Guest Editor’s Note
Opening the Doors, Entering the World: A New Era at Art Center
DOT’s first guest editor shares insights on Art Center’s engagement with the larger world.

Art Center Spearheads Public Campaign for Earthquake Preparedness
A new Art Center initiative harnesses the power of design to help prepare Los Angeles for the “Big One.”

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Renowned photojournalists leave an indelible impression on Art Center.

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The Complexity of a Design Education
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Once upon a time, the myth goes, there was a land where people thought that designers were artists or inventors who spent their days in the studio making fancy things. The occasional designer achieved fame, but most remained shrouded in obscurity. Like all myths, this one lasted a long time. Until recently, few people understood that designers and their work profoundly affect every aspect of the way we live.

But today the myth is fading at last, and Art Center is at the heart of a radical shift in public perception and professional attitudes. The social and technological upheavals of the past few years have brought about a sea change throughout the College. Gone is the notion that designers must toil anonymously. Instead, there's a keen new awareness that design can be deployed as a powerful tool in dealing with critical issues of our time. There's an exhilarating sense that, both collectively and individually, designers can make essential contributions to society and energize others in doing so.

It follows, then, that Art Center is redefining the meaning of the "educated" designer today. The major challenges of our era—sustainability, basic health and well-being, urban access and mobility, violence prevention, literacy—are being addressed throughout the College's curriculum, public programs, and institutional collaborations. Great talent and skill will always be the College's sine qua non, but now the designer whose work embodies contemporary issues wins the day. This is as it should be. In a world increasingly shaped by design, Art Center believes that designers must be change agents engaged in every possible arena.

As you'll see in the pages ahead, this is happening with an intensity that would have been unimaginable even a few years ago. Much of the vital, beautiful work pouring out of Art Center today—for starters, look at the "Classroom Without Walls" article and the "Portfolio" section—reflects the new business as usual.

This marks the first in a special series of DOTs featuring guest editors—thought leaders from among the Art Center community who share their insights on topics of importance and relevance to elevated design discussion. Our thanks to Erica Clark, Senior Vice President, International Initiatives, for her contributions to this issue, entitled "The New Business as Usual." — Iris Geit, Senior Vice President, Marketing and Communications

The response is equally avid among the College's corporate friends and sponsors. Since the very beginning, Art Center's reputation has resided in an unmatched ability to respond to—and, better yet, drive—corporate interests. The College's expanding engagement with social concerns aligns perfectly with many of the key issues driving the market today. Like many of their peers, the enlightened business leaders you'll meet on pages 6-11 realize that the presence of broadly informed, engaged designers in their midst directly affects innovation and the bottom line alike—and is, in fact, "the new business as usual." Imagine, for instance, that you direct the design department of a top automotive company and you're recruiting candidates for new positions. Which young designer do you choose—the recent graduate who's done brilliant work in a "school magazine" into a journal addressing topics of interest to his audience, in this issue a "VII" photography consortium highlighted on page 5. The word is out that something new is afoot at Art Center, and people want to see it and be part of it.

As you'll see in the pages ahead, this is happening with an intensity that would have been unimaginable even a few years ago. Much of the vital, beautiful work pouring out of Art Center today—for starters, look at the "Classroom Without Walls" article and the "Portfolio" section—reflects the new business as usual. It celebrates the unprecedented potential of design that John Hockenberry describes in his superb essay. It celebrates the 24/7 excitement of the designer who sees no separation between personal commitment and professional achievement. And fittingly, given its growing and diverse audiences, in this issue DOT celebrates a coming of age from a "school magazine" into a journal addressing topics of interest to us all. With doors flung open to the world, Art Center deserves nothing less.
Art Center Spearheads Public Campaign for Earthquake Preparedness

Left: Earthquake magnitude map (courtesy of the Southern California Earthquake Center) Right: Los Angeles City Hall is envisioned as a “Three Square” for public education.

“...the history of humanity has always been a race between learning and disaster.”
—H.G. Wells

Californians fear earthquakes more than any other natural disaster, but most people in the state are surprisingly unprepared for it—if not oblivious to—the threat posed by a catastrophic seismic event. In Los Angeles, where the next “Big One” could strike without warning at any moment, scientists envision a scenario that could rival the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina. It is a matter of life or death, but when, and officials agree that much more must be done to educate the public about how to take personal responsibility for earthquake preparedness.

Recognizing that design is an underutilized tool in addressing public safety, Art Center has launched a highly innovative, multifaceted communication campaign that makes today’s scientific, technological, and emergency management expertise more accessible to diverse audiences. Spearheaded by Art Center, this “classroom without walls” is a unique consortium of multiple community-based vehicles and alternative media channels in order to galvanize the public to take action. Art Center’s initiative will also create new paradigms for communication outreach that have vitally needed international applications.

After the conclusion of the intensive research phase of the project at the end of this year, transdisciplinary studios led by department chairs Ann Field and Nik Hafermaas with David Mocarski will follow in spring and summer sessions 2007. The task at hand will be to weave a rich fabric of ideas, reactions, and testimonials related to earthquake preparedness with strong and engaging visuals that will make up the “source book” envisioned as the initial volume. With internationally renowned designer Stefan Sagmeister at the helm to create the visual identity of the initiative as well as the art direction and cover of the publications, and special commissioned contributions by illustration artists such as Christoph Neimann, the project is structured to provide a unique collaborative platform for Art Center faculty and students to dive into.

Something must—and can—be done to change the outcome of the next big quake. As Dr. Lucile Jones, noted U.S. Geological Survey authority, often remarks, while an impending large-scale earthquake is inevitable in Southern California, its outcome need not be disastrous. By mobilizing the creative community in conjunction with other expertise, Art Center will drive an urgently needed move from a “culture of denial” to a culture of possibility and individual responsibility that makes the inevitable quake a less fearsome prospect.

Photography in the Service of Truth

The nine-member agency VII derives its name from the number of founding photojournalists. Their reputations preceded them—nine photojournalists at the top of their professions, documenting the most poignant stories of our time throughout the world. Internationally renowned as the VII agency, the group recently spent three days at Art Center leading a series of inspiring presentations and workshops attended by capacity audiences.

The richness and impact of VII’s work were evident from the outset of their visit. Each photo-essay that they presented—from shots of Indonesian child prostitutes to Chernobyl’s nuclear wasteland—reflected an unflinching gaze that pierced its subject to the core. Similarly, the photographers themselves displayed rare candor and insight in addressing the complex topics that arose during their workshops with faculty and students.

For everyone fortunate enough to attend, and especially for Art Center students, the encounters with VII had matchless educational value. “One of the most important tools a student must have is awareness,” says Dennis Keeley, chair of the College’s Photography and Imaging department. “The members of VII are relentless in their pursuit of this awareness. They put a face on human conflict and won’t let you look away. VII showed our students what’s possible and challenged them to make their marks on the world. Isn’t that what education is all about?”

The visit was so productive for everyone involved—including each of the VII members—that the entire group plans to return to Art Center in February 2007 for another series of presentations and discussions.

Art Center and INSEAD: A Winning Partnership

Six years ago, Art Center and INSEAD—one of the world’s preeminent business schools, based in France—implemented a groundbreaking collaboration between MBA and design students. Skeptics raised eyebrows, but proponents at both schools understood the value of the exchange from the outset. “Innovation and creativity are integral to business today,” said Manuel Sosa, the first INSEAD professor to invite Art Center students into his classes. “It makes sense to bring design and business students together before they meet in the real world.”

In January 2005 the first Art Center students arrived at INSEAD, where they became part of teams working on product-based, entrepreneurial projects and learned the fundamentals of business development. Their INSEAD counterparts quickly realized the importance of involving designers in R&D endeavors as well. The success of this first collaboration received international media coverage and paved the way for an ongoing Art Center-INSEAD exchange—and a remarkable sequel this year. Among the Art Center students in France this spring was Eran Weinberg, an eighth-term Product Design major.

Weinberg and his MBA team developed a plan for a simplified cell phone for senior citizens, and their presentation was so successful that it was entered in the prestigious annual INSEAD Business Venture Competition.

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Weinberg’s team not only made the finals—the first in the competition’s history to include a design student—but also walked away with the top prize of $10,000, which the team will use to seed a new business venture. “This was a win-win for everyone,” says Maureen Thurston, the Art Center faculty member who guided the students through their 14-week project. “All preconceived assumptions were dropped, and both sides learned how powerful the design-business collaboration can be.”

Art Center students Eran Weinberg (standing, center) won the top prize in the INSEAD Business Venture Competition.
THE NEW BUSINESS AS USUAL

A fundamental shift is occurring in today’s complex and challenging business world. Compelled by consumers, organizations, and their own growing concerns about issues such as global warming, poverty, and sustainability, industry leaders are rethinking their core beliefs about how to create, operate, and grow their businesses. As a result, old paradigms focusing exclusively on profits are giving way to the realization that it’s not only possible but also profitable to build social and environmental responsibility into bottom lines.

This approach is rapidly becoming “the new business as usual” and is generating a demand for creative talent—designers and artists who are eager to partner with business to develop, implement, and communicate innovative and responsible business strategies. In the process, many compelling questions emerge. How can designers and business professionals bridge the communication gap that has traditionally existed between their disciplines? What skills must designers acquire to function effectively in these new business settings? How can designers best prepare for their changing roles in business?

Curious to know how business and design leaders would respond to questions like these, DOT spoke with five individuals whose feet are firmly planted in both worlds. Each interview began with the question, “Is it possible for companies to be socially responsible and still meet their bottom lines?” The resulting conversations touched on everything from design for the United Nations to fly fishing in Wyoming. Thoughtful and thought-provoking, each of our contributors shared a unique perspective on the issues facing designers in “the new business as usual.”

Yvon Chouinard

Yvon Chouinard is a surfer, fly fisherman, and world-class mountaineer. He’s also the founder of Patagonia, Inc., the outdoor clothing company that he built into a $230 million success story without taking it public. Operating on the principal that green business is good business, Chouinard devotes 2% of Patagonia’s annual sales to grassroots environmental organizations. He recently published a book on the philosophy behind Patagonia, Let My People Go Surfing: The Education of a Reluctant Businessman. Chouinard’s business philosophy is straightforward: “Challenge conventional wisdom and present a new style of responsible enterprise.”

Q: Is it possible for companies to be socially responsible and still meet their bottom lines?

A: Oh, absolutely. Patagonia is a profitable company, and has been for a long time. We’re profitable by doing the right things. Also, it’s more of a challenge to do things the right way, especially for designers.

Q: How do designers fit into Patagonia’s vision of being socially responsible?

A: I think everything starts with design. If you want to change the world, it’s got to start with designers. To solve problems you’ve got to keep asking questions until you get to real solutions.

In my business, we start by asking questions. One question leads to another and another and another. To make responsible products, you’ve got to take those questions to your designers and insist that they dig deep.

Q: Can you give an example of how your designers dig deep?

A: When we made the commitment to switch over from industrially grown cotton to organic cotton, the onus fell on the designers to figure out how to do it. You can’t just call a fabric supplier and say, “switch that 10,000 meters of cotton fabric we ordered to organically grown cotton.” Then there’s the issue of dyes. In the past, we’d ordered predyed fabric. But we discovered that many of the dyes are toxic. If we don’t use toxic dyes, where will we get nontoxic ones? The questions go on and on, and our designers had to know enough to ask them.

For us, it’s easy because we’re not in business to make clothing just for the sake of profit. We’re in business to make responsible choices and prove to the rest of the world that it’s possible to be profitable by making them. In fact, there’s nothing in our mission statement about making money. That’s very hard to get across to a new designer who comes to work for us. They have a hard time understanding that the more quality we put into a product, the more profit we make. Everybody thinks that you make a profit by cutting this and cutting that. That’s absolutely wrong.

Q: How do you measure your bottom line, if not by how much money you make?

A: Well, it sounds corny, but we measure it by how much good we’ve accomplished at the end of the year. If you ask me what our profits were last year, I’d have no idea. I didn’t pay any attention to them. It’s really a Zen thing I learned from climbing. It’s how you get to the summit that counts, not what’s up there.

Of course it means being curious and asking questions. The reason you ask those questions is because you want to do the right thing, not only for yourself, but for the people around you as well. As a company, that’s what we’re trying to prove that corporations have a responsibility to contribute to the common good. That’s a hard one for most of them to get.

Q: Do most designers have this kind of awareness when you hire them?

A: No, not at all. I’ve given talks to graduates of design schools, and when I mention the idea of including environmental considerations into their designs, they look at me slack-jawed. But it’s not just the design students. Business students are graduating with not one single class in environmental responsibility. It’s a total disconnect.

The lesson that design schools need to get across to their students is that everything begins with them. They are the ones with the real power because design issues are inherent in every problem. If we want to stop global warming, feed people who are starving, and address other social problems, we must begin with personal responsibility. We begin with the designers because they are the ones who can change the world.

Susan Szenasy

Susan Szenasy is editor-in-chief of Metropolis magazine, the award-winning publication on architecture, culture, and design. Believing that design and architecture are humanist activities, Szenasy is deeply committed to education. She is also a staunch...
supporter of Art Center, spearheading the magazine's sponsorship of the 2004 and 2006 Art Center Design Conferences (and speak-
ing onstage as well). According to Szenasy, "Sustainable design is critical to the future of our planet."

Q: Is it possible for companies to be socially responsible and still meet their bottom lines?
A: Absolutely—but unfortunately, while some design profes-
sionals are very proactive, others aren't. For example, many
architects and interior designers are really catching on, but the
industrial designers are simply nowhere.

Q: Why are some getting it and others not?
A: Designers are beholden to the manufacturing community,
and the manufacturing community is very behind in their think-
ing about sustainability. Their attitude is that if nobody asks
for sustainable products, they shouldn't have to offer them. That's
hogwash because they advertise, and the consumer demands
what they advertise.

Just think about it. If you see in an ad are pictures of a
powerful, romantic red car fooling down a country road, that's
what you're going to want to buy, even if it isn't fuel-efficient. That's
because the advertising is very behind in their thinking.

It's not just the consumer. Designers are very proactive, others aren't. For example, many
product designers who are very proactive, others aren't. For example, many

Q: Is it possible for companies to be socially responsible and
still meet their bottom lines?
A: Yes, it is possible. Designers stand to make a huge impact on the marketplace.

Q: How can designers make companies socially responsible?
A: Designers have to understand a little bit
about processes and what happens when they create some-
thing. They should ask not only if something is beautiful, but is
it benign to nature and human beings as well? Is it recyclable?
It is something that can be acquired locally so that resources
aren't wasted on shipping? By addressing these questions,
designers can contribute to a much higher impact on the marketplace.

Q: Do most designers think of themselves as a group?
A: No. They're taught to think and work as individuals. But
there are very complex projects being built now that require
tremendous collaboration. No one group is more important,
and joint decisions are made because every material and
process needs to be looked at carefully from all angles.

Q: Does this approach need to happen at an educational level?
A: Yes, big time! The important thing about collaboration is
that any one person can shine at any given moment. No one
person dominates, and we benefit from the collective knowl-
dge and experience of everyone. That's what I think has been
missing. If we give kids these kinds of complex problems in
school and they're asked to solve them in a sustainable way
by working together, powerful things will happen.

Q: Why is there such a disconnect between designers and
businesspeople?
A: Because designers are taught to be artists, not collabora-
tors. They don't see themselves as part of the business com-
munity, and don't think they can understand how business
works. As a result, they become servants of business rather than collaborators.

There's also the problem of how industry thinks of design.
They tend to think of it as styling. They don't understand that
designers can help change the way businesses do business
can actually help their bottom line.

For things to change, designers will have to be educated and
behave differently. We need to explain that while creative pow-
erful, collaboration and business savvy are need-
ed. They do have to work in the real world. I don't think there's
much understanding in design schools of the realities of run-
ing a business and being in a business environment. Most
design schools are far removed from that.

Q: Is it possible for companies to be socially responsible and
still meet their bottom lines?
A: Yes. In fact, they can be the same thing. Good businesses
look for where being responsible overlaps with making money,
and try to operate in that sector. Just think how it feels to wear
a product that's made by a company you respect and is
designed and produced in a responsible way. You feel good.

Q: What about the opposite direction—designers learning to
appreciate business?
A: It is something that many designers underestimate how big the gap is
between them and businesspeople. Because they tend to
understand the obvious good that certain designs can do for
business, they tend to just cross the gap very quickly and
think it should be obvious to the businesspeople as well. But
businesspeople don't know how to judge design, so they're
suspicous of it. They also tend to think of it in terms of finan-
cial decisions. You've got to remember that design costs
money. The smart businesspeople are building it into their
bottom lines, of course.

Q: How can designers encourage businesses to appreciate
and value design?
A: They have to undertake the job of educating clients, of
showing them how design will make a difference. Of course
that means that designers have to understand a little bit
about business as well.

Q: Are the two sides beginning to understand the value of
working together in socially responsible ways?
A: I think the smart ones are. I hope so, because I always
think that whenever we make things, we're making the world
we all have to live in. For example, when we design a logo and
put it on a billboard, it's out there in the world. That's
the world, the landscape my children have to live in. It's important
to realize that design is a gesture, not just an aesthetic thing.
When you put a design out in the world, you have an impact on someone. It’s powerful. You have to be aware of whether that impact is powerfully good, upsetting, or intrusive, and respect the power you have.

Lars Engman
Lars Engman, Design Manager for IKEA Sweden, has had a long and varied career as a designer working at KF Interior in Stockholm and Design Studio Copenhagen for IKEA. Engman is keenly interested in education and shaping future generations of designers and artists. “I love exchanging ideas with students from all different cultures and countries,” he says. “That’s where new and exciting ideas are born.”

Q: Is it really possible for companies to be socially responsible and still meet their bottom lines?
A: Yes, I think so, if it’s being responsible to things like the environment and the people is built in. At IKEA we always have two goals: first, to make products that are affordable, functional, and meet people’s needs. Second, to do no harm to the environment.

Q: Can you talk about how you accomplish those goals?
A: IKEA has an overall policy of cooperation. We work together with all kinds of organizations, like UNICEF, GreenPeace, and Save the Children. We invite them to come and share their ideas and concerns.

When we sit down to design something, it’s as a team. Everything starts with a small group of five or six people, and we consult with our experts on every area of business. For example, one of those areas is TQE, which stands for Technical Quality and Environment. Their job is to look at all aspects of how a product will impact the environment how much of each resource it will use. Then we create a design brief.

As for education, I think we can really make a difference by working with the next generation. Getting a lot of different students together to share culture and ideas sparks creativity. When I teach, I really try to bring a global perspective. I think we need sister schools all over the globe to promote exchange and collaboration between designers; otherwise we have to learn the hard way to cooperate. I remember when IKEA decided to do business outside of Scandinavia, it was really tough in the beginning because we had to learn different ways of seeing the world.

Q: How have you tried to incorporate social responsibility into your own work?
A: I’ve had a lot of success in my life as a designer. One reason is that I love people and enjoy creating things that enhance their lives. The way I look at design is that it should be beautiful, but also meet people’s basic needs. I hate trends. They come and go. But if you can design something that works well, it’s a pleasure to look at, and meets a real need, then you’ve really accomplished something.

Stephanie Sigg
Stephanie Sigg (Environmental Design ’98) has been a senior art director at Ogilvy+Mather and is currently Art Center’s New York-based liaison to the United Nations. Sigg specializes in public service marketing and art direction for corporations and nonprofit clients. Her work on behalf of the United Nations has inspired and challenged her in ways she never expected. “Sometimes I think I should just become an activist,” she says. “But then I remember that I am a designer at heart and that’s where I can make the most meaningful contributions.”

Q: Is it possible for companies to be socially responsible and still meet their bottom lines?
A: If companies build social responsibility into who they are, then yes. A good example is Dove. Their strategic point of view is that we must begin with personal responsibility. We

Q: What advice do you have for new designers who want to make a difference?
A: Start really small and don’t expect great results all the time. It’s kind of like learning to ride a bike. You start with training wheels. Gradually you can show off a little and pull a wheelie. Eventually you might even be able to give someone else a ride on the back of your seat.

As 21st-century business leaders, Chouinard, Engman, Gooby, Sigg, and Szenasy embody “the new business as usual.” Within their business objectives they embrace the ability of designers to make a difference, and the ability of educational institutions like Art Center to prepare them for leadership roles in new arenas. Each of these leaders has developed strategies that are both profitable and responsible. In Yvon Chouinard’s words: “If we want to stop global warming, feed people who are starving, and address other social problems, we must begin with personal responsibility. We

Q: How can designers fit into the business world and still make a difference?
A: We act as translators. We can be quite influential by using imagery to get our messages across in subtle and sophisticated ways. A good designer will understand the business problem a company has and use design to help solve it.

Q: Do designers need to study business?
A: Yes. They also need to learn to think of design in bigger terms, to look at how it applies to bigger issues. I get this bigger point of view at the United Nations briefings I attend each week. There’s a different topic every week, and it’s presented from all sorts of angles and levels, including the international perspective. As I’m listening I’m asking how I would tackle the issue with design.

Q: How can designers find socially responsible projects to work on?
A: Well, you need to be proactive in your work. When you’re assigned a project and they ask you for an ad campaign, you can come back to them with suggestions and questions that encourage responsibility.

Q: So you plant the seed?
A: Exactly. I don’t think a shoe manufacturer is going to come to you with the idea of doing a cancer fundraiser to promote their product. But if you can show them how that kind of campaign would improve their image and their bottom line, then they’re often receptive.

Q: What about your work at the UN? How does that impact your regular work and personal life?
A: It all intertwines. The work I do at the UN isn’t the kind that I can just leave at the office. I don’t stop thinking about it just because I’ve gone home for the day. And there are a lot of planning committees associated with my UN work that I serve on.

At the same time, my life is so rich because of the UN work. The main thing is to learn to manage your time and resist taking on too many projects. I’d rather say no to a project than do it poorly. I’ve had to learn my limits.

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Classroom Without Walls: New Dimensions in Design Education

One of the hallmarks of an Art Center education is project-based learning in which fundamental skills are tested and enhanced in real-life settings—such as sponsored projects, internships, and independent study—that expose students to many kinds of expertise and dissolve the boundaries between academia and the larger world. These experiences have an incalculable effect on a young designer’s subsequent professional relationships and career.

In recent years this involvement has taken dramatic steps via multidisciplinary team projects that deal with complex social challenges directly on-site. Several of these “classrooms without walls” are featured in this visual essay; most of them stem from the College’s Designmatters initiative exploring social and humanitarian applications of design and responsible business practices. Students come away from these content-rich experiences with a new understanding of their ability to make a difference through design.

* In order to create promotional materials for the United Nations DPI/NGO Conference and accurately convey the theme—Unfinished Business: Effective Partnerships for Human Security and Sustainable Development—students developed a profound understanding of the conference’s content and the purpose of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO). The project provided a window into the challenges facing a world society and helped them understand what a daunting task the NGOs face as they work to make the world a more peaceful and healthy place for all. Students took pride in the project, seeing that their work can be purposeful on a global scale.*
Project: The Agency at Art Center ad campaign against stigma in children for the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. Participating students include Paola Carpintero, William Esparza, Royal Jackson, Jacqueline Jung, Nick Kamei, Maryam Mohseni, John Nguyen, Shannon Pert, Pearl Suh, and Denise Zurilgen.

“Working with The Agency at Art Center, students and faculty brought an exciting perspective to the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health’s Anti-Stigma Project for young children. The student work put faces and expressions to the pain caused when children are stigmatized because they are different in appearance, race, ability, family composition, or the language they speak. Moreover, the concepts and images developed by The Agency communicate hope and the real possibility of schools and communities where all children can imagine healthy, happy futures and believe that they are valued.”

John S. Hatakeyama, M.S.
Deputy Director
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
**International Organizations for Migration (IOM)**

**Project:** Animated public service announcements (PSAs) commissioned by the IOM and licensed by The AIDS Institute include: AIDS Affects Us All by Ryan Graeff, Daniel Park, and George Scurtu; Condom Carnival by Caitlin Berry, Jungmin Koh, and Hermineh Yahiyan; Snapshots by Karen Deverson and Rory MacLean; and Condom News by Ryan Bitinis, Randy Koropaia, and Robin Kuruz. [Not pictured: Pharmacy by Eli Sipsas and Aaron Thomas.]

“Art Center’s Illustration students more than rose to the occasion with this project. The challenge of coming up with a visual way to communicate the urgency of the AIDS epidemic to Caribbean youth was met with clarity and humor. According to the statistics on AIDS provided by the IOM, the Caribbean is the second-largest population infected with HIV and AIDS worldwide. Those who are most at risk in the Caribbean are young people between the ages of 17 and 44 who are caught between pop culture and the traditional values of their island home. By enlisting the creativity of Art Center’s students, the project used animated characters and humor to address the Caribbean youth as contemporaries. The results were PSAs that were relevant, truthful, and visually compelling. They brought home the truth of the situation without being dictatorial.”

Ann Fish
Chair, Illustration Department
Art Center College of Design

**American Red Cross**

**Project:** My First Experience, an award-winning Public Service Announcement for the American Red Cross, directed by Cody Heller.

“As I was donating blood for the first time—a terrifying experience for someone who is afraid of needles—breaking news of Hurricane Katrina flashed on the TV screen in the clinic, and everyone present watched in awe. At that moment I recognized the importance of what I had just done. I hope that the PSA not only reflects the wave of emotion I experienced but will also draw awareness to this vitally important organization.”

Cody Heller
Film, Video, Animation
Art Center College of Design
**Made in L.A.**

During the past five years, building a dynamic relationship with the Los Angeles region has been central to the expanding mission of Public Programs. Innovative collaborations with other area institutions, organizations, and businesses have enhanced the educational experience for our students and faculty. One example is our Made in L.A. series. As a major manufacturing center, Los Angeles offers tremendous resources and learning opportunities for artists, designers, and entrepreneurs seeking practical insights into how products are made. Because we tend to be sensory learners, these exclusive, behind-the-scenes workshops embrace Los Angeles as a highly relevant extension to the studio classroom.

—David B. Walker
Dean, Public Programs
Art Center College of Design

**City of New Orleans**

**Project:** Reaching Higher Ground, an independent study project by Product Design students Wakako Takagi and Chris Pavla, to develop strategies for rebuilding New Orleans.

“I was looking for a topic for my independent study project when Hurricane Katrina struck. I didn’t have any money to donate, but I finally realized I could donate my skill and talent as a designer. Two days later I initiated Reaching Higher Ground, a project focused on coming up with strategies for rebuilding New Orleans’ Lower Ninth Ward. In order to understand what the community was facing, we traveled to New Orleans. The experience changed my point of view forever, and the people of New Orleans taught me to love life even in the most difficult moments.”

—Wakako Takagi
Product Design, eighth term
The Complexity of a Design Education
by John Hockenberry

I may not be a designer but I learned as a small boy to think like one. Quite by accident, and without formal design training, I was always encouraged to think in big ways about the mind and the world, to naturally question things and to believe that the processes of the mind and the senses are understandable and accessible. This was something I grasped at a very early age by hanging around a working (and somewhat frustrated) designer who had no idea that he was teaching a little boy. To this day he probably has no clue about the impact his ideas had on my thinking as an adult. (As a non-designer I am, of course, a total mystery to my mentor.) I am no designer, yet I have benefited from a designer’s education.
My father is a designer, which means that for most of my childhood I had no idea what he did. Design was wildly abstract as a career, certainly not concrete like driving a bulldozer or a fire truck, or wearing a police uniform.

My father had a briefcase, but it was rarely filled with papers and office supplies. My dad carried strange cardboard models and pieces of plastic or wooden prototypes of secret objects in development—objects themselves which were as mysterious as my dad’s job.

Jack Hockenberry worked for Eastman Kodak during the time of the development of the Instamatic Camera. He was a designer at IBM during the development of the IBM 360 and 370 mainframes. He was the first director of design at Steelcase Inc. as that company moved from a manufacturing-era supplier of prosaic steel office furniture to a modern innovator in the development of work spaces for a new American creative economy.

As a little boy caught up in the wonderment of the astronaut era, I might have had difficulty understanding what a designer did, but I certainly understood how my dad thought and more particularly what he thought about. He thought big. He constantly wondered why things were the way they were and was always a somewhat neurotic stickler for safety in everything from toasters (he was skeptical) to power lawn mowers (he hated them).

I was deeply fascinated by my father’s books. They were shinier than the other books in our house. They had a sharp, cool smell that my dad’s books were strangely sized and vividdly colorful.

I remember R. L. Gregory’s book *Eye and Brain*. It had a picture of a retina on the cover and was all about the psychology of seeing. My father clearly loved to think about how processes like seeing worked. He loved to talk about what color was. My dad was never one to try and guess my favorite color like other adults. The idea of a favorite color had no meaning to him. He was most interested in how colors mapped onto the interior human personality. He would explain about cool and warm colors and color and memory. He would make sketches for me and explain how his choices represented a mood he was trying to produce in the person viewing his pictures. At a very early age this whole idea was revolutionary.

There were other titles. *Ekistics: An Introduction to the Science of Human Settlements*, by Constantinos A. Doxiadis. This was a giant book with wonderful pictures and mysterious diagrams. I tried unsuccessfully to penetrate its opaque text as a twelve-year-old. It particularly struck me that a book with more than a thousand pages was merely an introduction to a science. My father talked constantly about the ways cities might be built, and he was outraged by the way they came about randomly. For a powerless child who had to accept the complicated world (and my nightly curfew time) as a given, my father’s attempts to reorder the world were a fantastic new secret power. My dad thought about rebuilding cities even as he imagined the consoles for IBM computer operators. What’s more, he said that it was possible for me to think about building real cities. Suddenly my blocks and Tinkertoys were elevated to the status of my father’s drafting table in the basement.

Education in America consists largely of endorsing the idea of categories. The hermetically sealed subjects and distinct Ages of History are the template for imparting knowledge. They deliver unto the world smart, knowledgeable people who are nevertheless enslaved by the categories that they have never stepped back to view. Once outside the walls of the schoolhouse, these educated young people either embrace a single category and become the limited specialists of our age, or they reject them entirely and become the thuggish generic rebels of our age. The crumbling of categories is the grand coming-of-age story. Each soul is a battleground for a confrontation between the Enlightenment’s cold specificity and a more ancient impulse toward the universal, the spiritual in general. We see this conflict in our literature, our popular culture, and our politics. The irony is that so much of our literature and culture accepts without questioning the tides of chaos, randomness, and the coursing river of a mindless humanity. We are taught to believe that to try and change it in any meaningful way is pointless.

Design does not accept this idea. Design is a tool of hope applicable to all endeavors. The classical mode of inquiry represented by design is, I think, a living holdover from a pre-Enlightenment epoch. Design embraces the crumbling of categories in a joyful way. Design is our most accessible, and least threatening, tool for reexamining categories. The training of designers is the antidote for the undisciplined outrage over the way things are. Design is the quiet faith expressed through skillful construction of objects and experiences that “things” might be different. My own ability to see beyond categories to imagine without demoralization or anger how things might be different comes from watching my father and understanding his ways of thinking. It came from exploring his books and playing with his discarded prototype models.

My father is still a designer. At seventy-five he has any number of projects going, and he still thinks of his profession as a spectator on the fringe of the main event of chaotic headlong marketing and random pursuit of short-term profits. He would be surprised to learn that his obscure view of the world had any great lessons for his vaguely famous son. My father still retains his gentle outrage that things might be different and that his role is to change what he can in the time he has left. It is a wisdom that can and must be taught. Design education is an essential component of 21st-century literacy. That is the manifesto. All that is needed are leaders in education in industry to carry the flag.

Media commentator John Hockenberry has been a friend of the design community for many years. As moderator of the 2004 and 2006 Art Center Design Conferences and host of the annual Chrysler Design Awards, and as a contributing editor of Metropolis magazine, he has been instrumental in bringing design awareness to new public audiences. Hockenberry is also an acclaimed correspondent whose reportage for NPR, ABC, and NBC News from war zones around the world—including Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kosovo—has won numerous honors, including several Emmy and Peabody Awards. Hockenberry’s essay reflects not only his wide but also—in keeping with the theme of this issue of DOT—his astute perspectives on the larger role of design education today.
"Every line contains its influences, whether it’s a conscious decision or not. My grandfather was a big influence on my life, and was also the major inspiration for this piece."

1. Eric Nyquist, Illustration, sixth term. Personal project. Instructor: Rob Claryton

"This graceful but deadly dancer was inspired by the elegant forms of the praying mantis exoskeleton."

2. Peter Chan, Graduate Industrial Design, fifth term. Assassin Mantis. Instructor: Neville Page

"Having Howard Stern as a subject gave me carte blanche to break all the rules. I decided to depict him in a form that would invite some level of discussion while eliciting a smile from the viewer."


"The ‘aware’ organization expands the public’s knowledge of global issues and encourages active involvement. The packaging seeks to bring humanity to the design by employing cost-efficient self-mailers."

“Users of Le Creuset’s high-end cookware swear by its abilities to make food not only cook better but also look, smell, and taste better. I wanted to capture this elevation of the senses by pointing out the beauty, form, and function of food and pot, and the dependent relationship that they share.”

5. Hosan Lee, Advertising, first term. “Come to your senses” campaign for Le Creuset. Instructor: Roland Young

“The piece was designed as part of an awareness-raising campaign. Though there are signs on the drains themselves I felt there could be a more creative approach to really tell people that by putting trash in these drains you are putting trash directly into the mouth of many ocean inhabitants.”


“The project called for an entirely unconventional outdoor campaign to advertise for the 2006 FIFA World Cup. We felt that this campaign spoke in every language and to every culture that has a passion for soccer.”


“I’m always trying to push what I can do with my images, have fun, and express myself. This project and my instructor allowed me to do them all.”

8. Jonathan Kahn, Photography and imaging, seventh term. “If only she had eaten the pear...” (part of a diptych). Instructor: Mark Berndt

“I wanted my picture to have a macabre aesthetic—to evoke a ghostly, Victorian feeling. When I told the model to close her eyes, I knew that was something I needed to capture to create the mood I wanted.”

“I wanted to create an understanding of the deeper meaning behind tattoos. The design of this exhibit conveys the juxtaposition of the organic and the man-made.”

10. Elyse Marks, Environmental Design, fourth term. “Symbols and Myths,” an exhibit about tattoos. Instructor: Rob Bell

“Eggtouch” is a rental GPS guide that provides tourists to Taiwan with the most updated information about the Shi Lin night market, along with recommendations of places with the best food, entertainment, and shopping discounts.”


“The ‘Scuba Ray’ is a satellite-guided vehicle that pulls a scuba diver along a preplanned underwater route—immersing the user into his or her environment.”

“Outward Bound is based upon the principles of hands-on learning through outdoor adventure. The wilderness program brings inner-city youth outdoors and teaches them how to be self-sufficient while at the same time developing teamwork skills. Creating this film increased my knowledge and interest in organizations like Outward Bound, which I previously didn’t even know existed.”


“Empty spaces where the eye can flow idly leave room for the projection of doubt or uncertainty. This set of photographs focuses on the primal feelings of obsession through repetition that can be elicited by architecture.”


“My environment is a rich resource of inspiration, providing me with interesting moments I photograph or memorize in order to paint. Creating a project from memory, such as City Lights at Night, allows me to slow down and reflect upon a particular moment, giving it space to be viewed and appreciated.”

15. Maja Dale, Fine Art Media, eighth term. “Untitled (City Lights at Night).” Instructor: Tom LaDuke
"The concept of developing a modular vehicle system arose from the need to incorporate sustainability and longevity into this product design, including manufacturing efficiency, a decrease in overall material usage, and utilization of renewable materials—resulting in a vehicle with little to no pollution or harmful emissions."

16. Derek Howard, Product Design, sixth term. The “Jackal” motorcycle, a reconfigurable vehicle based on a universal framework conceived as the Link System. Instructors: Gaylord Eckles, Mark Ashcraft

"The American Sport Heritage motorcycle integrates a strong, rigid system with soft, sinewy forms in order to blend structure and style into a design both inspired and inspiring."

17. Dale Han, Transportation Design, sixth term. American Sport Heritage motorcycle. Instructor: Bumsuk Lim
“I’ve been seeing an abundance of social and political narratives as a reaction to what is going on all over the world. Designers are telling stories about their lives, governments, capitalism, industrialism, culture, music, poverty, and so forth, on a global scale. Design is a reflection of our time. The way in which various cultures live and think, their customs, food, clothes, music—all of these play a part in what designers say, who they say it to, and how they say it. Today technology plays a vital role in defining the techniques designers use to tell their narratives in their own visual style. Many designers are drawing, painting, and using analog techniques that they then blend with digital techniques. This is what’s emerging right now. 3-D is also evolving in amazing ways. Programming is used to create visuals in both 2-D and 3-D, whether it’s print or motion. All the different media imaginable, and their techniques, are merging to create styles that never existed before—simply because the technology was not there. No, not everything has been done.”

William Ismael, Graphic Design, fourth term

“Now, instead of a big logo or having a cool product, it’s a story about lifestyle. Apple is a good example: using ordinary people to tell stories of how the product worked in their lives. The most important stories I’m seeing today are happening with products that have some level of social consciousness. Lexus, for instance, has a new energy-efficiency story. Their new hybrid sports sedan and SUV not only get better mileage than gas-powered cars, now they outperform them as well. American Apparel is another great example. They manufacture a whole line of clothing that sells in high-end retail stores, but the way they market it is sort of a non-branding approach. The clothes aren’t visibly branded—allowing the wearer to customize them. The company also insists on paying their workers a living wage and doesn’t outsource any of the manufacturing. Everything is done here in the U.S. So the clothes are well designed, well made, and stand for a certain way of thinking.”

Nikolai Cornell, Media Design ’00, Graphic Designer, George P. Johnson Design

“Relative to my practice, a design research studio that focuses on underserved communities—underaddressed or misaddressed communities such as incarcerated women who are pregnant, or transients—I’m exploring various types of storytelling to accomplish different purposes. For example, we’re working right now with a nonprofit vision center to communicate with low-vision members of the community: part-time seeing users who providers have been treating as part of the blind community. These low-vision users don’t think of themselves as blind. To determine their issues, we often use nontraditional methods that go outside the first-person narrative. Like recording a conversation over dinner with the user and the people surrounding him or her, who are impacted as well. User scenarios, photo surveys, design comps in the form of films or books as a conversation catalyst—these are some of the narrative techniques we’re applying today.”

Sean Donahue, adjunct faculty, Graphic Design; principal, Research Center of Design