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Design Education for International Engagement:
Art Center College of Design

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Design Education for International Engagement: Art Center College of Design

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Abstract: For over 76 years, Art Center College of Design, located in Pasadena, California, has been one of the leading institutions for art and design education in the world. The college has garnered this position by continuing to examine and evolve its educational philosophy and creative practices in response to the swift technological and socioeconomic changes of the 21st century. Today, with collaboration becoming increasingly important across disparate fields of knowledge and between design disciplines, Art Center's curricula functions within a highly dynamic framework defined by a multidisciplinary, rigorous, and experimental atmosphere, as well as by a fundamental orientation to reality. The institution is a laboratory for innovation, a locus for partnerships with both industry and public sector development agencies, and a center of international dialogue in design. Since the founding of the International Initiatives Department in 1999, global engagement and social relevance have become even further heightened concerns college-wide. The nature and role of academic institutions in a time of accelerated global transformation represents a provocative inquiry that is synergetic with Art Center's own and ongoing institutional redefinition and educational agenda. This paper provides an overview of the core programmatic pillars that have enabled the college to best foster relevance beyond its walls, and generate a constant flow of research, cross-sectoral partnerships, and new ideas. The authors also offer a summary of the most significant strategies and alliances behind Art Center's innovative approach to internationalism, along with a discussion of methodologies and exemplary projects that champion the contributions of the creative individual as a powerful change agent and a citizen of the larger world.

Keywords: Design Education, Relevance, Social and Humanitarian Applications, Internationalism, Cross-Sectoral Partnerships, Engagement, Innovation, Creativity, Business-Design Alliances

A Brief Introduction to Art Center College of Design

FOR OVER 76 years, Art Center College of Design, located in Pasadena, California, has been one of the world's leading institutions for design education. Art Center offers undergraduate and advanced degrees in a wide variety of design and fine art disciplines, and the college's pragmatic, real-world approach provides graduates with the education and experience to become creative leaders in their chosen professions. Art Center's curricula are multidisciplinary, rigorous, and dynamic in nature, responding to a fundamental belief that interchanges among disparate fields of knowledge and design disciplines have become essential to contemporary higher education in general—and to design education in particular. Today the college also maintains its top-ranked position by evolving its philosophy and practices in response to the rapid technological and socioeconomic changes of our era. The institution is a laboratory for innovation, a locus for partnerships and collaborations with industry and public sector development agencies, and a center of

international public dialogue on the larger role of design.

Recent structural changes in the curriculum attest to Art Center's continual emphasis on real-world relevance and advocacy for the role of design in partnership with many kinds of enterprise. Of particular note is the growth of design research and design sciences; in coming years, it is anticipated that the college's 1600 students will be increasingly graduate-level, and that many of these will be attracted by unique facilities for design research and design sciences currently underway. In addition, a new and timely emphasis on internationalism—evident not only among students and faculty, but in the curriculum—is already evident throughout the college community, and reflects Art Center's advocacy for design and designers as pivotal contributors to contemporary global society on many levels. All of these developments are highly relevant to the issues considered by the World Universities Forum.



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International Engagement at Art Center: A Mandate, Not an Option

Driven in large part by establishment of the college's International Initiatives Department in 1999, global engagement and relevance have become paramount concerns at Art Center. Among all constituents of the college there is a new, exhilarating awareness of the leadership opportunities that arise from a focused and purposeful involvement with the deeper contexts of contemporary life. This orientation-wide commitment to society and the larger world is transforming Art Center's identity from an American institution to an international one.

Art Center's internationalism reflects a profound belief that leadership in higher education today increasingly depends on international engagement, for institutions and individuals alike. Isolation breeds irrelevance in a global environment of ever-expanding information, inter-connectedness and flux. The multiple challenges confronting our world—geopolitical conflicts, dwindling natural resources, urbanization, and socioeconomic inequalities—represent powerful global forces that are shaping the way we live, work, and learn. Such pressures and opportunities at an international scale are affecting higher education in significant ways, creating an unprecedented need to deliver knowledge, experience, and sophistication in a global playing field. For a highly specialized institution such as Art Center, which literally influences the design of every aspect of daily life, the ability to meet these criteria is not only essential in order to maintain its competitive edge, but a key ingredient shaping the college's future.

In this time of accelerated global transformation, the Inaugural International Forum on World Universities' proposed re-examination of the nature and role of academic institutions represents a provocative inquiry that is synergetic with Art Center's institutional redefinition and educational agenda. This paper describes the core programmatic pillars that have enabled the college to extend its relevance far beyond its walls, generating a constant flow of research, cross-sectoral partnerships, and new ideas for design and higher education alike. The following pages also highlight the key methodologies and perspectives gained from an ambitious international slate of projects that integrate design with a wide range of subjects. Ultimately, this work champions the contributions of the creative individual as a powerful change agent and a citizen of the larger world.

The International Initiatives Department at Art Center College Of Design

Founded in 1999 with the mandate "*to boldly position the College at the center of international dialogue in design and visual communications*,"¹ the International Initiatives Department has a three-part mission: 1) to create programs that make Art Center an international destination for research and innovation in design and related enterprises, and that bring the college into the world in these respects; 2) to facilitate, in conjunction with trustees, chairs, faculty, and staff, collaborations with other leading educational, scientific, and cultural institutions that enhance complementary strengths and produce new educational and cross-cultural benefits; and 3) to help promote a deeper awareness and understanding of contemporary world issues—and new solutions to these issues—via new kinds of educational offerings and joint projects with outside agencies.

In the relatively brief time since its founding, the department has implemented a number of major initiatives corresponding to this mission. These include Designmatters, a College-wide examination of social and humanitarian applications of design and responsible business practices; the biennial Art Center Design Conferences and the upcoming Global Dialogues series, international forums on the intersections between design, technology, science, business, and the arts; and consultation services and partnerships in several overseas locations, including ongoing curricular exchanges with international business schools such as INSEAD (France and Singapore), and starting in 2008, with ESADE (Spain).

Because all of these activities are carried out in close association with Art Center's educational and administrative leadership, the department is recognized as an innovative hybrid whose work contributes directly to key administrative concerns—such as long-range planning—as well as the college's evolving educational considerations and practices.

Designmatters: A Potent Model for Education and Engagement

The International Initiatives Department launched the Designmatters program in December 2001 with a task force representing all Art Center constituencies, whose mandate was to develop the program's mission and initial agenda. Since then, Designmatters has rapidly gained international attention as a compelling case study for the involvement of an entire institution in a unified approach to linking real-world

¹ Richard Koshalek, *A Universe of Possibilities* (Pasadena: Art Center College of Design, 1999).

issues with academic practices.² The initiative is viewed as a flagship effort in a growing movement within the professional design community and design schools alike, to align research and practice with the exploration of social and humanitarian concerns as a means of greatly enriching design education.³

Several other notable programs somewhat resemble the focus of Designmatters, but with widely varying methodologies. These include the Institute Without Boundaries, founded in 2003 in conjunction with the School of Design in George Brown Toronto City College; Archeworks, a self-labeled “alternative design school” in Chicago, where students work in multidisciplinary teams with nonprofit partners to create design solutions for social concerns; the “Man and Humanity” Masters Program at the Design Academy, Eindhoven; and the Royal College of Art Helen Hamlyn Centre, London, a multi-disciplinary leader for inclusive design and universal design research.⁴ All of these academic contexts embrace the necessity to produce “a new breed of designer” exposed to a meaningful range of cultures and experiences.

What sets Designmatters apart is not only the fact that it represents a college-wide commitment integrated into Art Center’s undergraduate, graduate and public programs, but that it is also a bold institutional initiative that weaves aesthetic value with business acumen. Designmatters is a proponent as well for a new approach to “humanitarianism”—one that recognizes the need for a multidimensional understanding of global development and aid intervention.⁵ With

its key mission of enriching the opportunity for students and faculty at Art Center to delve into contemporary issues and generate tangible outcomes that can make a difference in society, Designmatters has generated a considerable portfolio of work, including public service announcements, branding identity systems, documentary films, product prototypes, mobility concepts, and more. This varied portfolio reflects four broad thematic areas of inquiry: public policy, global healthcare, human sustainable development and social entrepreneurship.

The strategic alliances forged by Designmatters are especially significant, especially if one considers the concept of partnership as “*a means to create space for individuals and communities of peoples to seek different types of leadership... which include new ways to express progressive values in addressing societal changes.*”⁶ In 2003, the United Nations Department of Public Information designated Art Center an NGO, or non-governmental organization, in recognition of Designmatters’ service to society.⁷ Other unique affiliations now include civil organization status with the Organization of American States, and another NGO designation by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).⁸ In addition, Designmatters’ consulting role in collaborative projects with the Pan American Health Organization (fig. 1), the World Bank, the American Red Cross, and UNESCO—among others—has provided the Art Center community of students, faculty, staff and alumni access to a prominent stage in which to offer original solutions to many of the critical issues of our time.

² In a recent feature article about the program in Design 21, the Social Design Network endorsed by UNESCO, Designmatters is referred to as “one of those rare, wonderful moments in education that asks students to close their books and open up to experience.” For the full article, see Sarah Lidgus, “Real World Education,” Design 21, <http://www.design21sdn.com/feature/839> (September 28, 2007).

³ Cynthia E. Smith, “World Design to End Poverty,” *Design for the Other 90%* (New York: exhibition catalogue Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Editions Assouline, 2007), p.12. Smith places Designmatters as one of the lead programs in the context of the “emerging arena” of socially responsible design initiatives.

⁴ For full program references, see The Institute Without Boundaries, <http://www.institutewithoutboundaries.com>; Archeworks, <http://www.archeworks.org>; Design Academy, Eindhoven, <http://www.designacademy.nl/indexen.htm> and Royal College of Art Helen Hamlyn Centre, <http://www.hhrc.rca.ac.uk>.

⁵ David Rieff, *A Bed for the Night, Humanitarianism in Crisis*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002) as well as Princeton N. Lyman and Patricia Lee Dorff, eds., *Beyond Humanitarianism, What You Need to Know about Africa and why it Matters*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 2007) address underlying trends about Africa and the complex challenges and potential of the continent—calling attention to the need to take a new approach to humanitarianism.

⁶ Simon Zadek from The Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability, cited in Henri Bartoli and Jane Nelson, *Building Partnerships, Cooperation Between the United Nations System and the Private Sector* (New York, United Nations Publications, 2002), p. 40.

⁷ Since 2003, Designmatters is responsible every year for key and contributions to the visual identity and communication platforms (websites; print collateral and PSAS) of the DPI/NGO annual Conference held at UN Headquarters in New York.

⁸ Art Center’s designation with the Organization of American States dates from 2006; the NGO status with the United Nations Population Fund was granted in May 2007.



Fig. 1: Campaign poster for the Pan American Health Organization “Faces, Voices and Places” Initiative

The Designmatters Platform for Knowledge Creation: Research into Action

Through the development of creative leaders at the cutting-edge of design innovation and influence, Art Center has played a central role in shaping the form and function of our culture for many decades. Peter Drucker’s definition of knowledge as *“information that changes something or somebody--either by becoming grounds for action, or by making an individual or an institution capable of different and more effective action”*⁹ offers insight into the paradigm shift that the Designmatters initiative has generated at the college. Designmatters has enabled the “DNA” of the entire institution to evolve with a new emphasis on imbuing the educational experience with critical content and a sense of contemporary relevance and commitment. Indeed, “research transformed by action” could be the motto guiding all Designmatters projects. The cross-pollination of expertise and knowledge transfer among unlikely partners that occurs in the initiative’s “transdisciplinary” collaborations constitutes one of its salient traits, and one often noted in international conferences and sem-

inars.¹⁰ This far-reaching dialogue promoted by Designmatters is largely driven by the wide range of experts that are routinely embedded in the studios—including gerontologists, policy analysts, social scientists, international development field officers, among others. The presence of these different fields of knowledge within the learning environment of the studio fosters a process of applied research that is fundamental to the design outcomes of the projects.

The Designmatters framework encourages students and faculty to abandon their comfort zone in the studio in order to experience the challenges and rewards inherent to real-world constraints. This transformative design process takes forceful discipline and a rigorous work ethic. Equally important, it requires heightened motivation—a component that is generally accepted as indispensable to creative production.¹¹ In the Designmatters model, a complex humanitarian brief is not the only factor that drives the outcome(s) of any given project; as previously noted, vital inspiration stems from the participation of diverse experts who lead the initial research phase of each class with design faculty. This research-driven process enables all participants to leverage and mobilize different expertise and resources, resulting in joint problem-solving and a far richer debate

⁹ Peter F. Drucker, *The New Realities* (London: Mandarin Press, 1990), p. 242.

¹⁰ See Mariana Amatullo and Mark Breitenberg, “Designmatters at Art Center College of Design: Design Advocacy and Global Engagement,” *Cumulus Journal: Ethics 2006 Cumulus Nantes Conference, Design, Ethics and Humanism* (June 15-17):16-20; Mariana Amatullo, Erica Clark, and Ann Field, “Designmatters: Shared Perspectives for Inclusive Communication Strategies and Global Engagement,” Workshop Abstract and Proceedings, Royal College of Art, Helen Hamlyn Center, Include 2007, April 2007.

¹¹ For a comprehensive summary of current research and theory on the sources of innovation and creativity, see Karlyn Adams, “The Sources of Innovation and Creativity,” a paper commissioned by the National Center on Education and the Economy for the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, September 2005, p. 4.

and exchange of ideas, often beyond the realm of design. Thus the new “comfort zone” is one incorporating this expanded range of inquiry.

Time and again this methodology is key to the successful—and very tangible—outcomes of Designmatters projects. A recent communication campaign developed for the United Nations Population Fund to raise awareness about maternal mortality worldwide is a case in point. As one faculty member said, “*This was a particularly daunting problem.*

Our students were asked to produce a variety of materials which would raise the consciousness of both a wide general audience and a very specific, specialist audience attending a conference focusing on this issue of incredible seriousness.”¹² The Graphic, Advertising and Graduate Media design teams responded by creating a campaign utilizing statistical and narrative elements; hence steering away from predictable images of suffering and creating new calls for action (fig.2).¹³

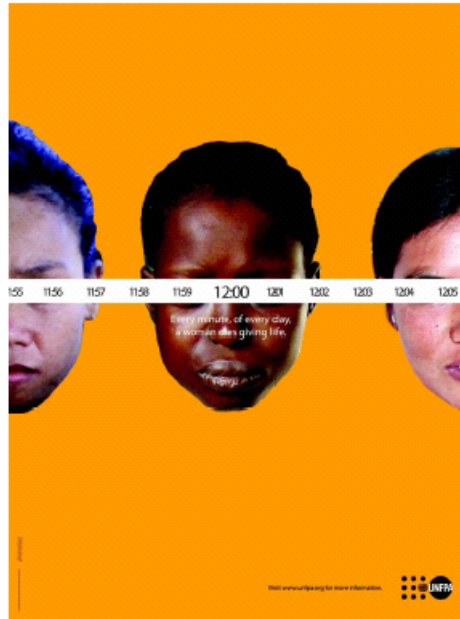


Fig. 2: Campaign poster for the United Nations Population Fund “Safe Motherhood” Initiative

In addressing global warming, calling attention to the current obesity epidemic in the US, advocating for HIV-AIDS prevention in the Caribbean, and many other issues, the Designmatters portfolio of public service announcements represents a distinguishing facet of the program’s work and exemplifies the public policy capacity of design. On an ongoing basis, Designmatters oversees the development and

production of campaigns that address a variety of communication challenges of global urgency and target diverse populations across geographical, socioeconomic, and cultural boundaries. The resulting PSAs are widely disseminated by project partners and given international platforms to effectively mobilize public opinion.¹⁴

¹² Lou Danziger, Elena Salij, and Helen Sanematsu in unpublished statement to the authors, June 2007.

¹³ The “Safe Motherhood Campaign” designed for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) January through June 2007, centered on the key statistic that “every minute, of every day, somewhere in the world, a woman dies giving life.” Please see <http://www.artcenter.edu/designmatters/projects/unfpa/index.php> and UNFPA <http://video.unfpa.org> for a comprehensive overview of the work.

¹⁴ To view a comprehensive portfolio of Designmatters PSAs and find out more about their distribution worldwide, please refer to the Designmatters website at <http://www.artcenter.edu/designmatters/psa/index.php>.



Fig. 3: MCT Staff Loading Medicines and Supplies onto Camels

In the past year alone, Designmatters has undertaken numerous projects that are not only significant examples of public policy intersecting with design practice, but also terrific vehicles for international exposure and cross-cultural exchange. Through their participation in these emerging opportunities, faculty, alumni, and students partake in an educational process that goes beyond the walls of the studio and into the field. A prime example is the Mpala Project, a three-way collaboration between Art Center College of Design, the Mpala Community Trust, a community-based mobile health clinic in Kenya, and the Undergraduate School of Engineering at Princeton University.¹⁵ The goal of the Mpala Project is to improve upon the healthcare delivery system and social innovations established by MCT, which has used camel convoys and the training of local com-

munity leaders to deliver healthcare to the highly isolated and nomadic populations in the region (fig.3). The project's significance to both design research and application made it a finalist in the May 2007 World Bank Development Marketplace Competition.¹⁶ Innovations resulting from the project include a breakthrough mobility system that improves the efficiency of the loads carried by the camel convoys; the design and engineering of new long range solar powered refrigeration units which allow the clinic to deliver crucial vaccines and medicines that are currently inaccessible to distant recipients; and a culturally relevant, visually based health education campaign for the region's non-literate population that is being conceived and produced with a team of designers from Art Center's Illustration Department (figures 4.a and 4.b).

¹⁵ The partnership with Princeton University has yielded the development of an initial solar-powered refrigeration and mobility system that is scheduled for testing at the beginning of 2008 in Kenya. The Princeton team is led by Winston O. Soboyejo, Professor and

Director of Undergraduate Program - Princeton Institute for the Science & Technology of Materials, Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering.

¹⁶ The project was among the 105 finalists selected from over 2900 proposals worldwide at the 2006 Development Marketplace Global Competition: *Innovations in Health, Nutrition, and Population for Poor People*, The World Bank, Washington, D.C.

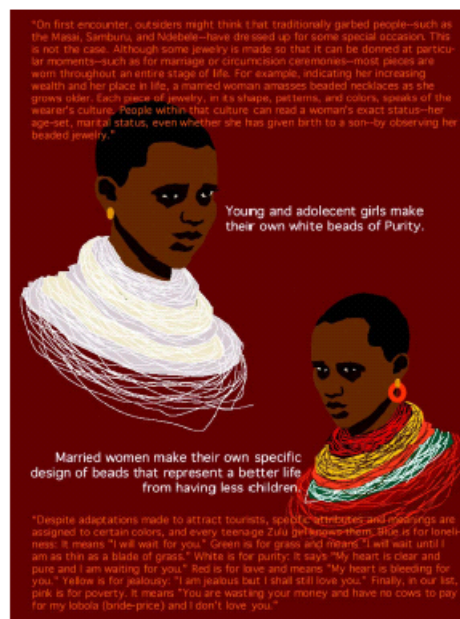


Fig. 4.a: Visual Health Education Campaign Sketches for MCT



Fig. 4.b: Kenyan Community Members Benefiting from MCT Services

In addition to providing content of utmost complexity, collaborative projects such as Mpala afford ample opportunities for designers to become fully engaged in participatory processes with the recipient communities. By the same token, such projects also establish connections and bridges between global and local concerns. In this particular case, for example, the constraints to design for semi-literate populations in an extreme environment invited experimentation with new uses of materials and visual strategies that in turn can have mainstream applications. The testimonial of a product design student who recently participated in field research on another Designmatters' project in Guatemala reflects a typical experience: *"I gained an amazing amount of 'ground truth,' in product design which will improve my*

ability to design for the people we have visited, as well as for those I will design for in the future. This trip was not only an inspiration to my way of thinking about life, but also about how much the person and their culture come into play in design."¹⁷

The Double Bottom Line: Beyond Corporate Social Responsibility

Beyond its imprint in the non-profit arena, the social agenda of Designmatters has rapidly been validated by the leading corporations that regularly participate in Art Center's long-standing funded educational projects. As the industry sector aligns business-oriented goals for growth and innovation with social purpose, Designmatters is increasingly offered oppor-

¹⁷ This is a statement from Art Center product design student Bryce Butcher, in an unpublished letter to authors recounting a field trip to Guatemala as part of research for an Art Center class in collaboration with the California Institute of Technology, September 2007.

tunities to engage in projects that illustrate the “double bottom line” which benefits both the company and the social cause(s) at hand. There is also a growing recognition that, depending on how well companies use design within their organizations, markets can be strategically transformed.¹⁸ Bruce Nussbaum, a leading editor at *Business Week*, voices an increasingly prevalent sentiment when he expresses corporate culture’s need to embrace the powerful problem-solving abilities of design: “*Business sees design as connecting it to the consumer in a deep, fundamental and honest way... If you are in the authenticity and integrity business you have to think design.*”¹⁹

In fall 2006, GE Healthcare sponsored a transdisciplinary project at Art Center with students and faculty from Transportation, Product, and Environmental design. The project brief—to deploy innovative medical technologies in remote areas of Africa by 2016—exemplified the newfound role of the designer in delivering solutions for new markets and

intractable humanitarian problems. Faculty and students were challenged to develop concepts that integrated solid business development schemes, innovation, and in-depth cultural understanding of the end users and contexts at hand. The outcomes ranged from the immediately feasible (an ultrasound scanner easy to operate and comfortable for patients who have never encountered such technology (fig.5), to futuristic but possible (a dirigible to transport patients to the closest hospital (fig.6). All of the solutions vividly revealed how design can be transformed from a taken-for-granted everyday commodity into an urgently relevant contribution. Again, this collaboration with GE was one in an increasing series of sponsored projects at Art Center that ask students to engage with the real world and be attuned to contemporary issues that address the uncertainty of globalization and expanding markets, as well as the challenge of developing new business opportunities within an environmentally conscious framework.

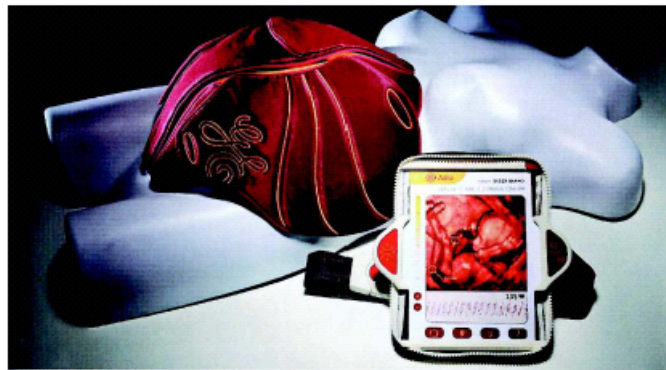


Fig. 5: Prototype Ultrasound Device Created in GE Healthcare Project

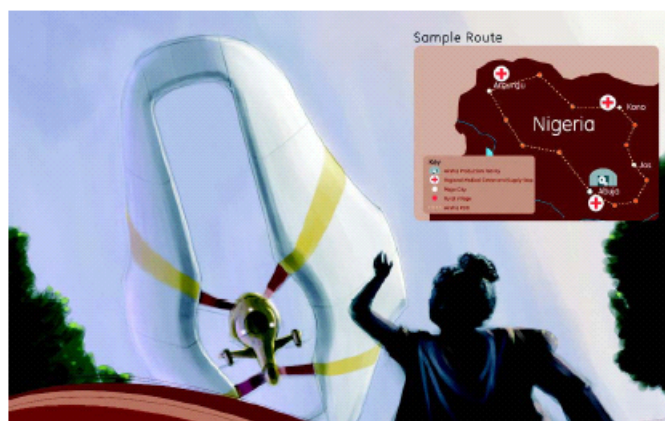


Fig. 6: Multi-Layered Mobility System Proposed in GE Healthcare Project

¹⁸ The impact of design-based principles into business and its social applications is an area of study that is generating significant mainstream press. Editor Bruce Nussbaum of *BusinessWeek* is one of the most dedicated advocates for design thinking in corporate culture, as exemplified in the innovation and design quarterly issues of the magazine. For the inaugural issue, see Bruce Nussbaum, “IN manifesto,” *BusinessWeek*, June 19, 2006.

¹⁹ Bruce Nussbaum from remarks in a speech at Innovation Night at the Royal College of Art, London, June 28, 2007. See also Elizabeth Woyke and Maha Atal, “The Talent Hunt,” *D-Schools, BusinessWeek*, October 4, 2007.

Promoting the International Business of Design: New Art Center Initiatives

In today's "creative economy,"²⁰ business managers who understand how innovation really works and can manage creativity are in high demand. This is evident in two current international partnerships that not only represent a new level of institutional engagement for Art Center, but a host of new educational opportunities.

Art Center's ongoing curricular exchange with INSEAD, begun in 2005, is a prime example of the college's focus on international exposure and innovative approaches to curricular programming. The joint program with INSEAD, offered annually at both campuses of the celebrated business school, is a unique platform to share learning and resources about business strategy, creativity management, and design thinking—with compelling results. Each year the program brings a group of design students (chiefly Industrial Design), selected in a rigorous competition, to INSEAD to work with teams of MBA students in product development and entrepreneurial classes. Each team has its own designer, and students on each "side" of the collaboration learn to work with the other side, gaining new understanding and appreciation of the other's professional approaches and processes.

The Art Center Barcelona Project greatly expands on the INSEAD collaboration, and is conceived as an open-ended, highly innovative experiment responding to two factors: the opportunity to create international, content-based "branches" of educational initiatives without building costly physical facilities; and the overall demand for innovation in advanced education today. Following several years of intensive study and development, in early 2008 the Barcelona Project will launch an ambitious range of programs that embrace leading educational, civic, cultural, and business institutions in Barcelona and beyond. These programs fall into three categories: 1) advanced, design-based R&D activities with industry partners, as well as international non-profit agencies working with Designmatters; 2) courses for executives seeking to integrate design and designers into business, and corresponding innovation management courses for designers, in partnership with ESADE, the renowned business school in Barcelona and Madrid; and 3) a series of public forums that enhance the above research-oriented activities. The latter will begin with the first Art Center Global Dialogues in March '08: two days of on-stage conversations with internationally acclaimed "disruptive thinkers" whose

achievements have transformed contemporary social paradigms and urban life in many fields.

The alliance with ESADE also promises crucial benefits for Art Center's home campus—including new graduate-level curricular offerings, heightened recruitment opportunities for faculty and students, and access to European corporate sponsors. Most importantly, the Art Center-Barcelona Project will bring the college into a tremendously vital region whose diverse and complex society offers the ideal environment in which to educate designers deeply informed about, and engaged with, the larger world.²¹

The Art Center Global Dialogues and the Art Center Design Conferences: Additional Platforms for Internationalism

The Art Center Global Dialogues will formally launch the Art Center Barcelona Project,²² but will also pilot a series of similar interdisciplinary forums in other international locales. Centered on the pivotal role of design in business, science and technology, urban issues, and education, each Dialogue event will involve international leaders in many arenas, and will spur a lively exchange on contemporary topics with top media personalities. This framework will foster new communications and partnerships among the participants, and build public awareness of design as a potent stimulus for innovation.

The Global Dialogues will also complement counter-point to the biennial Art Center Design Conference series, which began in 2004. Unlike the Dialogues, which will be held in locales overseas, the Design Conferences are presented at Art Center's South Campus facility in downtown Pasadena, and have become an important new source of educational benefits and visibility for the college. The two Conferences to date have attracted renowned practitioners in many fields as speakers and audience alike, as well as internationally known corporate sponsors. The 2004 Conference, entitled *Stories from the Source, Design Excursions Out of the Ordinary*, was conceived as a forum for diverse minds to intersect and foster a far-reaching dialogue about ingenuity manifested in the myriad applications of design from evolution to architecture for refugee populations. In 2006, *Radical Craft*, the 2006 Conference, explored the deeper meaning of "craft" in areas ranging from mass-production to literature, and the links between design and craft. The fact that both Conferences to date have drawn attendees from 20 countries, more than 30 states, and nearly 50 media outlets further

²⁰ Richard L. Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class and How it is Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (New York: Basic Books, 2003).

²¹ For a comprehensive overview of the vision for the Barcelona Project, see Erica Clark, "A New International Agenda for Design: the Significance of the Art Center-Barcelona Project," white paper, Art Center College of Design, October 2007.

²² Information on the upcoming Art Center Global Dialogues in Barcelona can be found at <http://www.artcenter.edu/dialogues/>.

attests to the visibility and networks that these gatherings create for Art Center. With the third Conference, *Serious Play* planned in May 2008, Art Center will again convene an extraordinary diversity of perspectives from design practitioners and leading thinkers whose presence on campus will foster subsequent projects and curricular activities. By acting as such a potent convener, the biennial Art Center Design Conferences make the college itself an international destination, and a vital nexus for collaboration and networking.²³

A New Frontier for the Future: Designs on the World

As an international competitive institution of higher education for the 21st century, and as an advocate

for the larger role of design, Art Center's mandate is inexorably linked to the responsibility to chart new territory for graduates to be design leaders and to "lead by design."²⁴

The future may be unknowable, but it is not unthinkable. At a time when the responsible design agenda is growing, there is increasing recognition that designers are uniquely equipped to drive innovation and address social challenges as "alchemists of the future."²⁵ With a new generation of young people demanding to play a larger role on the world stage than ever before,²⁶ Art Center's emphasis on the innovation and creativity of content-based, international collaborations that go beyond conventional boundaries and into the world at large is a proposition that stands a good chance for success and serves as a model for universities today, and into the future.

About the Authors

Richard Koshalek

Richard Koshalek began his tenure as President of Art Center College of Design in Pasadena in September of 1999. Born in Wausau, Wisconsin, Koshalek attended the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, where he received a B.A. in architecture (1965) and an M.A. in architecture and art history (1967). Koshalek was director of The Museum of Contemporary Art from 1982 to 1999, and joined MOCA in 1980 as deputy director and chief curator. He served as director of the Fort Worth Art Museum from 1974 to 1976 and worked at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis from 1967 to 1973 as curator, assistant curator and exhibitions coordinator. Koshalek is a former member of the International Board of the Wexner Center for the Arts, Board Member of the American Federation of Arts, was a speaker and moderator at the World Economic Forum in 2002 and 2003, and was named a Chevalier des Arts et Lettres by the French Government (1999). He was chairman of the Architectural Subcommittee for the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. In 2007, he served as a jury member on the Architectural Selection Committee for the Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University.

Erica Clark

As Senior Vice President of International Initiatives at Art Center College of Design, Erica Clark works closely with President Koshalek, trustees, department chairs, faculty, alumni, students and staff of the College to build relationships and content-based programs that position Art Center in the midst of international dialogue in many arenas. As founder of the department, Erica has developed a range of programs that engage the Art Center community with key issues relevant to the design professions and the larger world. Examples include: The biennial Art Center Design Conference series, the Designmatters initiative, the Art Center Global Dialogue series, and a variety of cross-institutional collaborations with educational partners such as INSEAD, the preeminent business school in Europe and Asia.

Mariana Amatullo

Mariana Amatullo, co-founder and director of the College-wide initiative Designmatters, is the Director of the International Initiatives Department of Art Center College of Design. In this capacity, she works closely with Art Center President Richard Koshalek and the educational leadership of the College in developing strategic

²³ For more information about the upcoming Art Center Design Conference, *Serious Play*, May 7-9, 2008, see <http://www.artcenter.edu/designconference>.

²⁴ The term "leadership by design" is one often used by Richard N. Swett, one of the few ambassador-architects in United States history. For his comprehensive account of architecture's broad contributions to society, see *Leadership by Design: Creating an Architecture of Trust*, (Atlanta: Greenway Communications, 2005).

²⁵ The phrase "alchemists of the future," as well as the positioning of the future as "not unthinkable" are statements that Art Center President Richard Koshalek frequently articulates in his public speeches and presentations.

²⁶ For a comprehensive overview of this generational trend towards societal engagement, see William Strauss and Neil Howe, *Millennials and Pop Culture*, (Great Falls: Life Course Associates, 2006).

partnerships that enhance Art Center's commitment to be at the forefront of international design education. Through her leadership, Art Center is the first design institution to be designated by the United Nations as a non-governmental organization (NGO). In her role, Mariana is responsible for overseeing an innovative portfolio of ongoing design projects and publications, and is also at the helm with Mr. Koshalek of a cross-institutional communication campaign under development on earthquake preparedness in Southern California. In 2006-07 Mariana served as an advisory board member to UNESCO's Social Design Network and judged UNESCO and Felissimo's Design 21 international competition "Heated Issue" focusing on new design proposals towards sustainability; she also contributed as an advisor to the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum exhibition "Design for the Other 90%." Mariana holds a Licence en Lettres Degree from the Sorbonne University, Paris, and a M.A. in Art History and Museum Studies from the University of Southern California.



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