promises, smooth skin also needs to be considered in terms of gratification. Since marketing communication is predominantly populated by smooth skin what we witness is can be regarded as a representational fetishization, where it becomes part of the “meta-fetish” of smoothness. During castings models are carefully selected to be part of the tool of seduction and argument for acquisition and as industry professional operate in the tradition based on the predominance of smooth skin, it seems safe to conclude that it works as a criterium for the selection in the first place. However, since the display of smooth skin is not limited to products and services concerned with skin but rather a stable in all types of lifestyle marketing, it seems to underline the power of the fetishization of smooth skin. Smooth skin becomes a co-representor of the brands and their products and an element in the mechanisms of worship with the inherent promise of gratification. Interestingly, as discussed by**

**Borgerson and Schroeder (2018), fetish items are often contextually isolated.**

**This is also the case for smooth skin being on display in marketing where it promotes a broad range of lifestyle products rather than products related to the skin or texture. The explanation for this may be that fetishisation is supported by repetitions, and as such maintaining the habits seem more important than obtaining internal visual cohesion in the design of the communication product. If the market is disturbed by part of the picture being out of context this is still pending to become uncovered, just as precise information of the status of smooth skin within more defined market segments are rare. In the meantime, as pointed out by Faber (2006), skin still seems to hold a particular currency which needs to be protected from the loss of slimness and youth. In other words, it needs to be protected from nature. So, while social capital of smoothness upholds its position as being a prerequisite for participation in many areas, it seems pertinent to investigate the connotations of its opposite - mature skin - in order to comprehend why this is so.**

## **Mature skin**

**We learn the lesson from childhood with fairytales read aloud by relatives and visualized in Disney animations. The evil stepmother of Snow White and the wicked fairy dressed up as an old woman poisoning Sleeping Beauty set impactful examples of the “true nature” of age. In her analysis of Snow White, Gašparovičová (2021) finds that the Queen is unable to reconcile with her natural aging process. She perceives her beauty as her power, her primary asset, the source of her status, and she sees herself as the most powerful because of it. Without beauty she will be stripped of identity and the**

**fairytale's understanding of her "non-beauty" renders her evil. Age and evil united in a long-lasting partnership. Also physiognomists have circulated around the concept of beauty. In their search for a definition of beauty they have supposed that certain features popularly believed as being ugly were also evidence of undesirable and low moral characteristics. Even though these works have historical origin, they have appeared as sources of inspiration feeding the general perception of skin condition and appearance with their portrayal of uneven skin structure as examples of the socially unwanted (Wegenstein and Ruck 2011).**

**Another discussion of the mechanisms of exterior evaluation and attribution of value is found in Fanon (1967) stipulating that epidermal schema draws attention to skin and attribute identity and social possibility based on the reading of skin. Even though Fanon's work is particularly focused on skin of colour, it still illustrates the mechanisms of the outside evaluation's ascription of social and cultural value based on visual characteristics of skin (Borgerson and Schroeder 2018, p. 116). Gordon (2015) draws our attention to the fact the external evaluation can also work as a basis for "othering" and stereotypification since the attention remains on the surface and thus ignores individuality and inner life (Borgerson and Schroeder, 2018, p. 117). But to escape the negative attributions of mature skin the market offers still more remedies, still more options for so-called self-improvement. In this respect a closer inspection of the contrasts between smooth and mature skin may shed light on the context of what can be left behind by buying into the make-over culture.**

**When contemplating the connotations of mature skin in marketing, we find it in a landscape where health, active lifestyles and perseverance of a youthful appearance are the aims. The socially**

admired state central in the logic of self-improvement as discussed by Borgerson and Schroeder (2018). Mature skin, however, seems to hold the position of the opposite of self-improvement. It appears to represent decline, self-deterioration, and to represent loss - not gain. As discussed above, also here attention is not on the possible interior or personal gains but remains on the evaluation of exterior. The need to avoid the state and look of mature skin indicates a perspective of retrospection in the sense that it is essentially understood by what it is *not*. Neither young, attractive nor marketable. When it is marketed, the discourse is often designed to show it as an object in need of improvement. Skin becomes the container of an object in need of self-improvement and failing to meet bodily norms and the ideals of smoothness but rather indicating passage through different stages (Patterson and Schroeder 2010). It seems to be a marketing logic, that skin's signs of passage through life bear testament to the recollections of past times as opposed to potential present and future contribution. It is noteworthy that in marketing's understanding of time, the present cannot be "owned" by a cohort showing evidence of previous times on their skin but only by a cohort with very short track records. Mature skin as a personal curriculum vitae does not qualify as a sales argument nor to being part of the picture. But what if it did? Which perspectives are missed by marketing in its search for new markets and segments?

### **What mature skin could bring to the table**

While still lingering in the negative narrative of age as decline and loss and perceiving age as a uniform group identity, marketing is restricted to repeating the stereotypes. The industry will replicate the portrayal of the social capital of mature people as regarded from the

external perspective and its production will remain ignorant of the embodied social capital in all its shades. Some of the nuances shared by the mature cohort are that they feel vibrant, have a lot to offer (Bennett 2019), and they do not necessarily lose interest in fashion. On the contrary, they seem to enjoy it more than earlier (Sadowska et al. 2017). Also noteworthy is the mature view on their own appearance in the work by Mair and Cili (2016) finding that less than 3% of their 40-89 years old respondents said they wore make-up to look younger. Moreover, it has been found that the fashion-conscious cohort often have younger cognitive ages, have different value orientations and are more eager to try new products (Nam et al. 2007).

When relating the above to studies of age and self-identity, they add that identity construction as an ongoing process which is not restricted to chronological age or changes in the body. Rather, identity is connected to people's activities and their relations (Cook 2018), and people perceive themselves as still being in the making or in the process of becoming. In other words, the ongoing identity construction is a personal process and one of continued reflection, revision and transformation evolving with time (Cook, p. 188). These findings contrast the general misconception of mature people as being struck and limited to retrospective contributions. The outcome presents a group of people at ease with their own appearance and who could easily be inspired to embark on new designs in fashion and lifestyle products. Additionally, it underlines the inadequacy of the surface condition of skin as being a sufficient indicator of the values and lifestyle of the mature segment. By subscribing to the idea of skin as valid representation and by adhering to the outdated the validity ascribed to these mechanisms, it seems that the social and



commercial bars work as substantial obstacles. Not only are people barred and excluded from activities and recognition, but also culture and marketing are barred from interaction with the mature groups.

## Discussion

<i>Smooth skin</i>	<i>Mature skin told</i>	<i>Mature skin untold</i>
<i>Attraction</i>	<i>Retrospection</i>	<i>Experience</i>
<i>Desirability</i>	<i>Loss</i>	<i>Curiosity</i>
<i>Social status</i>	<i>Decline</i>	<i>Age-independent self-identity</i>
<i>Seduction</i>	<i>Stagnation</i>	<i>Continuous development</i>
<i>Fertility</i>	<i>Self-deterioration</i>	<i>Vibrance</i>
<i>Refined state</i>	<i>Obsolescence</i>	<i>Contribution readiness</i>
<i>Luxury</i>	<i>The past</i>	<i>Openness towards new designs</i>
<i>Gain</i>		<i>At ease with own appearance</i>
<i>Development</i>		<i>Younger cognitive age</i>
<i>Progress</i>		
<i>Marketability</i>		
<i>The present</i>		
<i>The future</i>		

*Table 1 A preliminary overview of the connotations of skin inspired by Iqani (2012)*

A display of skin connotations as in Table 1. can aide the formation of a new understanding with a relative perspective as a context. As stated by Borgerson and Schroder, marketing does not just exist in a closed circuit but need to be considered as cultural text which often substitute the personal experience and shapes how people construct their understanding of the world (2015). Consequently, inspiring alternative views on the aesthetic design of skin in marketing as in

the third column of Table 1. may very well move beyond the commercial circuit. Additionally, new mature skin connotations may illuminate the paradox of the habitual erasing of signs of character and experience in an era of individuality (Lemma 2010). It is remarkable, how deleting the signs of age is prioritised and the result of aesthetic similarity accepted in the process of skin modification and cosmetic procedures. The traces of personal story and personality are effaced maybe honouring the perception that this is needed to fit in, be accepted, be found attractive – and ultimately sell. A new set of skin connotations as a balancing element against the known couple of new-versus-old, offers a different narrative with a wider perspective in the professional evaluation of what can be subscribed to when involving design of mature skin in marketing.

When contemplating Table 1. it is evident, that the three columns shift from positive (Smooth skin) to negative (Mature skin told) and back to positive again (Mature skin untold). The positive-negative contrast from the first to the second column is remarkable even though it is not presenting a novelty. However, we need to reflect on how much influence this contrast has. Apart from the consequences outlined and discussed above, it may also carry significant weight in the evaluation of beauty as being present in smooth and absent from mature skin.

Furthermore, as beauty is such a central carrier of social capital, it means that its significance is far greater than attracting the odd admiration. Consequently, a continued refinement and development of Table 1. may not only help drawing attention of the habitual recruitment and design of skin in lifestyle marketing, it may also inspire reflection on the concept of beauty on its own and in relation to age-diversity.

## Conclusion

The intention of this paper has been to discuss the design of the visual monoculture of skin in lifestyle marketing from an interdisciplinary perspective. With elaborations on the origins and the connotations of smoothness as a concept and subsequently of smooth and mature skin, the aim has been to create a deeper understanding of the social and cultural significance of the habitual thinking and evaluation when it comes to skin texture. The areas outlined establish a framework for the construction and meaning of skin in lifestyle marketing but also for a broader discussion of social and cultural views on attractiveness. Moreover, Table 1 may work as a source of inspiration when searching new ways for designers of communication, professionals in the lifestyle industries and scholars with aesthetic interests. With a continued academic exploration of the significance of the habitual visual and aesthetic designs of different stages in life, increased consideration of the design of mature skin and age-diversity in marketing may follow. A discourse of mature skin needs to be further developed, and the prototypes for this process may come from a wide variety of sources.

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## Rozina Spinnoy



***Brussels-based Rozina Spinnoy holds a BSc (Hons) in Interior Design from Glasgow Caledonian University. She is the Founder and Director of BIDs (Business Improvement Districts) Belgium. Passionate about Communities, Citizen engagement and Design Strategy, she founded the organisation in 2016 with support from other BIDs organisations across Europe. She also founded Empowering Women, Public Space & Climate Change, connecting a diverse and intersectional global community on related topics, while aiming to create further awareness, research and projects on female led and empowering initiatives, by sharing resources.***

# **The need for improved diversity in the creative and cultural industries to pursue the aspirations of a future, designed for all**

***Rozina Spinnoy***

## **Introduction**

**The term 'creative industries' started to be used almost 20 years ago. By then, the term 'cultural industries' already existed with the signification of music, dance, theatre, visual arts, film, and the heritage sector. The primary attempts to gauge the value of the creative industries were in 1997 when a newly voted Labor government in the United Kingdom chose to try to describe and evaluate their direct influence on the British Economy. Today, the concept of creative industries and their significance is acknowledged by nearly all governments globally.**

**In Europe, the cultural and Creative Sectors contribute €509 billion every year. The amount represents 5.3% of the European Union's Gross Domestic Product. This makes the Creative and Cultural Sectors the largest employment sector with over 12million full-time positions in Europe (Culture Action Europe, 2019). In 2018, creative industries contributed approximately £111.7 billion of value to the United**

**Kingdom economy. It is believed that while oil was the principal fuel of the Economy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, creative industries are the fuel of the Economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. If that is the case, we need to reimagine how administrations are structured, cities are organized, education is issued, and citizens relate within communities. While creative industries are essential to the Economy's advancement, the industry still faces challenges such as racial, gender, and ethnic discrimination that need to be resolved. This research outlines the challenges faced by minorities in creative and cultural industries.**

### **The nature of Creative jobs during crises such as the Coronavirus**

**During the covid-19 pandemic, many jobs were seen as less viable due to the pandemic's impacts and imposed rules such as social distancing. While the pandemic hit the entire Economy, creatives in the United Kingdom were the highly impacted group. Very few creatives, such as those working in National Theater streams and TV shows, survived during mandatory lockdowns. Primarily, crises lead to the cancellation of critical events and art festivals that denies many creatives opportunities to work.**

**Moreover, the pandemic forced many creatives to focus on the online audience causing them to give their content freely. By doing so, they were setting a pattern that their content is less valuable thus devaluing the creative industries as a whole. While various stakeholders such as the UK government, pledge to reinforce the creative industries, the process could be faster. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, creative industries were among the fastest-developing industries. As seen above, its contribution to the Economy in 2018 was approximately £111.7 billion. However, the coronavirus epidemic has**



revealed the intrinsic precarity of the creative workforce market. Creatives are usually insecure and poorly compensated, and their job requires considerable investment to start and survive.

According to the UNESCO study on the impacts suffered by the creative industry amidst the pandemic, the crisis caused Gross Value Added in leisure and cultural domains to decline by \$750b in 2020. Moreover, ten million jobs were lost that year. The report suggests that the creative sector has been suffering crucial effects from the onset of the pandemic, accompanied by a reduction in the support for leisure projects. While the report shows that creative industries are instrumental in social cohesion, well-being, and educational tools, it also indicates that the industry's potential to contribute to economic advancement has been undermined.

### **Women in the creative industries**

The creative industry is one activity that can improve the economic structure of society and boost social inclusion. Statistics show that only a tiny percentage of females with a creative sector education find themselves in creative jobs upon completing their scholarships (Setyaningsih et al., 2012). While more women than men study creative arts, lesser women enter the creative workforce after graduating (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2013). The most recent statistics show that 40.6 percent of male creative graduates were hired in creative industries within six months after graduating, compared to 30.3 percent of their female counterparts. Hence, despite creative arts degree programs being so enticing to female students, a more significant percentage of male creative arts students ultimately go on to work in the industry, according to the research of HESA's Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) statistics.

Nevertheless, the percentage of females entering creative jobs is currently at its peak over the last five years, and the gender gap is slowly closing. However, it is still evidently present. Most creative directors are majority male, and a study by the Young Creative Council discovered that 88% of female creatives do not have role models. In comparison, 70% of female creatives have never worked with a female creative executive or director (Larsen, 2020). Therefore, implementing policies and practices in gender equality and taking a systemically inclusive and intersectional diversity lens approach across the creative and cultural industries would be necessary to break these statistics.

Sarah Baker and David Hesmondhalgh are celebrated experts in the cultural and creative industries. In an article named "*Sex, gender and work segregation in the cultural industries*," the authors give deductions from research concerning gender-based workplace discrimination in the creative industries, particularly industries of music, television, and publication in London (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2015). Their outcomes are consistent with international outlines exposed by the UNESCO statement. Their conclusions on gender-based work discrimination in creative industries are valid and relevant for most countries worldwide.

Hesmondhalgh and Sarah commence their paper by claiming that all societies across the globe tend to relate some specific jobs to women. Some courses commonly associated with women are hairdressing, nursing, beauty work, and primary teaching (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2015). On the other hand, jobs like driving, car sales, carpentry, plumbing, and other related sectors are associated with men. The case is very similar in the creative industry, according to Hesmondhalgh and Sarah.

Primarily, they point out the irregular distribution of females in various creative and cultural sectors: 5% in interactive content and 6% in gaming sectors compared to 61% in the publication industry, 41% in television, 47% in radio, and 32% in the music industry. The authors also stress the overrepresentation of females in specific jobs in cultural industries. Occupations that involve the collaboration of production are distinctly 'female.' At the same time, creative jobs regarded as the most respected such as camera operators, directors, sound experts, editors, photography directors, and others, are primarily occupied by males (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2015). Few craft and technical occupations, such as make-up artists and costume designers, are filled by females. They are underrated by society or even not acknowledged as including technical skills.

Therefore, in cultural industries, the line between creative and noncreative tasks and admired and non-admired tasks is frequently covered over the separation between singly male and female roles. Baker and Hesmondhalgh highlight an example of the advertising sector; whereas of the year 2000, there were 60% female administrative employees, 54% female accountants, 44% media organizers, and only 18% female creatives globally (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2015). Nevertheless, why are males associated with creativity? Baker and Hesmondhalgh explain that there are specific myths about males that have existed for ages, describing them as "*male, sensitive, with juvenile egoism, apprehensive, dependent.*" While most people claim that these features contradict at first glimpse with more conformist forms of masculinity, the distinction varies from manifestations of feminism concerning arts- females have customarily been perceived as deliberates best at articulating "taste" instead of "real" creativity.

## **Minorities / people of colour in the cultural and creative industries**

**Black Lives Matter is a reality index for workplace diversity and inclusion approaches. For instance, Adidas, a German sportswear brand, began hiring Latin and African employees in America following Black Lives Matter demonstrations due to George Floyd's massacre in Minnesota. However, most people, especially those out of the United States, need to perceive the significance of this movement. Therefore, to truly tackle the issues of inequality among people of colour in offices, people ought to perceive the Black Lives Matter campaign and diversity and inclusion exertions as jointly inclusive.**

**Debates around equality, anti-racism, and diversity in creative industries have existed for quite some time. However, there have been developments in elements of inclusion and representation. The terms diversity and inclusion (D&I) have frequently been used in the context of the creative industry. Organizations and businesses are working harder than ever to create projects and programs that will assist them in establishing an inclusive atmosphere. However, are they making enough progress, or are they simply talking? There is a universal feeling that something has changed, as evidenced by movements such as the Black Lives Matter campaign pressing people in creative and cultural industries to struggle with the degree of their habitually limited and exclusionary roles. The number of black employees in the UK's creative industries has increased dramatically in recent years. For instance, the number of employees from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) settings saw a 15% increase in 2015. The increase was more than twice that of the whole UK labor force. The Creative Industries Minister Matt Hancock reported that the upbeat jobs figures showed Britain's creative industries were doing better than ever." However, the large-scale unemployment and budget**

incisions in the media and creative industries resulting from the epidemic have demonstrated how delicate the cultural ecosystem is. Efforts are needed to ensure diversity and inclusion in arts and culture by institutions, among other key players.

In research conducted by Bella Caledonia, she explores the need for inclusion and diversity in the creative industry. She gives recommendations that have been done with people of colour, especially in creative industries in Scotland. Caledonia interviewed various creatives, such as Aarti Joshi, Joe McCann, Ica Headlam, Nyla Ahmad, Claricia Parinussa, and Sekai Machache. She asked them about their struggles, experiences, and overall feelings about the creative industry (Caledonia, 2021). Consequently, several themes were established from which a valuable understanding of the current issues among people of colour in the creative industry can be obtained.

Minority cultural groups have a long past of under-representation in creative and cultural industries. How the creative industry perceives ethnic minority groups can often be founded on prominent prejudiced and inferential premises that have real- world repercussions. Studies reveal that minority communities' viewers trust that the representation of ethnic minority individuals affects how non-ethnic minority handle people of colour in real life. Organizations such as Media Diversified, whose operations ceased in 2019, have tried to bring diversity and inclusion to the United Kingdom's media scenery by supporting writers of minority groups (Caledonia, 2021). However, although there has been real progress, most challenges are with racism and falsification. The creative landscape across the world has to be changed if it is to be justly diversified and inclusive. In the United King-dom, for instance, cultural industries have been

conquered by a thin subgroup of the UK people. The covid-19 plague worsened the matter by reducing creative organizations and decreasing job opportunities in cultural and creative sectors.

## **Diversity and Inclusion in Europe**

The Hashtag **#BrusselsSoWhite** is an informal campaign reproving racial diversity issues in Brussels. The utilization of this hashtag on Twitter underlines the absence of racial diversity in the European Parliament. Racial minorities include above 10% of the European Union's population. Nevertheless, fewer than 5% of the policymakers voted into parliament positions are racial minorities (Heath, 2022). The absence of ethnic multiplicity among workers of the EU institutions in Brussels as described in the **#BrusselsSoWhite** movement, is even more striking since Brussels is a comparatively racially diverse region.

Rafia Zakaria pens against White Feminism, asserting that it does not give room for the racial minority feminists who have been disregarded, secluded, or expunged from the feminist drive. She talks about Brussels-based reporter Shada Islam concerning the persistence of white feminist ideology in Europe (Zakaria, 2021). Numerous determining elements must be considered regarding the lack of diversity in European Union affairs. For instance, there is a possible allegation that the European Union institutions' Human Resource sectors discriminate against ethnic minority applicants. Contributing elements such as 'educational elitism' in the perception of recruits being from the 'usual' educational institutions. Besides, there is an inclination that very few people from minority backgrounds are interested in such seats.

Undoubtedly, the EU promotes racial equality and discourages discrimination, which deserves celebrating. Thus, supporters of EU diversity need to exercise what they preach as far as striving to normalize ethnic diversity and prevent the categorization of individuals based on their biases. Therefore, instead of blaming one person or the EU for the absence of inclusivity, the prevalent lack of racial diversity needs to be addressed as a more complicated social and cultural challenge (Chander, 2019). While racial minority Europeans feel excluded from some spaces, mundane mindsets towards culture and nationalism are sustained.

Being in Europe is equated to being white; the European Union represents Europe, meaning that European citizens would occupy most positions. However, this is an awkwardly obsolete mentality that being European parallels being white (Psaledakis, 2019). Therefore, it is essential for people to expect multiculturalism in society, as being European in contemporary society is not associated with racial lineage.

The recommendations at varying levels include sectorial representative organizations within the creative and cultural industries to create awareness, educate, co-design and integrate frameworks for implementing inclusion, diversity and equity strategies directly within their institutions and existing cross-cutting policies. With the 'top-down meeting the bottom up' approach from the European and National level filtering down City and Municipality level cultural policies that impact local organizations and initiatives in the creative and cultural fields. There are several policy recommendations that could be implemented to ensure diversity in the cultural and creative industries, here are just a few suggestions:

**1. Establish diversity and inclusion goals and targets:**

Governments and organizations can set specific goals and targets for diversity and inclusion in the cultural and creative industries, and track progress towards meeting those goals.

**2. Invest in training and development programs:** Governments and organizations can invest in training and development programs for underrepresented groups, such as people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with disabilities, to help them gain the skills and experience needed to succeed in the cultural and creative industries.**3. Promote and support diverse representation:** Governments and organizations can promote and support diverse representation in the cultural and creative industries by supporting projects and initiatives that showcase diverse voices and perspectives.**4. Provide funding and resources:** Governments and organizations can provide funding and resources to support the development and success of diverse artists and creators (example below from Royal College of Art).**5. Implement diversity and inclusion policies:** Governments and organizations can implement diversity and inclusion policies to ensure that all employees and contractors are treated fairly and with respect, and to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.**6. Encourage collaboration and partnerships:** Governments and organizations can encourage collaboration and partnerships between diverse artists and creators, and between cultural and creative organizations, to promote diversity and foster creativity and innovation.



**Detailing, for example as mentioned in point 4 above, the sharing of best practices and case studies, such as cultural and creative educational institutions supporting scholarships for underrepresented communities. (Royal College of Art, Virgil Abloh Scholarship, 2022).**

## **Consequences from lack of diversity in the cultural and creative industries**

**Professionals mirror their background in their priorities – also in the creative industries, and as among them, design stands out as a means of creating new and better products, services or environments for other people, being able to identify with a diverse range of users is key. However, and despite empathy being a core component of design thinking and practice, an adopted, theoretical understanding of people with other backgrounds and other needs than oneself, can never compensate fully for an understanding coming out of belonging to a minority or an underrepresented community. Hence, a universally embraced aspiration in the creative sectors to accommodate people of different gender, ethnicities and ages, sexual orientations and identities, neurodiversity and degrees of physical and mental ableness, as well as people with diverse socio-economic backgrounds, will in part remain an academic issue, unless the same level of diversity materializes as a characteristic of the creative and cultural industries. If we want the future to offer products, services and environments for all; if we believe that the principles of universality and design for all ought to be ubiquitous in all we do, we also need to fight for a greater degree of diversity and inclusion in the professional environments who are the guardians of shaping our surroundings – and our future; designers, urban designers, architects and planners.**

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## Sarah Lund Morrison



***Sarah Lund Morrison is the founder and owner of SLUM.nu. She holds two degrees, an MA in Communication and Psychology and an MSc in Service System Design. With expertise as an experienced change and innovation practitioner and leader Sarah Morrison has worked with large and small, private and public companies in Denmark and internationally for 17 years - as both an internal and external consultant and change catalyst.***

***SLUM offers to design & lead development processes with a high degree of methodological expertise and in-depth knowledge of business processes, organization and management. SLUM realizes vision & creates outcomes by unlocking creativity and potentials with a service design thinking approach, use of visual co-design tools, and visual facilitation throughout all steps of the process. Inclusion and psychological safety is integral to the work as well as the foundational pillars to unleashing potential, creativity, foster innovation, realize change progress and behavior.***

# **Creative leadership and visual thinking is the new strategy for inclusiveness and sustainability**

*Sarah Lund Morrison*

## **VUCA Calls for creative leadership**

**In today's VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous) world, traditional leadership models are being challenged. The rapid pace of change, driven by shifting economies, the aftershocks of the COVID-19 pandemic, and societal shifts like the Great Resignation, demands a new approach. As stress and well-being rise to the top of business agendas, leadership must evolve to meet these challenges.**

**Many know this. However, it is easier said than done.**

**With multiple generations now shaping the workforce and new demands for work environments and experiences, the need for creative leadership has never been greater.**

**Creative leadership moves beyond traditional, linear decision-making, embracing design thinking, lean UX, agility and continuous learning to foster inclusiveness, drive innovation, and develop sustainable strategies that benefit both people and the planet.**

## **The creativity Gap**

**Despite recognizing creativity as a critical future skill, many organizations still struggle to integrate it effectively into their leadership practices. The Creativity Gap is a term used to illustrate a giant, growing gap between the demand for human creativity at work**

and the creative realisation and creative practise in the workplaces of today.

Research finds that creative thinking and problem-solving are the skills of most value to future workplaces. The World Economic Forum is one of them, and in their future of job report they say that creativity is one of the three most *critical skills* required to thrive in 2020 and beyond along with problem solving, which creativity is a driver for. Our fast-moving world of technology, globalisation and climate change demands people to foster and creative problem-solving as never before.

The era of creative innovation is here. And many workers have untapped creative potential and solutions to problems—but we see a massive barrier as workers are seldom in a position where they can give their input or test ideas. Workplaces and leadership have not been designed to foster exploration and experimentation with all that comes with it, failure, critical thinking and learning. This is a huge problem to creativity and innovation.

#### **Visual thinking as a research backed foundation for creativity**

One of the most accessible and innate human capabilities we can leverage and use to become more creative and boost our leadership is visual thinking. Creativity and visual thinking are deeply intertwined, rooted in the way our brains process and generate ideas. The human brain is wired for visual processing, with approximately 50% of its neural pathways involved in visual functions. Our human brains dominance of visual processing is why visual stimuli often trigger faster and more profound cognitive responses compared to other forms of information.

**By thinking visually, we tap into a natural human capacity, enabling more dynamic and associative thinking, which are key components of creativity. Imagine what we could do if we turned to visual ways of working in line with typewriting, numbers and words?**

**Research shows that visual thinking enhances creative processes by engaging the brain's visual cortex, which is crucial in how we perceive, process, and respond to visual stimuli. This engagement stimulates creative thought and aids us at work when we need to organize and express complex problems and ideas. The world is increasingly complex, hence a need of many workers today. Visual thinking fosters a form of "whole-brain" thinking, where both the logical left hemisphere and the creative right hemisphere are engaged. This balanced brain activity enhances the ability to generate new ideas and solve problems creatively - this goes for you, and for me.**

**Even studies show that people who frequently engage in visual thinking tasks tend to display higher levels of creativity. They are better equipped to see patterns, make connections, and envision multiple solutions.**

**Cognitive science research supports this notion - that there is a strong correlation between the connection between visual thinking and creativity. Visual stimuli do not only enhance memory and learning but also play a crucial role in creativity.**

**When we are asked to visualize concepts or problems, we often arrive at more creative solutions than when relying solely on verbal or numerical reasoning.**

## **Graphic Facilitation as a lever - grab your pen**

**Grabbing a pen and sketching ideas, mind maps, storyboards, and connecting elements on a board help all of us externalize thoughts that might otherwise remain abstract. It is a quick and easy way that everyone of us can turn to to aid creativity and visual thinking.**

**And using a pen is everything else but about looking nicely and about perfection. It is not art. Sketching ideas with a pen is aiding our thinking processes and mindsets as previously argued. In this subtle way we can all facilitate the exploration of ideas from different perspectives together - it is a creative collaboration formula right there and can stimulate creative problem-solving and innovation in seconds - a creative act with very little effort and with the tools available for everyone.**

## **Visual Thinking, Inclusion, and Psychological Safety**

**So visual thinking, graphic facilitation and creativity are interlinked. When it comes to psychological safety, visual thinking can provide a democratic and universal language for collaboration. Visuals have a tendency to provide a non-threatening way to share and discuss ideas. It disarms power discourses and often hard to unwind stakeholder split in an organisation.**

**Visual tools democratize the process making it easier for all team members, regardless of their communication style or expertise, to contribute. This inclusivity reduces the fear of judgment, fostering a safer environment where individuals feel more comfortable expressing their thoughts and experimenting with new ideas.**



**In this way inclusion and creativity go hand in hand. Ensuring that all team members, regardless of their background or identity, have equal opportunities to participate and contribute leads to a broader range of perspectives and enhances creativity. When people from diverse backgrounds feel included, they bring unique viewpoints to the table, leading to more innovative ideas and solutions.**

**Visual thinking supports inclusion by transcending language and cultural barriers, making complex ideas accessible to everyone. With graphic facilitation and a facilitator, it can democratize processes and ways of working driving the culture we need, allowing diverse teams to engage fully in the creative process, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued.**

**Visual tools bridge gaps between departments, fostering cross-functional collaboration and enhancing overall team creativity. It takes facilitation but no doubt that using visual thinking is a lever.**

### **Creative leadership in a VUCA world drives DEI & sustainability**

**In the context of today's VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) environment, the shift toward creative leadership is essential. And visual thinking plays a pivotal role in this transformation, helping leaders and teams grasp and simplify complex information, facilitate continuous learning, and drive innovation as a means to DEI and innovation.**

**By adopting visual strategies, leaders can foster creativity, integrate diverse perspectives into decision-making, and navigate the complexities of the modern world with greater agility and insight.**

**Adopting creative leadership utilizing visual thinking goes beyond simply implementing new tools—it's about cultivating a culture of creativity, collaboration, and continuous learning starting with one self as an everyday practise. The approach not only enhances communication and drives innovation but also is a leadership strategy to foster inclusive environments that effectively navigate complexity. And this leadership we can all embrace and bring into play - not because of the title you formally get in a work context, but rather because of the value it brings and mission it sets out to accomplish.**

**In today's rapidly changing world, visual and creative thinking are not just skills; they are strategic imperatives for any organization seeking to thrive and they can be seen as essential drivers to agendas such as DEI, Sustainability and innovation.**

## **Conclusion**

**Leveraging each of our human capability to practise creativity and many people's desire to create, the freedom to explore through experiments, is crucial for business success because experimentation is learning, learning leads to new insights and to innovation.**

**The gap between innovation investments and the actual outcomes from these are often results of a lack of creative leadership. Without leaders and creative ambassadors to guide and inspire others through an innovation process, creative ideas will most likely fail to become solutions. This gap is further widened by stifled organizational cultures, risk-averse mindsets, and bureaucratic processes that paralyze creativity and growth mindsets.**

**Bridging the gap between the freedom to create and the need for creativity in the workplace as a driver for sustainability, wellbeing and DEI strategies is not just an economic necessity; it's about honoring and nurturing what is naturally human and merging business with what it means to be human.**



***Visual thinking refers to the process of using visual elements—such as diagrams, sketches, mind maps, and other graphic***

***representations—to structure, understand, and communicate ideas. It leverages the brain's natural inclination toward visual processing to help individuals and teams organize thoughts, solve problems, and convey complex concepts more effectively.***

***Graphic facilitation is a specific application of visual thinking within group settings, such as meetings, workshops, or strategy sessions. A graphic facilitator uses visual tools and techniques, often in real-time, to capture ideas, discussions, and decisions in a way that enhances understanding, engagement, and collaboration among participants. The facilitator might create large-scale visual charts, mind maps, or illustrations on whiteboards or flip charts as the group works through a topic. While visual thinking is a broad cognitive process involving the use of visual tools to generate and process ideas, graphic facilitation is the practice of applying visual thinking techniques to facilitate group discussions and processes, helping to make the collective thinking visible and more easily understandable. This approach fosters inclusiveness and ensures that all participants can see how their contributions fit into the larger context.***

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## Karina Vissonova



***Karina Vissonova is a researcher, author and educator in design philosophy focused on future wellbeing, future sustainable societies, sustainability and the evolution of design education. In her research and education, Karina works with futures studies and speculative design perspectives. Founder of the non-profit Institute of Advanced Design, she also directs research within futures sustainable societies and education. In addition, under the umbrella of her institute's activities, she curates art exhibitions of art and science. Karina lectures at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design in Budapest and she is a senior research fellow at the MOME foundation. Karina holds membership with the World Futures Studies Federation.***

# **Design for wellbeing – ... when is time for design dreaming**

*Karina Vissonova, PhD*

## **KEYWORDS:**

*Material wellbeing, critical design, pluriversal design, sustainability*

**Design for wellbeing is a beautiful idea. It makes one think of prosperity, of possibilities, and of choices. It speaks of delivering goodness by creating a solution that increases someone's experience of being well. With the economic growth of the last decades, in western-styled industrialised societies the solution can be one of many, iterated over, differentiated by style, by the way it functions, by the materials it is made of, and by the level of joy and satisfaction it may provide. In these societies, the delivering of goodness has been perceived as a relatively simple relationship between the needs and desires of the population and available resources, skillfully formed into products. However, this perception has become considerably outdated.**

**Firstly, it is outdated because of sustainability requirements, – we simply have overreached the planet's capacity for resilience against our interventions in more than one of its critical elemental systems (Rockstrom 2019, Richardson 2023). The planet's safety boundaries, so to say, have been collapsed by the rapid industrialisation and unwieldy focus on economic growth (Daly 1993, Daly and Cobb 1989,**

Dietz et al. 2013, Schumacher 1973, Hopwood et al. 2005), letting in possible futures of scarcity and uncertainty.

Secondly, this perception from early on has been somewhat misconstrued within mechanisms of marketing. Jackson (2016) argues that marketing repeatedly promotes a narrow and misleading view of human nature, by emphasising material accretion as central to attainment of individual wellbeing. This constructed portrayal suggests that individuals are primarily focused on satisfying their own needs and desires, which translates into the drive to consume goods and services – to which then the current economic system of production-consumption has been tailored. Such a picture of society, according to Jackson, suitably aligns with the interests of 'consumer capitalism'. Jackson points out that by focusing predominantly on consumption, marketing perpetuates a societal model that is unsustainable and fails to address the broader and more layered dimensions of human wellbeing. This misrepresentation has been the basis of an economic system that prioritises growth and consumption at the expense of environmental sustainability and social equality. Jackson's criticism of consumer capitalism lends to a conception that it is not directly needs and desires of individual members of society that have driven the global populations into the current crises, but corporate organisations that have organised the planetary resources around these needs based on a false and misleading image of a human. Based on a similar argument, critical designer Ted Hunt <sup>2</sup> proposes that we redefine the today's informal, nonetheless

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<sup>2</sup> *'Welcome to the Corpropocene' by @\_Ted\_Hunt is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*



increasingly popular concept of 'anthropocene' – a geological epoch marked by significant human impact on the planet <sup>3</sup>– to 'corpropocene', where consequently the significant impact is marked by corporations instead of human individuals.

Thirdly and finally, we can no longer, practically nor ethically, uphold the notion that global resources for delivering goodness may be prioritised in some populations over others. Although there are proponents of the current economic system who support the idea that a well growing economy in some populations will eventually overspill, benefiting every member of the global population (Hopwood et al. 2005), new propositions for alternative economic paradigms advocate for a globally equal and just distribution of resources and goods, while keeping within the safe planetary boundaries (e.g. Raworth, 2017, Constanza et al. 2019, Spangenberg et al. 2019, Parrique et al. 2019). These paradigms emphasise a focus on universal wellbeing that is achieved by reducing material outputs while balancing their distribution globally, by this addressing the uneven development that had taken place since the rapid industrialisation of the post 2nd world war period. It is rather visible today that the scope and size of production of goods, as well as their spectrum, do not necessarily relate to their access in global populations. Elhacham et al. (2020) report that in 2020 the anthropogenic mass, i.e. the human made materials surpassed the Earth's biomass. This mass is predominately concrete, metals and plastic, basically constituting all that are our urban landscapes, roads, bridges, as well as our ships, shoes, and food packaging. Today, these goods, however, have met the needs and

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<sup>3</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthropocene>

**assisted in obtained wellbeing only for some of the global population. The focus of the new economy paradigms, in essence, is on social justice as elemental in wellbeing of every member of the global society (Vissonova, forthcoming A).**

**Wellbeing is thought of as a universal idea for a quality of human life. Commonly, it is considered that factors such as democratic governance, geopolitical stability, education, access to resources and jobs, and healthcare, as well as community participation and social relationships all contribute to wellbeing. These are the leading factors by which wellbeing is measured by the global indices, as for example in Happy Planet Index, Gallup Sharecare Wellbeing index, OECD Better Life Index, UN Human Development Reports, and World Happiness Report (Vissonova, forthcoming B). These indices provide valuable insights into human wellbeing. However, directly or indirectly, the indices also elevate the perceived importance of economic performance characteristic more in some societies than others, and life satisfaction that is subjectively determined. Meaning, these quantifiable factors are not universally commensurable for determining wellbeing, as societal setups, ways of living, and preferences towards life qualities are differently shaped and nuanced by culture, beliefs, and climate. Consequently, any one worldview on wellbeing, that tends to dominate, would only inform design partially.**

**This approach to wellbeing aligns with Escobar's (2018) concept of pluriverse. With the notion of pluriverse, Escobar challenges the dominant Western-centric worldview by advocating for a design philosophy that regards and develops capacity to address multiple ways of being, knowing, and living. His perspective seeks to**

**decolonize design by recognising and valuing diverse cultural perspectives, particularly those that are marginalised as the result of economic market-dependency ideologies. It rings of ‘doing well by doing good’, where the one designing engages in the material wellbeing of other members of a society and reciprocally some good emerges for all. Escobar’s pluriversal design proposes creation of spaces where different worlds can coexist, promoting sustainability and social justice by integrating the differently embedded knowledge systems into design processes. The notion of pluriversal design is also proposed by Noel (2020, 2022), specifically focusing on creation of pluriversal design curricula, as well as for its future integration in design for wellbeing by Vissonova and Hohl (2023).**

**While design for wellbeing today has mostly corresponded with product-based solutions, – product based wellbeing as Manzini (2007) calls it, pluriversal design opens the possibilities to imagine alternative ways of design to participate in enhancing positive life qualities. Through the differently embedded knowledge of social groups and communities, based on their geographical location, history, culture, beliefs, and altogether – their values, the social groups form their preferences of life-qualities and hence create the basis to inform design for wellbeing that may be particular to them. This formation, nevertheless, bears prospects of continued wellbeing when considered in a context of a just collective wellbeing, in larger social groups and in global society. Meaning, wellbeing in a pluriversal world is social justice dependent, where global resources are justly distributed and rights to attain individual and collective wellbeing are granted to every member of the global society.**

**Therefore, in design for wellbeing there appear to be two approaches: One where designers absorb, immerse with, and co-create with the differently embedded knowledge of the social groups. And second, where design emphasises social justice in their projections and thus creates conditions for wellbeing. Today, it may require a quiet shift from design thinking to design dreaming. Nonetheless, it may be dreaming that paves the way for design for all.**

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## **Letter from the Chairman's Desk**

### **By Sunil Bhatia PhD**

**I was selected for sensitive responsibility for the government and was asked for medical examination for my body from government-appointed doctors. The doctor found I am colour blind for a specific colour and recommended for rejection of my candidature as per the government guidelines.**

**He explained your eyesight is normal but this job is colour sensitive and your eyes are not equipped to absorb such colour of light.**

**I was disappointed with this new development because the specific nature of light was the reason for rejection.**

**I realized once in a dark room, I was groping in the dark to avoid hindrance on my way that could hurt as I stepped for existence. I felt normal as an electric bulb lights the dark room.**

**I realized the light has guided me to select those jobs where color sensitivity is not required and living in the dark is much more difficult.**

**I realized light is guiding the traffic. Red means stop, green- move, and yellow -be careful in crossing.**

**I went to a restaurant and noticed there was an ultraviolet mosquito repellent that was trapping the insects because of its light. A TV program was showing a program of bullfighting where a matador was**



placing a red colour of cloth in front of the bull's eye that was blocking sight and disturbing him, in an attempt to clear visibility was hitting the cloth.

There was news on TV where the terrorists hiding in a house and police surrounded them. They have announced to surrender and come out of the house. They placed a high beam searchlight focussing toward the entrance to make them blind temporarily. In case their intention is not fair at least police can counter them during temporary blindness.

A spy was placed under high voltage light and not allowed to sleep and that psychological pain made him confess what authority was interested in.

Light character is shadow surfaces as it faces some opaque block. The same problem of shadow was faced by surgeons who were disturbing him to see the area of operation due to the shadow of their own hands. Scientists designed light bulbs arranged in such a way, that light does not make shadows even the block is facing. It was the product of surgery light that was guided to perform without any issue of shadow.

During wartime government used to advise the citizens to light their houses at night in such a way that should not be visible to the enemy from a distance. The enemy could make the people live by following light from their houses and that will help in target bombing. It was the light that was guiding the bombers. With the advancement of technology such actions of keeping the dark are no longer required. Bombers can make the habitants live in clusters because of energy level is dense and equipment can locate levels of infrared presence.

**It is the light that has made a thin line of day and night. People can work day or night with equal effort, and enjoy games of the day at night.**

**The world never sleeps. It is light that has changed our thought process and lifestyle and enjoy more freedom compared to our ancestors without oil lamps to electric bulbs. Thanks to that person who made the first fire torch for holding in hand for light. He used fire property of heat and light in such a way it changed human life forever. It is made secure and safe and keeps away enemies with the art of management of fire. The design of the oil lamp is not accidental but a well thought out design where a wick made with cotton has one end dipped in stored oil to help in burning with low intensity for not generate a high level of heat and the other end has fire for light. Other side the fire kiln has a high intensity of heat by burning logs for cooking where the light was controlled by enclosing fire as the design of the chamber helps in channelizing the heat in a concentrated and focused manner. These two concepts changed the face of human development and laid the foundation of modern civilizations.**

**The absence of light and presence patterns helps design the desired picture elements (Pixel) in the computer and guides the users in drawing the desired picture.**

**In medical science use of light as a laser for surgery is extensive but that light is guided by the surgeon, not a product that guides the uses.**

**It is great honor that Economist and Designer Steinar Valade-Amland has accepted the invitation and invited articles from contributors in of his choice for special issue. It will be different perspective to see the design as whole for survival in market.**

**Lambert Academic publication for celebration of the 150th special issue by publishing a book by compiling editorials "Design For All, Drivers of Design" in two sets Drivers of Design Drivers of Design Volume-II was translated into eight different languages from ENGLISH to French, German, Italian, Russian, Dutch, and Portuguese. Kindly click the following link for the book. "Morebooks", one of the largest online bookstores. Here's the link to it:**

**<https://www.morebooks.de/store/gb/book/design-forall/isbn/978-613-9-83306-1>**

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**Enjoy reading, be happy, and work for the betterment of society.**

**With Regards**

**Dr. Sunil Bhatia**

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## Forthcoming Issues

### October 2024 Vol-19 No-10



**Dr. Bijaya K. Shrestha** *received Doctoral in Urban Engineering from the University of Tokyo, Japan (1995-'98), Master in Urban Design from the University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong (1993-'95) and Bachelor in Architecture from the University of Roorkee (now Indian Institute of Technology), India (1983-'88). Dr. Shrestha has got working experiences of more than two decades. He had already served to the Department of Housing and Urban Development,*

***Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning, Government of Nepal, United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), Japan and various architectural schools in Nepal before taking the present job at Town Development Fund (TDF). He has initiated a new master program in Urban Design and Conservation at Khwopa Engineering College, Purbanchal University, where he served two years as Head of Post-graduate Department of Urban Design and Conservation.***

***Dr. Shrestha is the recipient of numerous gold medals for his excellent academic performance and decorated by 'Calcutta Convention National Award 2006' by Indian Society for Technical Education for his best paper at the 35<sup>th</sup> ISTE Annual convention and National Seminar on Disaster – Prediction, Prevention and Management. He is also member of numerous professional bodies and life member of various alumni associations. He has already contributed more than five dozen of papers, published in various forms: book chapter, international journals, conference proceedings, local magazines and journals including in local newspapers. Moreover, he has been invited in numerous international conferences for presentation of his research findings. Finally, his field of expertise includes sustainable urban development, disaster management, housing, local government capacity building and development control. He will focus on universal design concept in Nepal***

## November 2024 Vol-19 No-11



### **Dr Sandeep Sankat Associate Professor**

*Ph.D. (Architecture), Masters of Ekistics, Bachelor of Architecture*

*Research Interests: Architecture, Ekistics, Universal Design, Older People and Built Environment, User Centric Design*



### **Vishakha Verma**

*Assistant Professor*

*Research Interests: Sustainable Architecture, Climate Resilient Architecture, Architecture for health and well-being, Biophilic Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Built Environment and human behavior, Environmental Psychology, Energy Efficiency in buildings, Passive Design, Green Architecture, Universal Design.*

**December 2024 Vol-19 No-12**



**Yuka Takahashi**

**Designer, specialized in industrial design and applied art.**

## **Year 2025 declared as Women's Designer**

### **February 2025 Vol-20 No-2**



#### **Dr Natasha Poggia**

*Natasha Poggia is a design educator, Fulbright Scholar, TEDx speaker, Climate Reality Leader, and passionate advocate of design for social and environmental change. She is an Associate Professor of Design at the University of Houston-Downtown. Prior to that position, she taught at Lamar University and the Hartford Art School, University of Hartford, in the United States, and at the Universidad de Buenos Aires, in Argentina.*

### **March 2025 Vol-20 No-3**



#### **Dr Dolly Daou**

*24 years of global leadership experience initiating and developing industry-research strategies, research centres, and projects for*



***medium-large organisations and for higher education programs in: Australasia, Europe, and the Middle East. I am Citizen of the Year 2024 received at the Kingston Community Awards. Also, I was a finalist for Kingston Women of the Year Award for the category of STEM education. I deliver workshops to organisations and institutes combining industry and academic bespoke design methodology to develop system and mission-driven strategies and transform research into actionable outcomes. I have also been the Chair of Food Think Tank Working Group at Cumulus Association since 20019. Based in Melbourne, I led the Head of Master of Design: Art and Technology at NACAA (the first joint Sino-French School of Design in China) and I have established and led the Interior Architecture Program at Swinburne University of Technology and implemented its transition. My career path led me to France, where I expanded my area of expertise leading the Food Design Lab working with the industry and policymakers on mission-driven strategies that comply with current government, academic and business outcomes. visit my website for further details: <https://dollydaou.org/>***

**April 2025 Vol-20 No-4**



***Valerie Fletcher has been executive director since 1998 of the Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD). Fletcher writes,***

***lectures, and works internationally. She generates opportunities for IHCD and has broad oversight of all consulting and design services. She created the IHCD User/Expert Lab which has over 400 people engaged in the evaluation of places, products, and services. Her current research focus is generating data to inform inclusive designing for the Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPoC) and for people with a spectrum of brain-based conditions.***

***Fletcher's career has been divided between design and public mental health and she is the former deputy commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health where she oversaw the largest participatory planning process ever undertaken in a state mental health system. She was Principal of Fletcher Studio Design from 1978-1985.***

***She is councilor for the International Association for Universal Design (IAUD) in Japan. She has created an international universal design benchmarking project for the government of Singapore. She serves as Trustee of the Boston Architectural College. Fletcher has a master's degree in ethics and public policy from Harvard University. The Boston Society of Architects awarded her the Women in Design award in 2005. The Helen Hamlyn Research Centre at the Royal College of Art in London named her Inclusive Design Champion 2022.***

## May 2025 Vol-20 No-5



### **Debra Ruh:**

***Advocate for Inclusion and Technology for Good***  
***Debra Ruh is a globally recognized market influencer and advocate for the inclusion of people with disabilities. With over 500,000 followers on social media, she is among the top 2% of voices on LinkedIn, making her a powerful voice in the spheres of technology for all (Tech4All), technology for good (Tech4Good), and AI for good (AI4Good).***

***Debra has spoken at numerous multinational corporations, the United Nations, and the World Bank, emphasizing the importance of accessible technology and inclusive practices. She has authored three impactful books on disability inclusion and the role of technology in creating a more equitable world. She also a speaker for US State Department.***

***As the founder of Ruh Global IMPACT, a think tank focused on disability inclusion, Debra has driven forward-thinking initiatives and fostered global dialogues on these critical issues. Additionally, she co-founded Billion Strong, the world's first grassroots identity organization for people with disabilities. Billion Strong aims to unite the global disability community, enhancing their visibility and support***

**network.**

***Debra's efforts are rooted in her belief that technology can and should be a force for good, creating opportunities and breaking down barriers for all. Her work continues to inspire and lead the way toward a more inclusive and accessible world.***

**June 2025 Vol-20 No-6**



**Maria Kaplan**

***Mara Kaplan is a national expert and trailblazer in the realm of creating inclusive spaces for people of all abilities and ages to truly belong. As the lead consultant for PlayPower on inclusion, Kaplan pioneers initiatives shaping the future of playground equipment and play spaces nationwide. Her journey began as a parent advocating for her son with disabilities, leading her to establish an indoor inclusive play haven and serve as the executive director of the Center for Creative Play for over a decade. Kaplan's impact extends through her consultancy "Let Kids Play," where she conducts dynamic workshops, collaborates with landscape architects, and works with community groups on designing playgrounds while also developing online training on inclusion and child development. Through her unwavering dedication, Kaplan continues to transform communities and champion inclusivity across the country.***

# New Books



Sunil Bhatia

## Design for All. Volume-II

Drivers of Design



<https://www.morebooks.shop/shop-ui/shop/book-launch-offer/74414a1df61c3d2ea8bf46ae7e3c0cf31769f261>



Sunil Bhatia

# Design for All

Drivers of Design

Expression of gratitude to unknown, unsung, unacknowledged, unnoticed and selfless millions of humans who have contributed immensely in making our society worth living, their design of comb, kite, fireworks, glass, mirror even thread concept have revolutionized the thought process of human minds and prepared blueprint of future. Modern people may take for granted but its beyond imagination the hardships and how these innovative ideas could strike their minds. Discovery of fire was possible because of its presence in nature but management of fire through man made designs was a significant attempt of thinking beyond survival and no

doubt this contributed in establishing our supremacy over other living beings. Somewhere in journey of progress we lost the legacy of ancestors in shaping minds of future generations and completely ignored their philosophy and established a society that was beyond their imagination. I picked up such drivers that have contributed in our progress and continue guiding but we failed to recognize its role and functions. Even tears, confusion in designing products was marvelous attempt and design of ladder and many more helped in sustainable, inclusive growth.

[www.lap-publishing.com](http://www.lap-publishing.com)

it is available on [www.morebooks.de](http://www.morebooks.de) one of the largest online bookstores. Here's the link to it: <https://www.morebooks.de/store/gb/book/design-for-all/isbn/978-613-9-83306-1>

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**SHERYL E. BURGSTAHLER** is an affiliate professor in the College of Education at the University of Washington in Seattle, and founder and director of the university's Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology (DO-IT) and Access Technology Centers.

**"Sheryl Burgstahler has assembled a great set of chapters and authors on universal design in higher education. It's a must-have book for all universities, as it covers universal design of instruction, physical spaces, student services, technology, and provides examples of best practices."**

—JONATHAN LAZAR, PROFESSOR OF COMPUTER AND INFORMATION SCIENCES, TOWSON UNIVERSITY, AND CO-AUTHOR OF *ENSURING DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY THROUGH PROCESS AND POLICY*

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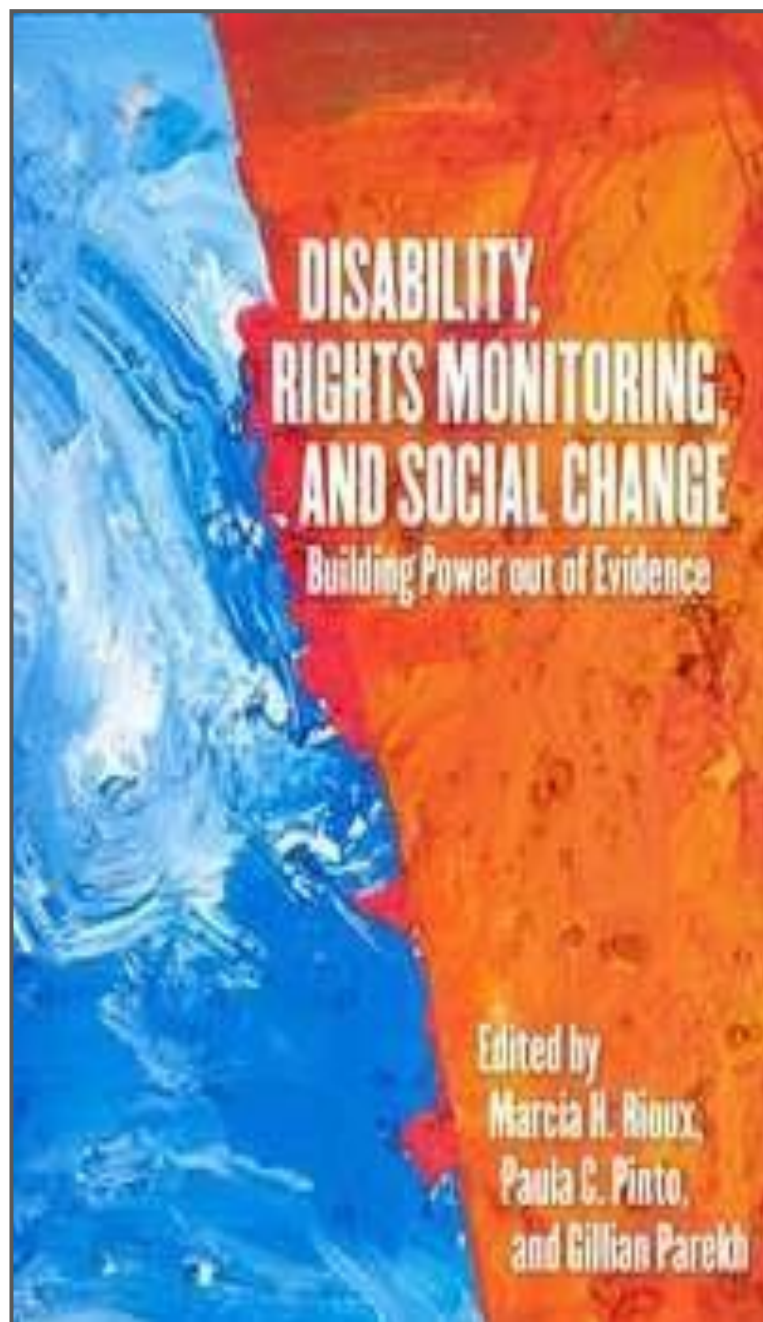
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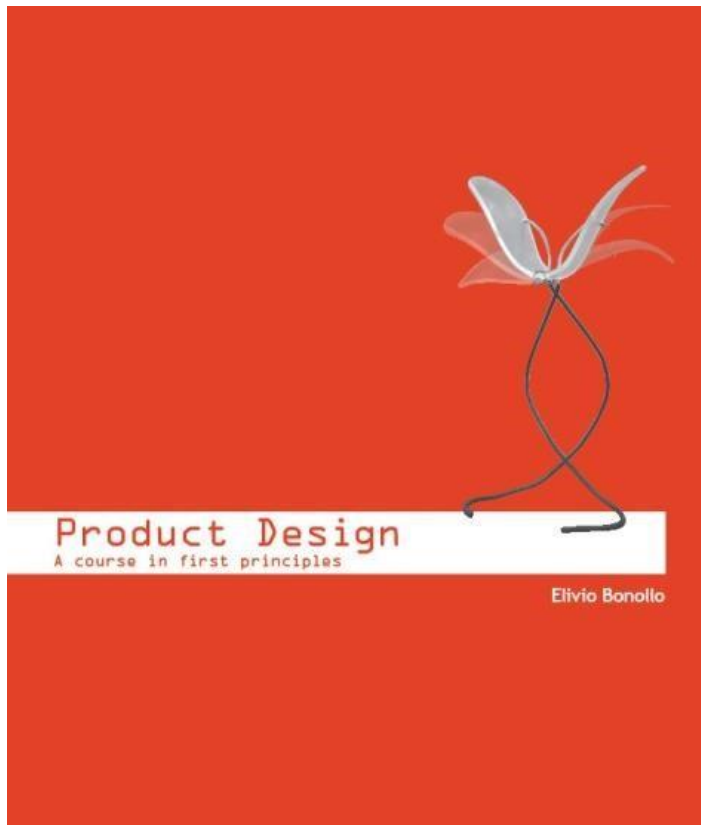
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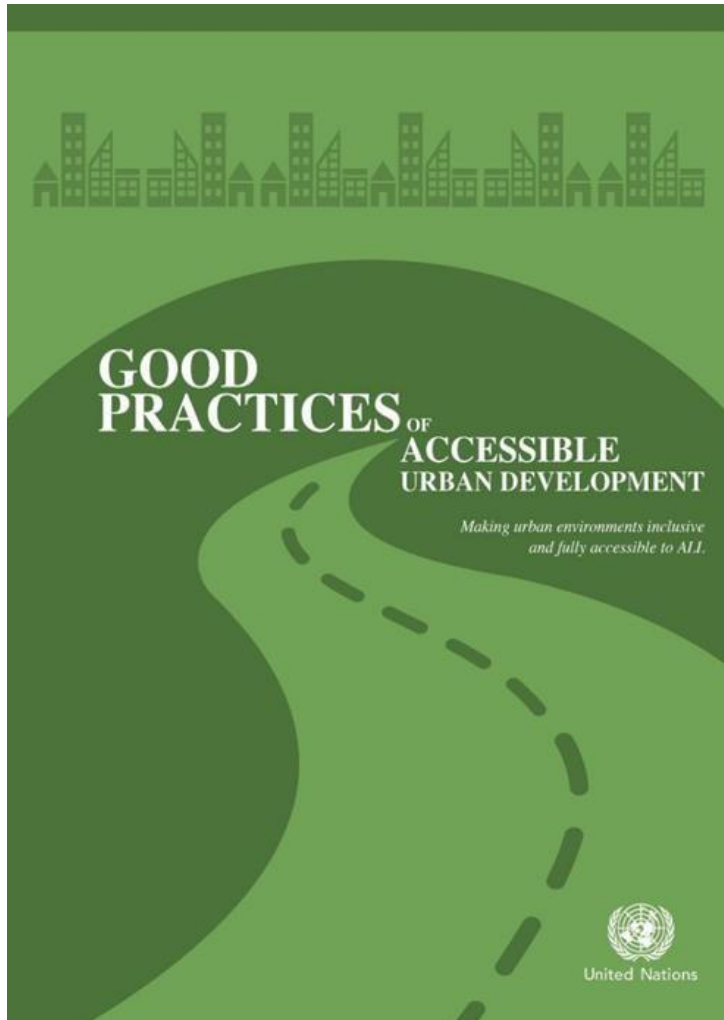
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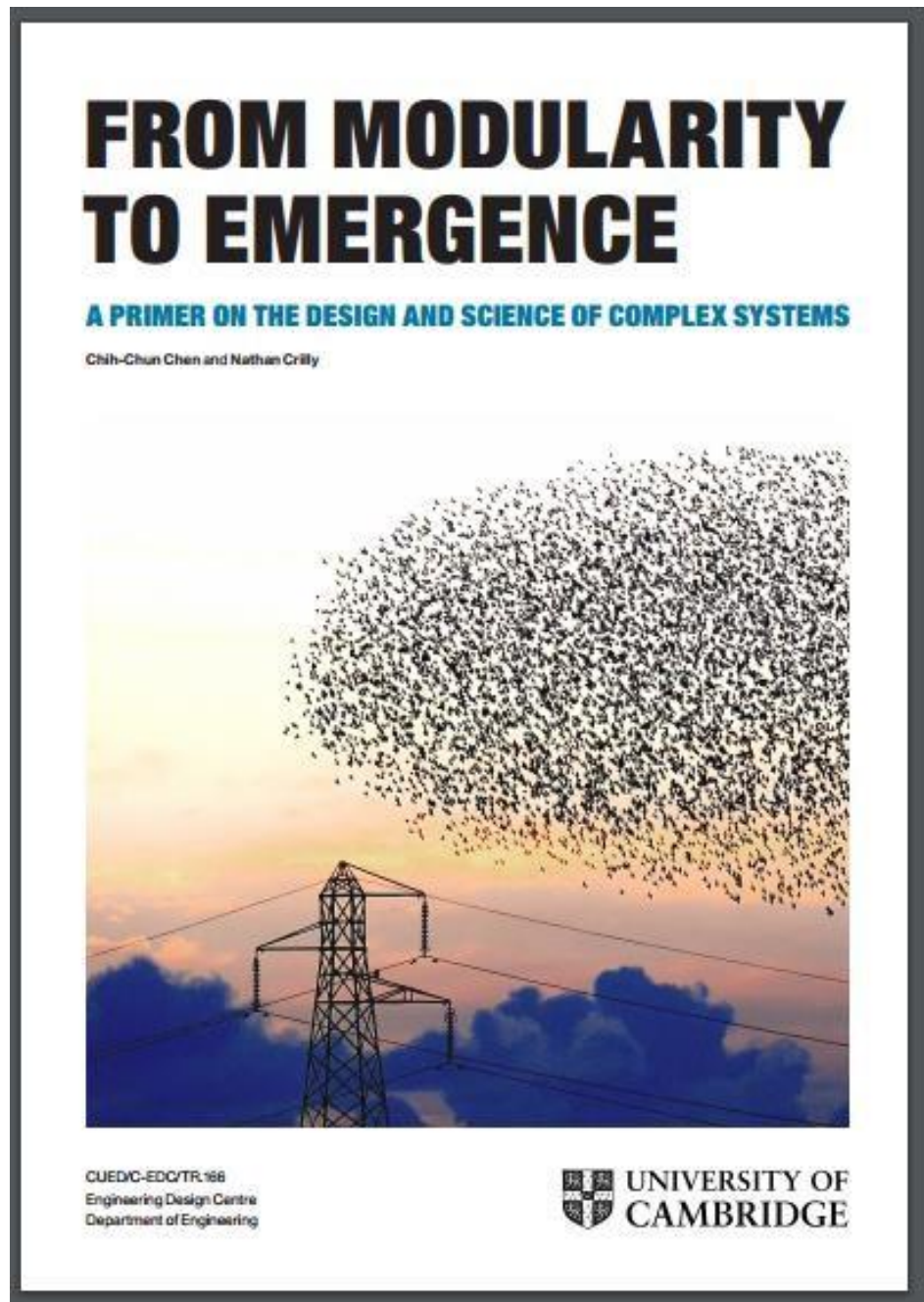
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**In light of the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III) and the imminent launch of the New Urban Agenda, DESA in collaboration with the Essl Foundation (Zero Project) and others have prepared a new publication entitled: “Good practices of accessible urban development”.**

**The publication provides case studies of innovative practices and policies in housing and built environments, as well as transportation, public spaces and public services, including information and communication technology (ICT) based services.**

**The publication concludes with strategies and innovations for promoting accessible urban development. The advance unedited text is available at:**  
**[http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/desa/good\\_practices\\_urban\\_dev.pdf](http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/desa/good_practices_urban_dev.pdf)**



**Dr Chih-Chun Chen and Dr Nathan Crilly of the Cambridge University Engineering Design Centre Design Practice Group have released a free, downloadable book, "A Primer on the Design and Science of Complex Systems".**

**This project is funded by the UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EP/K008196/1).**

**The book is available at URL: <http://complexityprimer.eng.cam.ac.uk>**

# Changing Paradigms: Designing for a Sustainable Future

Editors:  
Peter Stebbins  
Ursula Tischner

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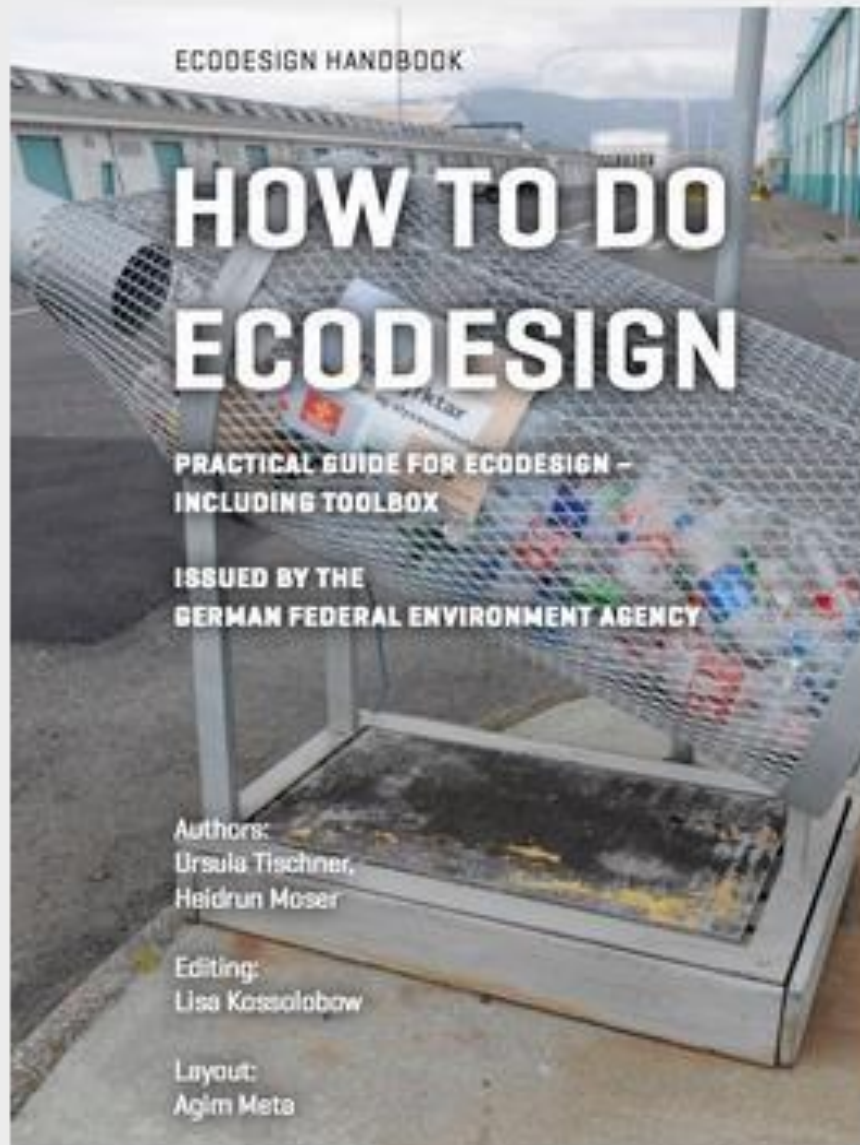
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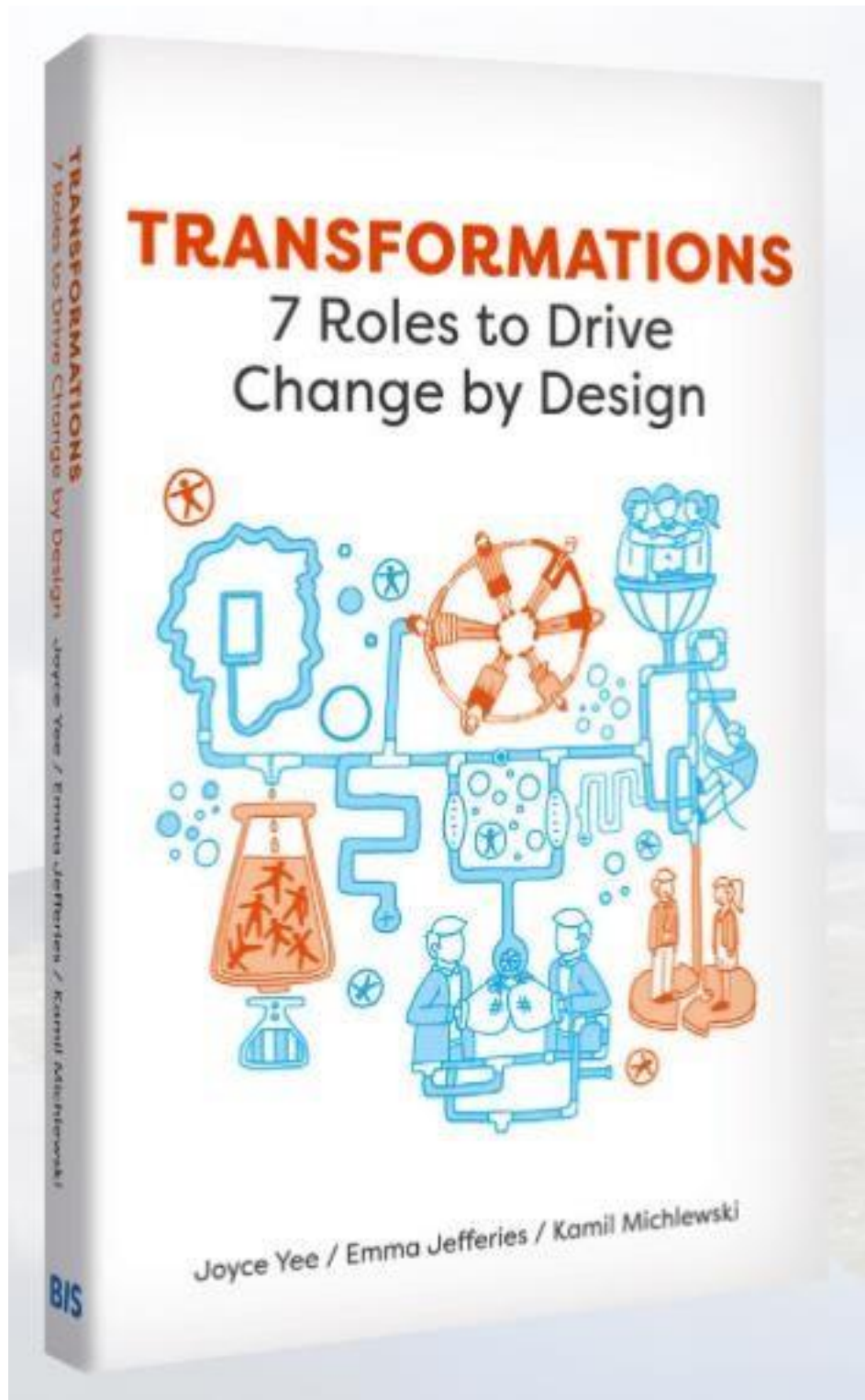
## Changing Paradigms: Designing for a Sustainable Future



# **New iBook / ebook: HOW TO DO ECODESIGN**



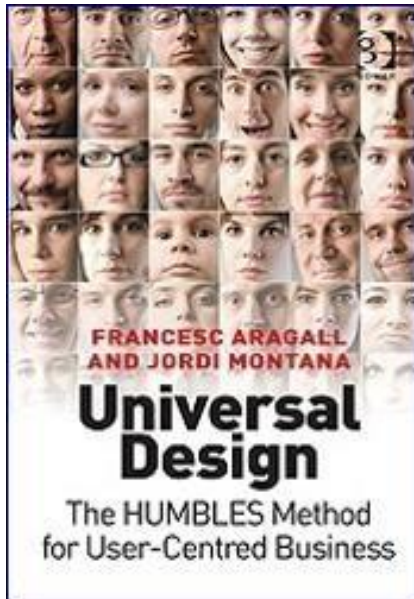
Practical Guide for Ecodesign – Including a  
Toolbox  
Author: Ursula Tischner







## Universal Design: The HUMBLES Method for User-Centred Business



“Universal Design: The HUMBLES Method for User-Centred Business”, written by Francesc Aragall and Jordi Montaña and published by Gower, provides an innovative method to support businesses wishing to increase the number of satisfied users and clients and enhance their reputation by adapting their products and services to the diversity of their actual and potential customers, taking into account their needs, wishes and expectations.

The HUMBLES method (© Aragall) consists of a progressive, seven-phase approach for implementing Design for All within a business. By incorporating the user’s point of view, it enables companies to evaluate their business strategies in order to improve provide an improved, more customer-oriented experience, and there by gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace. As well as a comprehensive guide to the method, the book provides case studies of multinational business which have successfully incorporated Design for All into their working practices.

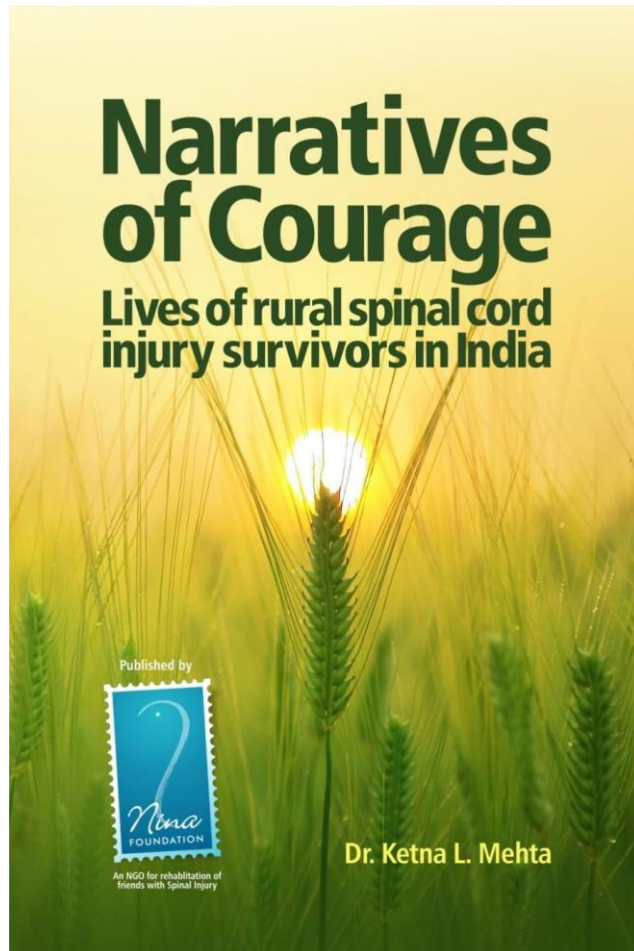
According to Sandro Rossell, President of FC Barcelona, who in company with other leading business professionals endorsed the publication, it is “required reading for those who wish to understand how universal design is the only way to connect a brand to the widest possible public, increasing client loyalty and enhancing company prestige”. To purchase the book, visit either the [Design for All Foundation website](#)

**Nina Foundation's latest E Book has been Published on following online platforms. Now you have more options to download and read Amazon's Kindle;**

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# Case Studies in Applied Behavior Analysis for Individuals with Disabilities *(Second Edition)*

Keith Storey, Ph.D., BCBA-D

Linda Haymes, Ph.D., BCBA-D

This book responds to a critical need for highly qualified personnel who will become exemplary professionals because of their advanced knowledge, skills, and experiences in working with students and adults that have varying disabilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Since Board Certification for behavior analysts was introduced, there has been an expansion of training programs in Applied Behavior Analysis to meet the demands from school districts, health insurers, and families. In spite of these developments, a case studies book has not been available that uses the Behavior Analyst Certification Board Task List, Fifth Edition (BACB) guidelines for educating individuals receiving their BCBA, or for those in the field such as teachers, and service providers. The goal of this book is to fill that need. In this newly revised second edition, eighteen case studies are provided—case studies with complete analysis, case studies with partial analysis, and case studies without analysis. The format, readability, and detailed description of instructional methodology makes this text a valued resource for instructors and behavior analysts responsible for improving the skills of people with disabilities.



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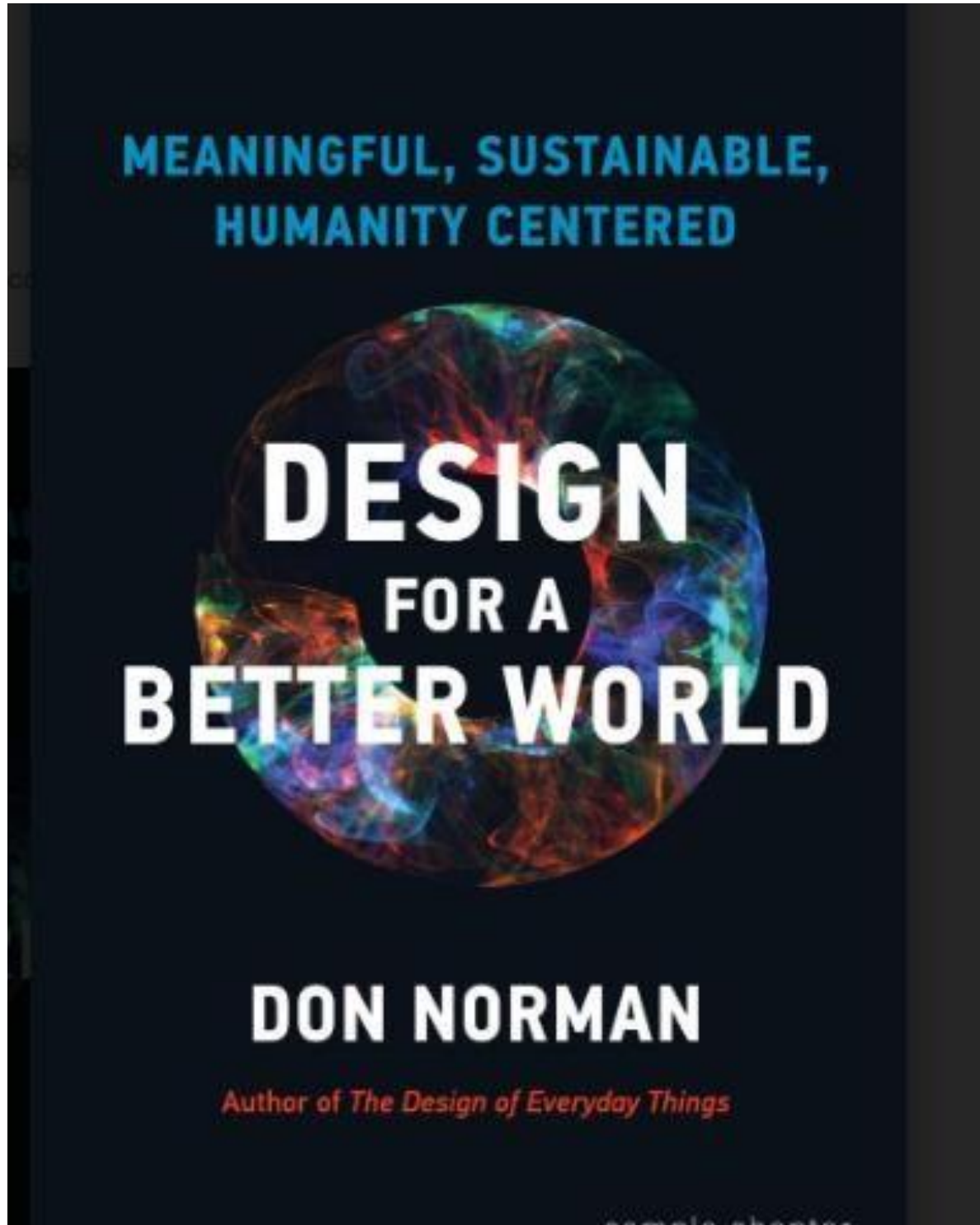
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# News

## **Gresham lecturer to discuss accessibility for all**

**Imagine a world where all products and environments could be accessible for all, regardless of ability, age and other factors. This concept, known as universal design, aims to make sure that everyone can maneuver through life with dignity.**

**Edward Steinfeld, SUNY Distinguished Professor in the School of Architecture and Planning, will discuss this topic's evolution at the 18th Glen E. Gresham Visiting Lecture on Oct. 17.**

**In his lecture, "The Evolution of Universal Design," Steinfeld will share his observations on the concepts and examples from projects conducted by UB's Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access, where Steinfeld is founding director.**

**The talk takes place at 5:15 p.m. in 190 Pharmacy Building, South Campus, and via Zoom, with an in-person reception starting at 4:30 p.m. Continuing Education credit will be issued to NYS-licensed PT/PTAs and OT/OTAs for in-person or Zoom attendance.**

**Steinfeld is internationally known for his research and publications on accessibility and universal design. He has written or edited 10 books including "Universal Design: Creating Inclusive Environments," the first textbook on the subject.**

**During his long career, he directed the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Universal Design and the Built Environment at UB.**

**He has also served on the board of the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA).**

**The Glen E. Gresham Visiting Professorship in Rehabilitation Science features a nationally or internationally recognized authority in an area directly related to rehabilitation science. The twice-yearly Gresham lecture is sponsored by the Department of Rehabilitation Science, School of Public Health and Health Professions.**

**(Courtesy: University at Buffalo news)**



## Programme and Events

**SEOUL DESIGN AWARD 2024**  
for sustainable life

Call for Entry



## Universal Design Award



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## Aufbau für die Jury-Ausstellung



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**Chief-Editor:**



**Dr.Sunil Kumar Bhatia Faculty Member,  
13, Lodhi Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003(INDIA)  
E-mail:dr\_subha@yahoo.com**

Editor:



**Shri L.K. Das  
Former Head Industrial Design Center, Indian Institute of  
Technology (Delhi), India E-mail: [lalitdas@gmail.com](mailto:lalitdas@gmail.com)**

**Associate Editor:**



**Prof Dr RachnaKhare, School of planning and *Architecture* , Bhopal,  
India**

**E-mail: [rachnakhare@spabhopal.ac.in](mailto:rachnakhare@spabhopal.ac.in) Editorial Board:**



**Prof Dr.GauravRaheja, Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee,  
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India**

Email: sugandh@iitb.ac.in



**Prof Dr Ravindra Singh, Delhi Technological University, India**

Email: ravindra@dtu.ac.in

**Special Correspondent:**

**Ms. Nemisha Sharma,**

**Mumbai, India**

Nemisha98@gmail.com

**Address for Correspondence:**

**13, Lodhi Institutional Area,  
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003 India.**

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**Special request should be addressed to**

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