ITERATIONS

Design Research & Practice Review

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DESIGNERS
IRELAND

George Boyle / President of the Institute of Designers in Ireland

Institute of Designers in Ireland: President's Address

Since becoming President of the Institute of Designers in Ireland (IDI), the prevailing puzzle preoccupying everyone seems to be: *"What is Design?"*. I am astonished by how many are inclined to lead me to the same overwhelming question. A fog curls around our feet.

Things are not so difficult among IDI membership. The IDI has flourished recently due to the judicious vision of former presidents, faithful officers and generous voluntary contributions of members.

Yet in the public realm: confusion abounds. The purpose of design has always been more than beauty or originality. It's about balancing contradictory interests, making best choices from complex options, iterating to simplify and clarify, manipulating skilfully a repository of content, process and material. Results traditionally were often an artefact or physical output – product, clothing, story, narrative, various forms of communicative solutions or optimised, dedicated physical environments.

Our task now is to respect those parameters and aspirations of previous generations – but to apply creative energy to a broader spectrum of challenges, communicating clearly to those who don't get it. Designers are, increasingly, part of a value chain where innovation – far beyond materially or intrinsically measurable – is achieved by multi-disciplinary teams, in virtual, physical, meta-physical realms.

So: What is Design?

Design adds value – aesthetic, intuitive, sensual, efficient, practical – to lifestyle or enterprising needs. Design is honing, improving, refining things – for sure. But increasingly, Design is a matter of resolution – for real people with real problems. It is how people navigate or encounter systems – how we communicate. Design reaches into our collective conscience, encouraging responsible behaviour. It creates space, cultivates sense of place for increasingly disconnected communities. Design builds tribes, forges bonds: softens prejudice or judgement. Design can enunciate, elevating common goals, recognising diversity, polishing identity. It reveals essence through iterative discovery and exploration. Design ignites through people, along professional paths and – more and more – posits perception of our place on this planet. Designers tap a yearning psyche. Good design feels *"just right"* or *"meant to be"*. We are more pivotal in the greater context than we thought.

"Success does not happen by accident : it happens by design"

Design: Rising

Our 2016 adventure will be *"Design:Rising"*. The reference helps us refine who, when and where we are: articulating an undertaking, raising one voice, scribing credible, inclusive goals, governance and community. We want to focus on what Design can do – who Designers are. The IDI has a job to do, talent to circle, and impression to make. Through diversity and talent, Irish designers have economic, philosophical and political influence. We can harness this rich potential for the betterment of everybody. We will build on repeating patterns: events, awards, benefits, activities, committees, engagement: guided along these lines:

- People & Worth;
- Empathy & Earth;
- Research & Knowledge Growth;
- Development & Professional Growth;
- Education & Tribe;
- Community & Life.

I find the IDI on an inexorable track of progression, impact and authority for future iterations. This year is, of course, just another year. I believe we offer members – established or new, young or seasoned, individual or corporate, idealistic or cynical, rural, regional or urban – the renewd support, promotion and commitment of an inspirational structure we can call home, that will always have our back. I am honoured to be involved at this transformational time.

George Boyle

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