

*Words of Design* by Craig Au Yeung

1 .

The sectors affecting international politics, economy and social life are developing in response to the opposition, argument and merging of the two major concepts of globalization and localization. The formation and evolution of modern design trends, as a responsive indicator of the economic activities in the consumption society, bear adequate evidence of the pervasion and influence of globalization and localization.

2 .

Regardless of the recently much-debated and quickly spreading concise minimal style, the aesthetics of poverty represented by reconstruction of massive recycled materials, and the renewed attention and application of plant, decorative ornaments noted as a revival of New Art Nouveau, all of which directly reflect the efforts of modern product, furniture, garment created by designers and artists to represent their standpoints and interact with the society in a changing and blatant era.

3 .

Minimalism, a term originally reserved for the avant-garde art in the 1960s and 1970s, was taken over to the design field in the 1980s and 1990s, and Donald Judd (1928-1994), the artist who had been pursuing Minimalism, was widely recognized as one the great masters of minimal design. D. Judd has from the very beginning been deliberately blurring the distinction between fine arts and design applications and has designed wooden and metal daily furniture with neat outlines and simple forms, which he presents in daily living space. His works, including chairs, desks, bookshelves, bookcases and beds, are purer and more refined than the pure and refined life philosophy of the Shakers puritans who migrated to America in the old days. His simple and primitive forms and craftsmanship are represented in all his works, whether created in the old factory buildings in the downtown of New York or the permanent studio and the place for collections in a desolate small town in the middle of the United States.

4 .

John Pawson, a British architect who is very active recently, also endeavours to incorporate his understanding of minimalism and oriental Zen into his interior design works. He practises the aesthetic ideas of “Spiritual Void” and “Space Reserved for Emptiness” and seeks perfection in natural lighting, ventilation and material details in all his works, including high-grade private standalone residences, international fashion flagships and VIP lounges of international airports. He subverted the luxurious and flamboyant decoration style of the upper-class society and renewed the definition of the high-class taste to “less is beauty”.

5 .

Designers and artists advocating and practising minimalism have a common intensive interest in the tenets and life philosophies of oriental aesthetics and Japanese Zen and quite appreciate the “wabisabi” spirit in ceremonies of Chado (way of tea), Ikebana (way of flower) and Koudou (way of fragrance) in Japan. Tadao Ando, a Japanese-born world renowned architect, is recognized as the representative of Japanese minimalism. His pursuit of minimalism is best exemplified in the numerous private and public architectural cases in Japan and museums, schools and cultural buildings around the world. His brand style is represented by making concrete walls as smooth as silk, thereby leaving an indelible impression in the daily living space. The deliberate “imperfect” forms of the Japanese ceramist, Kisho Kurokawa, bear adequate evidence of extreme emphasis on the feel of minimal works, and the popular household brand “Muji” is a successful case of spreading the minimal life philosophy.

6 .

In fact, the emphasis of minimalism on natural and plain materials is not only represented in some works with simple and geometric forms but also in the works of designers and artists who reflect the conflicts in reality without the least reservation. The most eye-catching and hyped design team in recent years is the Brazilian Campana Brothers who often work with Italian first-rate international furniture brands in Milan Furniture Fair. Brothers Fernando and Humberto Campana create clearly themed ironical works

with wood, rags, corrugated board, rope loops, rubber tubes and old toys hoses abounding in the slums in the Brazilian community. These works are both practical furniture and eye-catching installation art. Compared with cool-headed and abstractive style of minimalism, the works of Campana Brothers are more straightforward, more sensitive and more provoking and make consumers reflect on the differences between, and the social significances represented by, exorbitantly priced furniture and mass-produced cheap household articles.

7.

Apart from world-renowned designers like Ron Arad, Tom Dixon, Piet Hein Eek and Maarten Baas who reiterate the significance of rethink, redesign and reconstruction in their works and thus directly or indirectly publicize the aesthetics of poverty, more unknown folk designers create works in a direct and primitive way in everyday life, without pompous theories or media hyping, but more energy and straightforwardness.

8.

In contrast with emphasis on conciseness of minimalism that less is beauty by practicing “reduction” strictly, a “reactionary campaign” has appeared in the design field, which resolutely carries forward and represents public preference for botanical patterns and geometric forms. A representative of this trend is the Dutch designer Tord Boontje, who uses botanical patterns in drapes, carpets, scarves and metal shades and of course more directly in wallpapers and dish patterns, setting a decoration vogue followed by numerous consumers and other designers.

9.

Taiwanese artist Michael Lim amplifies Taiwan folk calico into his space installation works, which rises to fame on the global art arena. His calico series take in various local art and cultural elements and represent an attempt to coordinate the new and the old by combining traditional patterns and the youngsters’ roller games trying physical extremes.

10 .

The textures recently used on numerous exterior decorations, such as the “metallized” Islamic traditional patterns of the Arab Cultural Centre in Paris, the complicated overlapping structure known as the Bird’s Nest for the Olympics Stadium 2008, the skeletal structure of the new CCTV headquarters, all of which are massive, expensive and breath-taking visual experiences followed by this decorative agitation.

11 .

French brothers Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec have launched a set of plant-like plastic units capable of being freely pieced together into complex wall hangings like Lego toys, which is just like adding a footnote to this vogue likely to prevail for an indefinite time.

## WHAT IS DESIGN?

John Heskett  
Former Chair Professor of Design  
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

### *Brief:*

To discuss the subject: what is design in terms of different perspectives (e.g. functions, form, context, etc.) of appreciating and appraising “visual arts with functions”.

### **Objectives**

1. A general introduction to design and discussion of its processes and role in society.
2. An introduction to some of the main themes in the History of Design with the aim of providing a “tool-kit” of basic teaching material and analytical approaches.

### *Linguistic Problems with the word “design”.*

A problem exists in English with uses of the word “design”, as in an apparently nonsensical sentence: “Design is to design a design to produce a design.”

Design is to design a design to produce a design.  
Noun 1      Verb      Noun 2      Noun 3

*Noun 1* - indicating a general field of activity:

"In the 1930s, the Pennsylvania Railroad used design to project a dynamic corporate image."

*Verb* - indicating a state or action:

"Raymond Loewy designed locomotives for the Pennsylvania Railroad."

*Noun 2* - indicating a plan or intention:

"Loewy's designs proposed a cladding, or skin over the locomotive, to create a dramatic external image."

*Noun 3* - indicating the finished outcome:

"Loewy's locomotive designs had problems in everyday working practice."

The word “design” therefore can be confusing since its meaning alters as the context changes.

### **Design and Culture**

There has been a problem going back into early civilizations in which work producing anything is regarded often with contempt. Such attitudes are still found today. A leading American critic noted:

“While the tumultuous rise and global spread of American capitalism is surely a subject epic in scope and dramatic in detail, it is one that has inspired surprisingly few of our best writers. There has always been interest in the behavior of people who have money, but less interest in how money is made.”

Scott, A.O. “A Matter of Life and Death.” *The New York Review of Books*, December 17, 1998, p.38.

In contrast, a leading anthropologist and an economist have firmly identified the role of goods in creating contemporary everyday culture.

“The most general objective of the consumer can only be to construct an intelligible universe with the goods he chooses.

...

Goods, then, are the visible part of culture. ... Ultimately, their structures are anchored to human social purposes.”

Douglas, Mary and Isherwood, Baron. *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978, pp.65-6

“Psychologists in general have followed the lead of Freud and Jung by ignoring the place of things in the daily commerce of existence.”

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly and Eugene Rochberg-Halton, *The Meaning of Things*. Cambridge University Press, 1981, p.25.

### **Design and Professional Competence**

Another interesting interpretation of design is by Herbert Simon, a Nobel prize-winning economist, who describes design as a basic intellectual activity that is an integral component of all professional work.

“Everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones. The intellectual activity that produces material artifacts is no different fundamentally from the one that prescribes remedies for a sick patient or the one that devises a new sales plan for a company or a social welfare policy for a state. Design, so construed, is the core of all professional training; it is the principal mark that distinguishes the professions from the sciences.”

Simon, Herbert A. *The Sciences of the Artificial*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, (Second Edition) 1981, p.129.

### **Consumption and Workmanship**

One of the first people to identify concepts that explain some important differences of emphasis that help to explain design was another American economist, Thorstein Veblen, who drew a clear distinction between consumption, or the acquisition and possession of value, and workmanship, or the creation of value.

Acquisition was the target of his first major book, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, published in 1899, in which he coined the phrase “conspicuous consumption.” This can be characterised as pretentious uselessness. People spend money on what can be displayed as a symbol of wealth rather than what is of practical value.

In contrast, Veblen emphasized that one of the most important instincts contributing to human progress was that of the instinct of workmanship, which he regarded as being concerned "with practical expedients, ways and means, devices and contrivances of efficiency and economy, proficiency, creative work and technological mastery of facts."  
Veblen, *The Instinct of Workmanship*. p.33.

## **Design as Art**

Continuing difficulties exist in the relationship between design and art, with design frequently being considered to be a lesser form of art.

An example was an article in the *New York Times Magazine* of 1 Dec. 2002, in which several artist/designers were invited to redesign objects of everyday life chose by themselves. A ceramic artist, Jonathan Adler chose the toilet as his subject.

"I chose to redesign a toilet because even though everybody has one, they're always so dreary. I wanted to create a cheerful toilet. I was inspired by Dior's New Look, with its wasp-waisted silhouettes, from the '40s and 50's. The shape makes it a little cuter; the graphic element makes it fun. There are a number of functional issues that would need to be addressed for this to actually work, but the toilet really is the perfect arena for playfulness."

So, according to Jonathan Adler, a toilet should be "cheerful", "cute", "fun" and "playful".

*Question.*

*Do you agree with Adler's attitude? Should objects become more and more concerned with fashionable change?*

Basically, this concept of design as art is concerned primarily with form, in terms of factors such as Shape, Colour, Texture, Trends and Meaning, with the major design tools being Aesthetics, Styling and Decoration

Design is in fact composed of many sub-disciplines, some of which are:

engineering design, product design, industrial design, ceramic design, decorative design, graphic design, illustration design, information design, typographic design, advertising design, packaging design, brand design, interior design, fashion design, textile design, pattern design, software design, systems design, interactive design, etc.

Some of these may be closer to art, such as textiles or illustration, which hinge upon individual and highly subjective judgements, but the majority are much more concerned with work in a business context that determines what they can do and how they can do it. This requires more

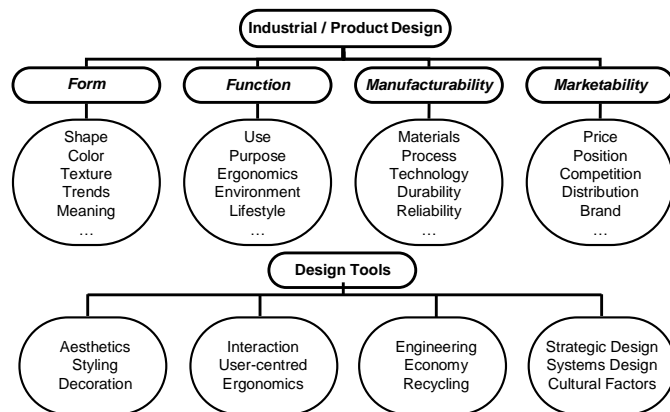
than individual subjectivity and whim to be effective. Terms such as Cosmetic design, Applied art, Commercial art, and Decorative art reduce design to an unimportant element in a process where important decisions are made by others.

### Design as a Complex Business Activity

In contrast, an example of design as a much more complex and serious activity, but no less creative, is the work undertaken by British designer, Ross Lovegrove, for Vitra, a Turkish sanitary ware manufacturer in which over a over a hundred products, including toilets, were designed. Ross Lovegrove and his team spend six months researching the needs of people, the state of the market, and the capabilities of the company before beginning designing. The series has completely transformed the company's market position and launched it as a competitor on international markets.

The concept of Design as a Complex Business Activity therefore requires a much more demanding range of approaches covering a wider range of relevant factors than the personal whim of designer in imposing a fashionable influence in an arbitrary manner.

#### Design as a Complex Business Activity



### Research

The role of research in Ross Lovegrove's work is typical of much design work in the contemporary world.

Producers often have problems in knowing what new products to develop.

They may think they have a good idea, but how they know if other people will think it a good idea and spend their hard-earned money on it.

Various kinds of research can be used to clarify some questions in developing products:

- *Market research*  
Which focuses on what others are doing.



- *Technological trends*  
Which explores new possibilities in technology, although this can be expensive.
- *Social/cultural trends*  
Investigates what is happening in society in terms of factors such as demographics, tastes and trends.
- *User observation*  
This is concerned with discovering and understanding people's actual and latent needs.

While some designers are concerned with new technological applications, most are active in the last two forms of research into social/cultural trends and user observation.

Research does not dictate outcomes in a simple logical process, since designing involves a high level of tacit knowledge, derived from learning by doing, or experience over long periods. Research, however, can serve as a basis for creative solutions with very different characteristics, particularly more complex problems where the levels of difficulty are not easily comprehended by one person's subjective understanding.

A simple example is how to extract juice from a lemon. The process is uncomplicated:

- Cut and press a lemon.
- Separate juice from the pulp and seeds.
- Apply juice to further use.

#### *Future Research Development*

Some of the research being undertaken at the School of Design at HK Polytechnic University and which could be important in the future are:

##### *Form*

- Form factors
- Trends in form
- Ergonomic parameters

##### *Processes and methodologies*

- User observation
- Planning and systems

##### *Organisational*

- Management structures and design
- Market characteristics (global/local)
- Product life-cycles

##### *Theoretical/Historical*

- Design, society and culture
- Economic value of design

The importance of maintaining and improving design capabilities as a crucial tool in the knowledge economy widely believed to be the important wave of the future is evident in the manner in which many of Hong Kong's neighbours and competitors are building their strengths on a long-term basis. Japan has been doing this since the late 1950's,

Korea and Taiwan since the 1970s. The trend in Taiwan's education system is clear:

### Taiwan – Educational Development

Number of institutes offering ID degrees in Taiwan since 1964:

	<i>Diploma</i>	<i>Bachelor</i>	<i>Master</i>	<i>PhD</i>
1964-70	7	-	-	-
1971-74	4	2	-	-
1975-84	5	2	-	-
1985-89	8	3	2	-
1990-94	9	10	5	-
1995-99	9	11	7	-
2000-05	0	22	15	4

Design is not art but a professional business activity, requiring high levels of creativity for its practice, but also knowledge and rational problem-solving capability. The types of design abilities that we need to nurture in Hong Kong's young people are high skill levels, a strong sense of values, creativity and wide-ranging knowledge. They will need to be adaptable since the nature of design is already in a process of change.

### Changes in the Roles of Designers

- Design has become divided into many specializations
- But at the same time, designers have to work with many other disciplines.

### Two paths seem to be emerging:

- **A Conventional View**  
In which designers create individual forms and leave it to users whether to buy or not.
- **A New View**  
In which designers are increasingly creating systems enabling users to take vital decisions for themselves, supported by cheaper and small-scale technology, especially digital devices of all kinds.
- Both will continue to coexist for the foreseeable future, but the new view is expanding at a rapid rate.

### Who decides what is value?

Is a business producer-centred or user-centred?

### What is Quality in Design?

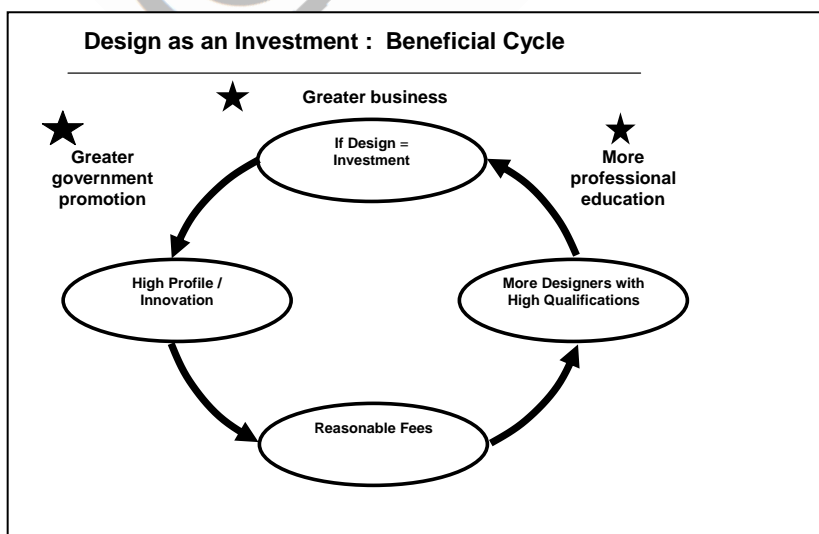
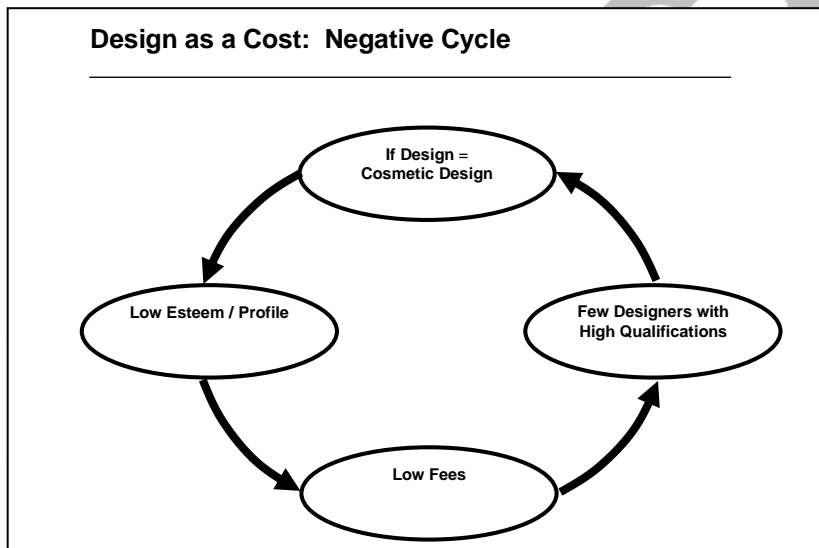
"Quality" in a product or service is not what the supplier puts in. It is what the customer gets out and is willing to pay for. A product is not "quality" because it is hard to make and costs a lot of money, as manufacturers typically believe. That is incompetence. Customers pay only for what is of use to them and gives them value. Nothing else constitutes "quality."

产品或服务的“品质”不是由供应商加上的。这是顾客能从中取得又愿意花费的。一般生产商把产品欠缺“品质”的原因推作制造上的困难和成本高昂。这是不适当的。顾客只会购买对他们有用和有价值的东西。并没有其它可建立“品质”的因素。

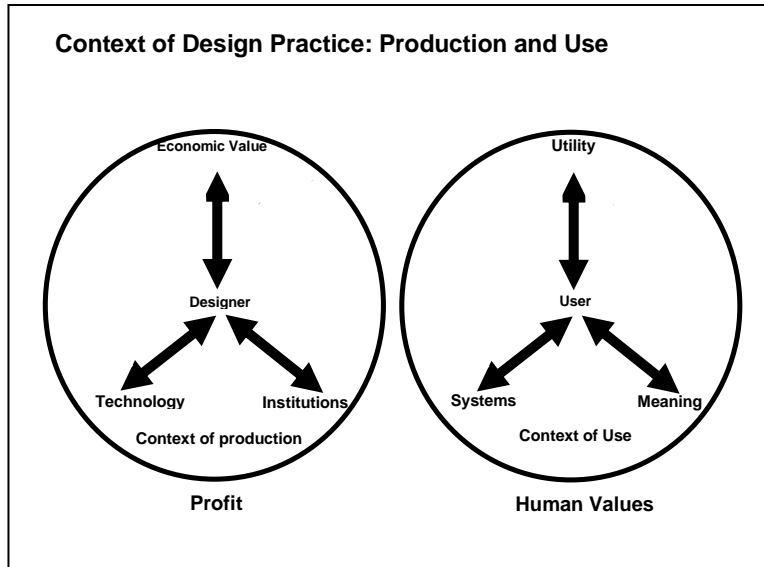
Drucker, Peter F. *Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Practice and Principles*. New York: Harper Row, 1986, p.228.

The major difference between art and design is who determines value. In the final analysis, judgments about art are made by the artist. He or she decides what is important or not. In design, what the designer thinks is not the major determinant, it is users who decide whether something has value or not.

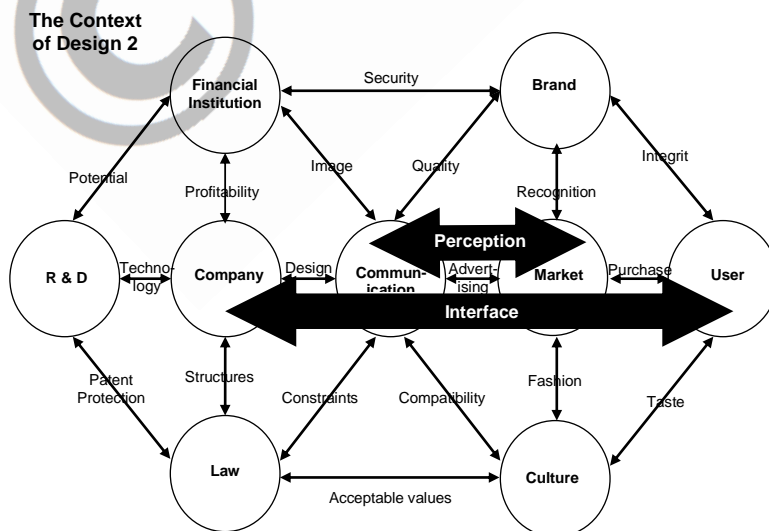
Whether design is used intelligently in a company depends very much on the attitudes of management.

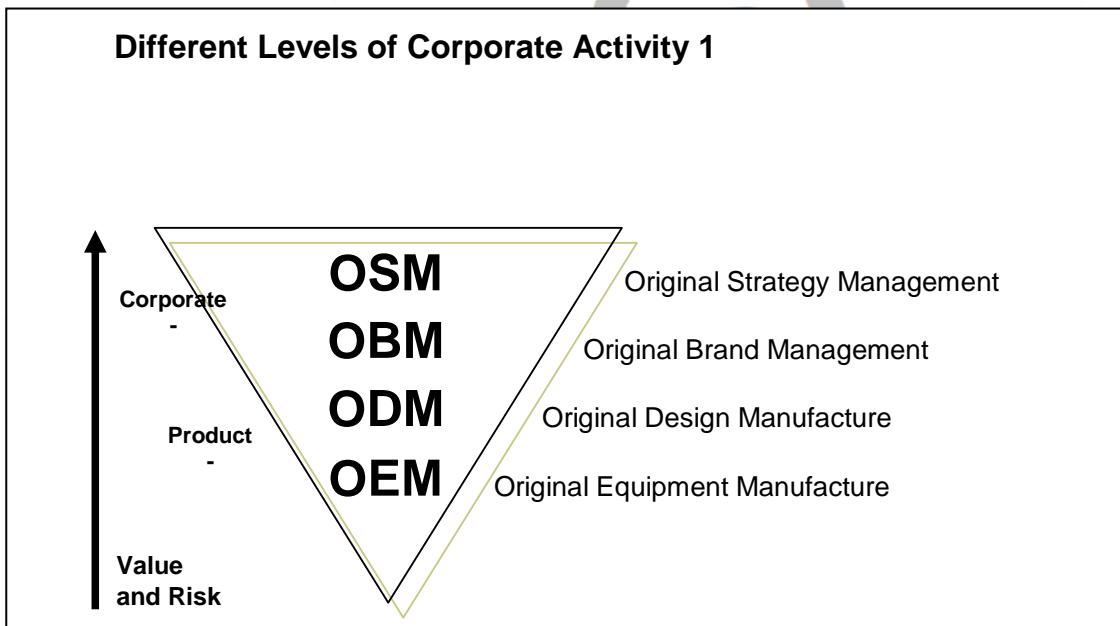
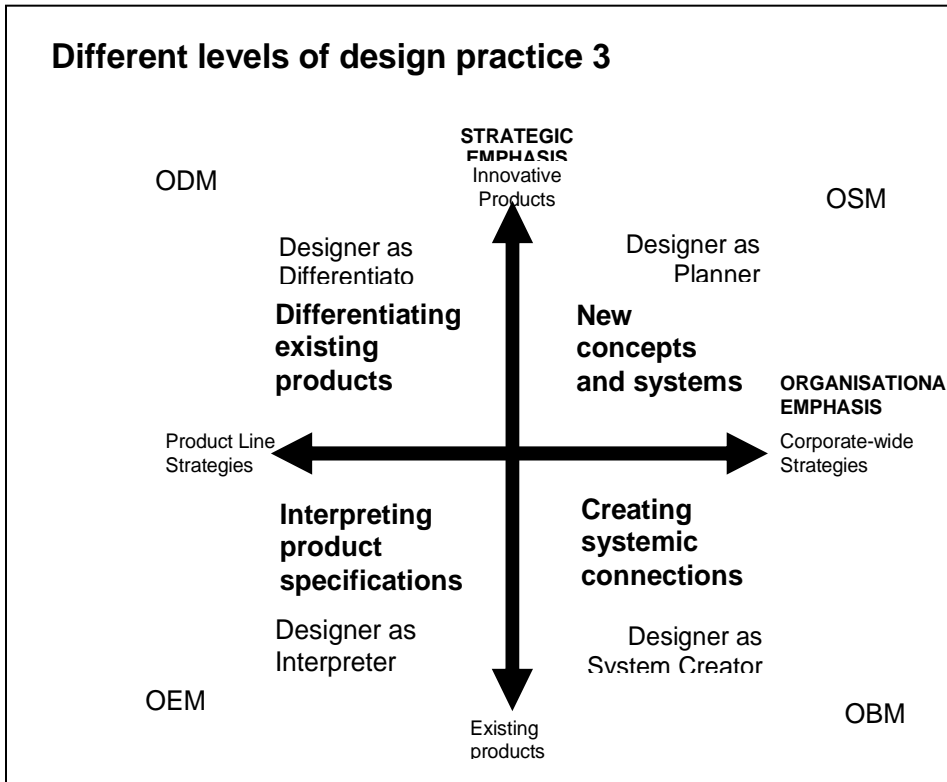


How then can the viewpoints of business and user be reconciled? There seems to be a clash between the human values involved in how ordinary people use products (buying a washing machine is not seen as a way to make the home more profitable) and how producers view making them – in which profit is an absolute necessity.



This in essence is the major role of design: generating products, communications, environments and services, and systems, which have enhanced human value in terms of such factors as ease of use, better performance, access to wider opportunities, and greater pleasure in use. Such qualities in the long run create continuing and sustainable profits. It is possible to have designs of benefit to society, economy and culture in terms of human value that is simultaneously economically valuable. In other words, there does not have to be a conflict between the two emphases of profit and human value.

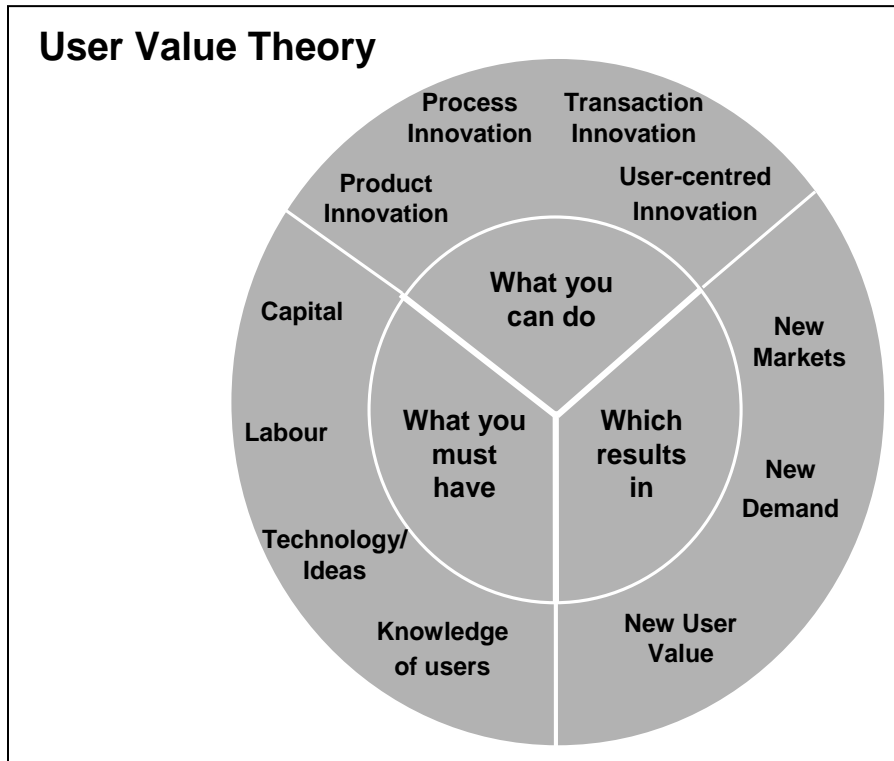




### User-centred Design

One of the most important tools in contributing to the welfare of populations is the concept of User-centred Design, which means going beyond what people currently know and want. Instead it seeks to offer

what people never thought they could have or never knew they wanted, in ways that are sustainable and increasingly accessible to all.



“There is a lack of the creative will that has to be expressed in the company’s entire expression of life. That takes time, it takes years, it takes patience.”

“若要发挥创意于公司之全部，创意总是不足。这需要时间，需要年月，需要耐性。”

Jürgen W. Braun, Managing Director, FSB

## 導介

這篇短文嘗試用不同的述事角度，從香港過往三十多年中西文化背景和差異底下，以至日益膨脹之「香港文化意識」去欣賞、去審視環繞著我們生活的「平面設計品」(2-dimensional Design Objects)，細看它們的存在和價值，進一步加深「設計教育」在中學課程有何意義。儘管從六十年代末開始，香港的美術教育有良好的開端，加上七十年代香港工業的起飛，以及八、九十年代香港的城市不斷地發展，以至今日在國際金融中心的角色，香港人在文化、教育、生活、經濟、甚至政治各領域，我們都不能擺脫「設計」之重要性，以及它「無處不在的影響」。

「設計」，當我們欣賞它的「可觀性」(Appearance，指外貌)時，我們不能忽略它的「理念性」(Concept，即創意)，以及它的「實用性」(Function，指用途)；這三方面的特性(Properties)，包括了可見或隱晦性的元素，是不可缺或的。

因此作為老師的我們，是否應一方面要認識「設計」的重要性、加上了解它的潛在價值，但同時亦要開啟新一代學子的眼光，讓他們面向將來，以正確的態度，接受挑戰。筆者認為，「設計教育」的意義就在認識我們的「過往」、審視「現在」，以及為「將來」而鋪路。這裡的香港包括您和我，同時亦包括香港其他七百萬人，接受不同「教育模式」的香港大眾。

「設計」帶來人類福祉，例如自動電梯於六十年代引入中環萬宜大廈帶來「驚喜」、「效率」和「舒適」，但從此亦帶來香港人缺少了運動、壞了身子的問題，這正是有得亦有失。近日，當我們多用了膠袋、紙袋，我們同時又要處理環保與徵收膠袋費用的社會問題。這一切的改變，不論大小就足以我們教育界正視「將來」，為一個嶄新的開放年代而準備自己。我們要具國際視野、靈敏的頭腦，以及創新的思維，改變香港人「資源上的不足」。

## 「設計」為何而來？

當每一個新「設計」的湧現，就是舊一個的「死亡」，雖然「過氣」的設計，可能成為香港文化博物館的藏品。這就是現實！因此「設計」的創造者，他們的處事態度就是如何將自己的設計品的生命延長，以及如何爭取接觸更多觀眾、更多買家。這就是：設計既要符合功能，也要大眾接納。香港設計教育先鋒王無邪先生說：「設計是有目的性的創造。設計……為滿足人類的實用需求……一件工業的製成品須符合用家的期望。」<sup>註一</sup>

筆者想指出「設計品」的出現，千變萬化，無處不在。但它們的「壽命」長短不一。由數小時的非法張貼於其他公司門口的海報，以至轉載入香港特區歷史的區旗、區徽的設計，都是代表著設計師的心血歷程。

我們不可不知「設計」一詞是一個舶來語(來自意大利文 *disegno*<sup>註二</sup>、與 *drawing* 同源)，在西方自中古時期(Middle Ages)由**工藝師**一詞(或稱為裝飾藝術的工匠)演進成今時的「**創作人**」地位，有近千年的歷史。這和第二次大戰前德國包浩斯(Bauhaus)系統<sup>註三</sup>(1919-1933)的設計教育有關，回顧我們中國因是**農業立國**、數千年來的舊社會，藝術只屬皇朝、貴族，以及宗教人士所擁有，藝術品的製造、收藏、鑑賞等機會來自權力和有知識的上流社會。一般農民出身的國民，只處於接觸日用品的框架內，加上改朝換代之戰禍，平民財產喪失，難怪我們先祖、甚至諸位負笈美、日、法留學回國的孫中山、魯迅、徐悲鴻等歷史偉人都對當時舊社會有所不滿，但又礙於革命事業的開展，以及英年早逝，他們都難深入討論問題，與年青的一代作學術性對話、交流較少，美術教育在舊社會從此只流入「**裝潢形式**」、「**技術提升**」，未能將「**創新精神**」在國內發揚光大。

回顧香港，「設計」學習正配合「設計」行業的新開始，有賴**王無邪、何弼、Jon Prescott、Henry Steiner**等前輩於六十年代末開始<sup>註四</sup>。他們諸位在不同的教育、設計領域推動「設計」，而當時的香港中文大學、香港大學兩校外進修部正不斷地發展，加上 Henry Steiner、何弼等設計師、建築師作為教育實踐先鋒，推行西方的「**設計基礎**」課程(art and design foundation course)<sup>註五</sup>，從此開拓了香港設計教育常規的一頁，也把當時的香港青年視野擴闊。

時隔三十多年，由公餘學習模式開始，至今天全日制非學位或學位課程，畢業生可說是千萬，但除卻少數人士，例如**靳埭強、陳幼堅、蔡啟仁、施養德、麥家碧**等人成為香港人所熟悉，大部分的設計師都只能默默耕耘，他們的作品未能為人認同之理由為何？我們的教育系統是否出了問題？是否有所不足之處？問題又出於哪裡？

我們要知道設計有**特色**才會有**代表性**，靳埭強之作品以中國之基本筆法，加上帶有中國元素的物件、配合中式陰陽對比，產生亦古亦今的面貌；陳幼堅以香港、或中國之懷舊形象和色彩，也開始了他的**舊瓶新酒**做法；蔡啟仁之設計以「**中英文字**」骨格為本，他的平面、立體設計(結構)開拓**富文字之筆劃美**，行走理性和感性之間；當然施養德的**城市觸覺**，是靠他對生活、對運用極細膩的影象，加上高設計水平，出版至今行銷之「**號外**」。事隔多年，他們的設計師地位已無可匹，但問題又是：香港有足夠的設計精英，成為新一代設計師學習的榜樣嗎？

除了上述七十年代之設計師，都有著「**中西文化共融**」之美學外，其他的手法都是**大同小異**，既以西方構圖、著色、造型等常規性處理，充斥著陳腔濫調(cliché)，或甚至互相模倣、抄襲、或用過時的風格、或受電腦技術「**控制**」(dictating)著的<sup>註六</sup>「**為設計而設計**」的廣告設計，例如超巨型的戶外廣告牌，常以西方模特兒(或少數巨星)的例牌照片，加上高科技、使人摸不著頭腦的產品展示，國內國外、香港「**相爭看齊**」。難怪我們學了「**西方標準**」後三十多年、加上「**地球村環境**」的出現，我們香港的設計水平逆水行舟，創意更見缺乏。相反的，鄰近地區，設計日見創新。例如新加坡 *Where* 雜誌；日本、泰國商品的日新月異的包裝，除帶濃厚西式風格外，還見大和的「**冷傲**」，與恰恰相反的泰國的「**熱情**」，互相輝映成趣。



## 香港精神，與西方價值共存？

流行多年的「傳統與創新」、「East meets West」等對比式理念，給香港設計師無窮的創意和機會，但今時今日在極限的「可發揮的空間」，也許是時候讓設計師多溝通、學者多加研究箇中如何從科技、經濟、社會、文化、生活等領域，創出更多主意，讓我們繼續發展這門博大精深(magnitude of design)的「香港產業」。

隨著科技的進步，改良和加倍功能(例如電子相機)已不是唯一的銷路保證，所以各路商人意識到產品「美麗、新穎」的容貌，有助建立品牌效應。所以各大工業國急促開發新潮產品，帶動競爭力；之不過，事隔整個世紀，各地學者指出：「不是所有的設計品，都是成功的商品。」言下之意，各地市場充斥著不少設計差勁或抄襲出來的商品，不消說我們的香港，翻版已不是新鮮的事物，看看 Tempo 就是經典的例子。德國設計議會主席 Dieter Rams 曾經指出：「假如您仍未為『設計』『打擾』(指正用一件工具時)，您已算是幸運的一個(用家)。」在他眼中，設計「應走中立及開放式(neutral and open)之路」……「愈少設計，就是愈好的設計。」<sup>註七</sup>。這不就是一針見血的批評？我們新一代「為設計而設計」的設計師，是否應引以為鑑？

## 欣賞「拿來」，但不可全盤西化

我們從西方「拿來」<sup>註八</sup>(魯迅用語，意謂洋為中用，但不是盲目地、不經篩選去抄襲)美學、以及哲學和科學觀，始於五四學運，「學習西方」、「洋為中用」早已是理所當然的事；但一百年後中國優秀的設計，還限於我們的傳統建築或傢俱、又或一些例如酒類之老產品，其他的談不上設計。同時香港大部分設計品當中，在外國人眼裡只是一般的「變異」、「變奏」的設計(creativity through variations)<sup>註九</sup>，達不上追求設計的原創性，因此開拓式的理念，是我們教育界必須加強的教學目標。

香港為一高效率的城市，競爭劇烈。為著爭取時間、為著宣傳商品，娛樂出版界尤見激烈。有危有機造就了閱讀普及性，以及免費報紙和雜誌的出版，除惠澤打工仔外，還為投身設計工作的青年提供更多的就業選擇；但有了新的市場競爭，又出現了「變革求存」，導致舊有的社會道德淪亡論或社會對色情標準之謬論等老問題湧現，香港中文大學學生報之「情色事件」，可見時下青年向舊有的標準挑戰一番，「甚麼應該寫、甚麼應該畫」頓成社會議題，也加重了教育界的負擔。

「設計」的存在，以改善我們生活質素為經、亦以提高我們文化水平，以及對「美」的追求為緯；設計師(及有關的工程師)在這兩者平衡中尋求取捨(compromise)，因而創意可以綿延不絕，滴水可成河。學者 David Pye (1978)指出，一項「設計」必須符合六大條件<sup>註十</sup>，才算是完整的工序：

1. 設計應符合造型上基本的組合原理；
2. 生產的設計應符合要求和定位，設計師確保該設計在用途上合符目標和收效；
3. 確保在生產後，設計的原件耐用，符合標準要求；
4. 確保用家的保養或添加原件權力，提供用家進一步有關資料和與公司接觸的途徑；(以上的

條件被視乎與「用途」有關)

5. 設計品的投資要合理、價格普為人接納；
6. 設計品的外貌廣泛為人接納。

以上是指出設計不是一蹴而就，是要經過**程序及篩選**，才能面世，這與純藝術的創作過程很不一樣。又當 worldwide web 流行，「平面設計」的範圍已靜悄悄地起了「**革命**」；從**靜態**(static)的影象，演變成分秒必爭的**動態**(moving)影象，**視覺、聽覺語言**因此顯得更加複雜多變。

**設計要求**(廣義上可應用任何設計品上)包括**客觀的因素**，例如對機械的常識、對生產成本的預計，也同時包括**主觀的「美」與「醜」**的標準。後者因人、地域、文化、習慣、潮流等各處有別，不可一概而論。紅色、白色、黑色在中西的色彩用法，各自不同。

打從自西方傳入香港，**美的闡述**已成為「**國際性**」語言，早期學者包括英國的 Maurice de Saussure、Kurt Rowland、美國的 Paul Rand<sup>註十一</sup>等，他們洞悉了西方「**美的排序**」(principles of arrangement)，是隱藏於大自然的**定律**(包括透視、色彩)，加上物件之間的本質，例如**造型、肌理**，以及**元素之間的關係**<sup>註十二</sup>(relations between elements)。因此西方的美學，**重於理性觀察和分析**。

簡言之，「平面設計」對我們教師來說，可包括**倡導學生認識**：

1. **可見的元素**，它們是圖片(包括繪畫)、文字與色彩；
2. **不可見的元素**，就是它們之間的「**關係**」元素變化；加上最重要的
3. **評估**(review)該設計的「**手法**」和它的「**有效性**」，加上是否還有其他的「**可持續發展、帶動本地色彩的可能性**」？

### 港式「變奏」，但不能忽略原創性

在筆者愚見，香港藝術館近日主辦的「不中不英」展覽<sup>註十三</sup>，雖謂向香港之「**中英文化變異**」尋根，挑戰「非中非英、亦中亦英」的港式文化(有如澳門之土生文化)和其他**表達的模式**，通過「拿來」、加以「**注釋**」，創造自己的藝術。惟是這種個人的創作，雖有**主觀獨特之處**(individuality)，但在筆者眼中，有些是**隨手拈來的「範本」**(templates)或從他人借來的「**即食造型**」，會造成大量「**美術或設計的贅語**」(superficial redundance)<sup>註十四</sup>，這也是教育界應該正視的問題。

**中西文化差異**提供了設計機會，但同時亦產生不同的**審美及審查**的角度。在探討東西方美學之分別，筆者利用澳門郵票設計之《中葡陶瓷》，掌握中葡陶瓷個別的特色之同時，又加以標榜設計的「**可讀性**」，通過六組文字和圖案來**促進西方認識中西陶藝的差異**，包括陶藝的用途，也涉及郵票作為認識中葡文化、商業、航道等之**工具**和兩國歷史上的背景。這種**多元用途的理念**，最終勇奪得法國之洲際大獎及意大利的文化獎<sup>註十五</sup>。我們對**設計的價值**、我們對**人生的探求**、我們對**言語夾雜運用**等，將來應更有探討的價值；例如「**設計**」可否帶來文化、造型、色彩之自由配搭(mix and match)的新啟示？又或突出**主色**(colour blocking)會否有更新的效果？又或語言中的雙

關語(puns)和逗樂、搞笑(gag)等等手段，是否也是探討各地**文化差異和共融**的工具？

在美學上，純「文字」是有局限的，不為外國所了解，因此飲品的包裝，在美麗的色彩、獨特的圖案設計吸引下，把「前衛」、「好味」、「新鮮」、「高格調」的**隱性價值**宣傳開去，引發強烈的購買慾。因此**大眾對「美」的觀念**，也是作為「推銷員」的設計師一定要掌握的資料，例如賣手機產品的設計師多以：

1. 大眾對模特兒胴體、姿態或產品的美麗外觀、加上使人看後**愉悅的色彩**；
2. **直接**了當介紹商品，不轉彎抹角，不依賴文字訊息；
3. 圖中模特兒與觀者有**眼神接觸**，潛意識中把觀者「洗腦」；
4. 主要產品有**清晰的定位**、針對獨特的消費羣；以及
5. 間接或直接展示出**價錢合理**(消費之回報)的訊息。

以上的一切，都是以「**大眾消費概念**」為基礎，加上「**小眾品味的潮流**」互相結合的成果，反映出設計界是一個**充滿「預計」**的行業，脫離不到大、小群眾的**喜惡範圍**。

### 「香港精神」的認同，是否更有深層的意義？

談到香港大眾口味，在**本土意識膨脹**的今天，倒發覺香港精神的**身份認同**(Hong Kong Identity)是否也脫了色？在大家的**口味相近**，身穿著同一成衣店購買的 Polo 底下(尤其是在假日)，**互相「包容」、「共濟」**，但實際上是缺乏了安全感，在無特色的生活形態下，變成了**既定形式和美學的追隨者**，這難道就是香港的「集體回憶」麼？為改善香港形象，我們一有賴設計師、工程師去改善「**智慧匱乏**」的舊貌，另一方面在學校，在教師支持下**開放「校園空間」**，創立一些「**實在或虛擬的環境**」，讓學生搞好「**智慧型的學習**」，切勿再重蹈覆轍，只為技巧而活，以為「**仿做到西方**」就沾沾自喜。「香港精神」，如是跟著他人的思想走在背後，我們還會有甚麼將來？

「**文化雜碎**」是香港的特色。**同音字夾雜、名詞變動詞**等都帶有本地色彩。甚麼電視台節目「**鯉勢力**」、甚麼廣告語「**成就佢最好的將來**」、明星買廣告時說「**明知唔 work**」、報紙專欄「**國際 fun 明**」台北之「**我家賤貨**」(年青人飾物店)、澳門之「**聞鷄起舞**」(食館)，以及「**餃掂**」(食館裝飾)等相關語，明知只是一般的「**變奏創意**」，難登大雅之堂，但我們的文化亦欣然接受。香港演變需要過程，由漁鄉至大都會，由「**全中式**」地帶，成為「**中西滙合**」；回歸後更變成「**中國境內**」之「**國際金融中心**」，變化前所未有的。但在整個演變過程中，我們的「**設計**」扮演著甚麼角色？我們應否自問「**香港特色**」又是怎樣的一回事？

### 西方之科學觀如何與東方色彩結合？

我們中國既有的美學標準，始於南齊謝赫(479-502)<sup>註一</sup>的「**古畫品錄**」。他提出的「**六法**」事隔千年，在國畫鑑賞仍以「**氣韻生動**」為最重要的標準，套用現代詞彙，它就是中國式的「**絕對創意**」，擺脫了**工匠的枷鎖**，這是把**人性和藝術**雙結合，我們有些人窮一生努力亦未可達此意境。細看西

方標準，雖有**寫實與幻想**，但基礎都是從**觀察得來**、理性的描述外貌、鋪排著色、以及多樣化構圖，以及風格的發展。回顧中國藝術之本質——「**古典鮮明、神韻灑脫、抒情寫意、樸素自然**」；而情調中更有「**秀婉**」、「**健朗**」<sup>註十七</sup>等等標準，都是需要我們觀者具備學養，才能有所領略；正與西方的「**光度、彩度**」；造型的「**寫實、表現、半抽象、甚至極微細**」等等概念，都是有迹可尋；不過我們的「**五彩墨色**」或與「**漸變、對比、肌理**」等舶來術語有著「**異曲同工**」之妙罷。因此，雖謂中西文化各異，但亦富於若干「**共同價值**」；我們有待各地學者及設計師共同攜手開發出來。

在教育持續的發展上，我們意識到香港學生的「**審視以及評估**」能力上，應該加強他們的**自身審視的意識(self-enquiry)**。在他們的**經濟能力**相應提高後，他們將來的**社會權力**也相應加大；他們會問「**為何我要選購這貨品？它與其他的有何不同？**」這一羣香港新一代的消費者(部分會成為社會新貴)已追上了時代，他們會以開放的態度，追尋自己的選擇。當「**I have a choice**」意識膨脹，亦是**權力的代表**，影響著他們的判斷力。這除帶來商機外，還給設計師扮演「**創造者**」的機會，因此「**貿易、設計、進步**」就成了一系列的代名詞，帶來不斷的經濟契機和社會的繁榮。

當然，在有選擇的同時，就產生貨比貨以及**品質比較和對立**。我們欣賞設計帶來的「**優越性**」，但同時給我們社會不少「**破壞**」，例如破壞環境的電腦垃圾、我們過度使用紙張，以及若干**失效**的技術等，攝影、電腦軟件和印刷行業為此科技進步之重災區。我們的視覺藝術科教學也是：當追不上時代、又當教視覺藝術時又要教設計、又當面對工作壓力時，我們教師怎樣才算「**做好呢份工**」呢？這是教師們揮之不去的「**挑戰**」。

## 設計教學，「**技術、學術**」雙結合

說成教師的「**挑戰**」(或苦況)，是視乎個別教師的觀點與角度，也同時與每人的「**能力、學識、興趣**」以及「**處事方法**」有關。不消說，作為教師必需學懂怎樣寫教案——「**設計工作提案**」(Design Project Brief)。備課時在一至兩頁紙裡，「**設計**」出「**總要求**」、「**研習流程**」等，同時亦利用它為師生間之「**合約**」。細節上要寫明「**目的、要求、活動範圍和生產步驟、遞交日期、評分標準，以及閱讀、參考書單**」等。有了這個 Project Brief，師生都按著時間表跟進，以及保證學生發揮至崇高有創意的目標。這個**願景(vision)**就是我們高中教育必須推行的「**技術**」和「**學術**」的結合。

在 Morrison 及 Twyford(1994)<sup>註十八</sup>的提議，一份優秀的 Project Brief 應要求學生：

1. 用簡潔、有力的文字和插圖，由設計概念圖，繪畫至最後階段的施工圖；
2. 直接生產設計品的雛型(prototype/mockup)，或以電腦撰寫程式，以便生產；
3. 設計品的測試，初步評估和修改；及
4. 執行設計品的生產；會否附有整體的評估報告(evaluation report)則視乎設計工程的需要。

**專題研習教學** (Project-based Learning)<sup>註十九</sup>是教設計唯一的「**探討式**」的教學法；在過程中，目

標和時間的掌握是關鍵性的。顧名思義，研究任何專題都是需要師生互動、互相啟迪。做教師的要用積極態度和開明角度看學生的設計研習作品；要求學生用橫向或線性思考(vertical and lateral thinking)作大量資料參考與探索，找出多元化的可行方案，繼而客觀地分析能否達至期望，包括概念上是否新穎的想法。這一切，都是一條有序的**設計鏈**，互相緊扣、工序嚴謹。

最後，也是最重要的一點。如要欣賞學生的表現，就要必須明白一件優秀的設計，就是一件「**整體、綜合體**」(an integrated entity)，是包括一系列**蘊藏價值的作品**。整項工作是需要以**多角度審視、不同層次的探索**。學生是不可能在短短一兩周內，全靠天份而完成的。當課堂內做「設計」作業，我們期望學生**不斷改變思考模式**、在教師的倡導下，用**理性作出判斷**，發揮**多元智能和創意**。

注釋：

1. 王無邪著《平面設計原理》，雄獅圖書，1974 出版，1993 第 15 版，第六頁。
2. Morrison J., Twyford J., *Design: Capability and Awareness*, Longman, 1994, p.16
3. Newark Q., *What is Graphic Design?* 視傳文化，中文版，2003，第 38 頁。包浩斯 Bauhaus(the Building School，位於德國 Weimar)的校長為 Walter Gropius, 名師有 Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Johannes Itten。
4. 1973 年香港博物美術館主辦了「基本設計展覽」，當時的王無邪、Jon Prescott(白自覺)、何弢等為主導老師；Henry Steiner 為當時權威的設計師，代表作有銀行及酒店業作品。
5. 藝術及設計基礎課程以中文大學校外進修部為首間院校，之後有香港大學校外進修部、香港工專(香港理工大學前身)、私立有大一設計學院、正形設計學院等。
6. 見 Fiell C., and P., *《Graphic Design Now》*, Taschen, 2005, p.56
7. Margolin V.,(Editor),*Design Discourse: history, theory, criticism*, University of Chicago Press, p.111
8. 「拿來主義」是中國著名文學大師魯迅(1881-1936)推崇四點思想精神之第三點，其他是「立人為本」(第一點)、「獨立思考」及「韌性的堅守」(第二及四點)，見 2007 年 4 月 26 日於澳門由上海魯迅文化發展中心主辦的《魯迅是誰?展覽》展版內容。
9. 見 Margolin V.(editor),*Design discourse: history, theory, criticism*, University of Chicago Press,1989, P.111。法國心理學家 Abraham Moles 分創意為「絕對創意」(absolute creativity)及「變異創意」(creativity through variations)，前者為當務之急。
10. Pye D.,*The Nature and Aesthetics of Design*, Herbert Press, 1978, p. 23
11. Sausmarez, M. de, *Basic Design: the dynamics of visual form*, Studio Vista, 1964；Rowland K.,*Visual Education and Beyond*, Ginn & Co., 1976；Rand, P., *Thoughts on Design*, Studio Vista, 1947, revised edition, 1970
12. 見王無邪著《平面設計原理》，雄獅圖書，1974 出版，第 8 頁。
13. 「不中不英」展覽於 2007 年 3 月 23 日至 6 月 3 日於香港藝術館展出。
14. 見 Margolin V.(editor),*Design discourse: history, theory, criticism*, University of Chicago

Press,1989, P.129

15. 《中葡陶瓷》為畢子融於 2000 年設計，榮獲法國郵票世界杯《洲區最漂亮郵票》及意大利《最佳文化題材》獎，資料藏於澳門通訊博物館。
16. 見高準著《中國繪畫史導論》，新亞出版社，台北，1972，第 57 頁。「六法」是一、氣韻生動；二、骨法用筆；三、應物象形；四、隨類賦彩；五、經營位置；六、傳移模寫。以「氣韻生動」為最高標準。
17. 同上，第 28 頁。
18. Morrison J.,Twyford,J.,*Design: Capability and Awareness*, Longman, 1994, p.191
19. 見 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project\\_Based\\_Learning](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_Based_Learning)

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