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# THE JOY OF TEACHING

By: Lolita Dutta, Editor, Associate Director & HOD, School of Communication Design, UID

September 5th. Teacher's day. One day in the entire year where the role of the teacher is applauded. Whereas they actually deserve to be celebrated all year round! For it is very often the teacher who shapes your life, and gives you the impetus to become who you are.

When I was all of seven, my art teacher was one of the few who recognised my talent, and allowed me a certain freedom of expression. She told my parents, "Lolita will pursue an artistic profession." The words hung in the air until I actually went to design school. And later when I became an educator, the voice of my art teacher reverberated. She had shaped my future.

Design as also art, can follow trends, norms and skills; but the true learning comes from being free of thought and too many deliberations. This I try and instil in all the students I have taught now for almost three decades.

So it came as no surprise, on Teachers day when I received some of the most heartfelt and touching messages and calls, from all corners of the world. Students who trouble you the most also remember you the most! As I found to my utmost surprise.

There are students who actually remember what you taught them, how you taught them and where you taught them! I feel humbled, joyous and often find my eyes misting over, overcome by nostalgia, of scenarios from many different classrooms, incidents and events.

This year some of the greatest compliments were "you taught us to see, to look at colour, and you gave us the freedom to explore", "I keep hearing your voice in my head, to do better", "everything I learnt about life not only design was from you", and many more like this. I am sure many teachers would have received these thoughtful insights, and we all know, that this profession is not only noble, it shapes life.

A good teacher, never forgets the students, and vice versa, a good teacher, nurtures, not commands, a great teacher gives a student the lesson of life, the courage to face the world, take on challenges, and become a success. They give a student the value of freedom, in thought and expression.

As the years have gone by, I have realised the role I have played in so many young lives, I know I never will have monetary wealth, but in hindsight what I have as a teacher- the good will, the wishes and love of students- surpasses all. To quote from an old film 'To sir with love', a young voice sings for her teacher, "and in my mind you will live on and on".....

# CELEBRATING CRAFTS OF INDIA

By: Anahita Suri, Assistant Professor, School of Fashion Design, UID

As part of the Craft and Culture module, the students of Masters of Fashion Design, Semester III, studied the various crafts of India to identify the design language and develop an appreciation for the various raw materials, indigenous techniques, visual language and above all, the rich Indian heritage.

A show and tell session was organized at the end of inputs for each region of India- East, West, North, South- where the students actively participated by dressing up in apparel and accessories from various handlooms across India, to celebrate the richness of these textiles and understand their application into contemporary designs. The students collected textiles, apparel, furniture, décor items, etc. from their homes and wardrobes of their mothers and grandmothers, to identify and record various handloom and handicraft products.

Here are some pictures of students dressed up in handloom fabrics of different regions of India.



Students wearing hand crafted fabrics of North India like Banarasi brocade, Phulkari, Chikankari, etc. Picture Credit: Shivani Singh.



Students showcasing crafts of East India like Gamcha weave, Kantha embroidery, Tant weave and Shantiniketan leather. Picture Credit: Shivani Singh.



Celebrating crafts of Central and West India like Gota Patti embroidery, Bandhej, Lehariya, Meenakari, etc. Picture Credit: Shivani Singh.



Students dressed up in handlooms of South India like Mysore silk, Ikat, Kasavu. Picture credit: Shivani Singh.

These sessions were fun and interactive and proved to be an effective way of learning by observing and peer learning as well. The students used this opportunity to dress up and were eager to see what their peers were up to. As the subject faculty, I was pleasantly surprised by their enthusiasm reflected in them being on time for every class- dressed up at 9 am!

# UID FACULTY AT THE BARREIRA ART + DESIGN COLLEGE, SPAIN

By: Anahita Suri, Assistant Professor, School of Fashion Design, UID and Hariesh K. Sankaran, Associate Director, School of Interior & Furniture Design, UID

On September 10 & 11, 2020, Hariesh K. Sanakaran, Associate Director of School of Interior & Furniture Design & Anahita Suri, Assistant Professor of School of Fashion Design, presented their research papers at the Design Challenges conference at the Barreira Art + Design College in Valencia, Spain.

The Official Center for Higher Studies Barreira Art + Design is a center specialized in artistic education with more than 60 years of experience in training. The Design Challenges conference was part of the International Conference of Creativity & Innovation in Design which brought together designers, researchers, thinkers, artists, educators and entrepreneurs from 11 countries, including Spain, Portugal, Germany, Switzerland, Mexico, United Kingdom, etc.

Owing to the current global situation of Covid 19, the conference was held in a hybrid modality, with some presentations in person and some through video conference. The conference saw presentations on varied topics like Design Pedagogy, Studies in Design & Society, Educational Innovation in Artistic Matters, Design Sustainability & Social Responsibility and Entrepreneurial Experiences in Art & Design.

Participation in the conference was a great opportunity for the faculties of UID to present their research at a global platform. It also provided interaction and engagement with other presenters and created awareness on other challenges that designers are facing and addressing the world over. The publication is in process.

## 1. Impact of Mindful Space Design on Social Well Being by Hariesh K. Sankaran.

Hariesh K. Sankaran is an architect, product designer, urbanist, and the Associate Director at the School of Interior and Furniture Design, UID. His practice focuses on architecture, interiors, furniture & product and is based in Chennai. Over the period of years, his firm has worked on residential (architecture & interiors), retail branding, commercial complexes, office buildings, farmhouses, resorts, mixed residential use, apartments and hospitality projects. A key program of his practice has been aligned to enact effective altruism, where for every 5 projects he undertakes in the studio, he makes sure to do one project pro-bono for a family in an economically weaker community.

Consequently, the studio has developed a reputation for working on Micro-housing projects, working within tight sites, and economic constraints.

His paper was based on his practice-based design research. The paper discusses his approach in understanding present behaviors, future probing, and possible germination of healthy habits leading to designing lasting memories. The paper discusses three case studies and evolves a framework to create new environments moving towards an overall social upliftment and wellbeing.



Screenshot from the presentation. Picture Credit: Hariesh K. Sankaran.



Screenshot from the presentation. Picture Credit: Hariesh K. Sankaran.

## 2. Designers as Social Activists in the Context of Craft Clusters in India by Anahita Suri.

Anahita Suri is a fashion designer, educator and researcher. In her decade long academic experience, she has worked at grass root level with various craft clusters leading to an interest in craft design. Her research focuses on Indian crafts as well as history, identity & culture of clothing in the contemporary world. She is an Assistant Professor at the School of Fashion Design, UID.

This paper focuses on the current challenges in the craft sector in India, the role of the Government, educational institutes and designers to revive these traditional handlooms and handicrafts through design intervention and product diversification and thus, empower the craftsmen through a symbiotic work modality that would in turn lead to ethical and environmental sustainability.



Screenshot from the presentation. Picture Credit: Anahita Suri.

### REMOTE AREAS

Some crafts are practiced by tribal communities that live in regions with poor or no accessibility.

Various Government efforts have been made to build road, rail access to these regions, get these products out in the national market and create visibility for the same.

Examples are *Dongria Kondh* embroidery from Niyamgiri Hills, *Toda* embroidery from Nilgiri Hills, *Longpi* pottery from Manipur, Cane and Bamboo crafts from North East India, *Lepcha* weave from Sikkim, etc.



Fig 1: Dongria Kondh Shawl from Niyamgiri Hills, Odisha.  
Image Credit: [www.tribeoftextiles.com](http://www.tribeoftextiles.com)



Fig 2: Longpi Pottery from Manipur.  
Image Credit: [www.theantcraft.wordpress.com](http://www.theantcraft.wordpress.com)

Activate Windows  
Go to Settings to activate Windows.

Screenshot from the presentation. Picture Credit: Anahita Suri.

# THE 4:30PM CLUB

Written By: Ackshaj Anand, Semester 3, Animation and Motion Graphics, School of Communication Design, UID

A virtual bonfire for passionate students

This new life we've become accustomed to is leading everyone to think of all sorts of ways to recreate real-life interactions while sitting in front of a screen. As designers, and especially in our class of animation students, we're more than just blocks and names on a screen. We're a community that loves to share experiences, feelings and inspiration with each other. Every class across semesters has a sea of modules washing upon their shores each week, but we should look forward to diving into the waters past these dreaded deadlines and assignments. The 4:30PM club is the child of this idea, allowing us Animation students to be as close and connected as possible despite the ravine created by the pandemic. There's always something exciting in store every other day, from inspirational illustrations to breathtaking films, abound with hearty discussions.

The connection between a student and teacher goes beyond lectures and attendance. The best class environment is one where the ice has been broken and we're free to share and know things about each other as if we're all at the same level. Discord participation has been quintessential to this development.



Illustration by Nirvaan Gangoly, Sem 3

We have channels and forums for everything from recipes and music to pets and games. Sometimes students even do a live-stream of their work in progress, and any newcomer to a particular software can take away some tips and tricks. It's this very atmosphere that's allowed our monochrome classroom days to be painted with colours, giving birth to a wholesome club.

Faculty members Rohit Karandadi and Supriya Tirkey came up with the idea, inspired by the interactions back in their college days. Thanks to them, the forty-one of us are able to experience the 4:30PM Club, consisting of Film Screenings, Sketching Sessions and Animation Appreciation. Needless to say, we begin at 4:30PM. The first part of the club was born out of a desire for everyone to understand Film Language and get in the habit of analyzing film as a medium of communication. It began soon after the Film Language and Appreciation module as student-run streaming and discussion sessions. Films of various genres, time periods and languages were collected from the students and twice a week, mostly towards the weekend, we would all gather on Discord and watch a randomly picked feature from the list. This is an entirely different experience compared to watching it alone, as now we have a platform for discussions where everyone adds their own views and points into the blend. In one instance, we watched *Coherence* (2013) and it was so mind-boggling that we spent over an hour trying to decode the complex movie together. We relished an assortment of films over the days, animated and live-action both, learning about how things like lighting and composition played key roles in different scenes.

Sprouting from this comes Animation Appreciation. In this, we meet up and view a plethora of animation shorts from various animation artists and directors across the world, ranging from music videos to short films. This is particularly enriching for us because we get to explore fantastic creations which we probably never even thought could exist. We discuss what we liked or didn't like after it's screened, from the story to the concept and the animation. Things like projector-based animation and sand animation often take us by surprise and it's always a delight to doodle side-by-side. We look forward to this every Wednesday.

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Last but not least, we have the Sketching Sessions on Mondays and Fridays. Nowadays we've got heaps of work coming by the day, with barely any time or headspace to simply lay back and enjoy unbridled sketching. A remedy to this is the relaxed, laid-back sessions where we hone our skills while filling our pages with lively illustrations.

We start the hour-long session with twenty-odd minutes of gesture drawing, and then go on to using a common reference for everyone to draw. It can be a direct study or we can take inspiration from the reference and come up with an interesting sketch, using any medium and to any level of detail. With ambient music giving a café-like feeling, we engage in conversation about various topics as we go about our sketches, posting them on the channel for everyone to take a gander afterwards. Sometimes we get so engrossed that we lose track of time and keep going for more than two hours!

Eventually, the 4:30 Club was opened to animation students from other semesters as well. The best part about this club is that nothing is too formal and there's no compulsion to attend at inconvenient times. It strengthens our bonds and it always feels like we're sitting around a campfire with sketchbooks in our hands and opinions in our minds. It's this warmth that fills the chasm created by the solemnity of online classes. The marionette-strings of looming deadlines are unwound for just a couple of hours where we're all free to be ourselves and pour our hearts out into doing what we love.



Illustration by Rohit Karandadi, Faculty.

# SMALL TALK

By: Kishori Dalwadi, Assistant Director, School of Interior Design, UID.

Dialogue is one of the main tools of communication, as it unfolds interaction. Interaction is considered to be intimately linked with identity, which is continuously re-constructed through the stories shaped by previous experience, current circumstances, etc. With virtual sessions for the new batch of 2020, and dealing with online counterpart, to evoke dialogue and getting them the feel to be in 'Design' was a task; and an essential attribute to set before rolling into the regular class sessions. It was important to share the stories that unfold as narratives in the campus of UID. Consequently, to make new 2020-2022 batch comfortable, an experimental virtual interaction session was set by School of Interior Design, with their senior batch 2019-2021.

This stemmed in making the 'new batch' open and have all their queries, courses, pedagogy, etc. clear in an earthy language of conversation. It opened up new topics conducive to discussions. The virtual meeting and identifying the 'new' and the 'existing' together on the same platform as-Virtual face-to-face, was quite an experience. New zest was seen among this new bunch. They started to open-up with the co faculties making the online classes more communicative and interesting. A fresh start made on a fresh mode with fresh motivation!



# LET'S TALK OF THE WEATHER

By: Sambit Kumar Pradhan, Assistant Professor, School of Communication Design, UID.

There's something about certain kinds of weather which makes everyone, even if momentarily, have that searching faraway look unto the horizon often accompanied by a sigh, sometimes not.

What kind of weather is that? What does one search for? I believe everyone might answer these questions differently or perhaps would just have a silent shrug which wishes to be a sure nod but falls short by just a bit. In moments like these the horizon is usually reflective of the extent of the depth of the perception of our own selves. That searching look is perhaps our attempt to ensure that amidst all the entanglements and distractions of making a living of the life we have, we can still find ourselves.

We are all drifters through time. I often think that it isn't time that passes but it is us who pass through time. We are all vagrants from point A to point B. And we walk a bridge connecting these points as we walk from our beginnings to our eventualities.

Some have straight simple bridges, some which need minor repairs now and then, some have tunnels and forests to pass through, some have a very windy and windy bridge often doubling up on itself, going through many twists and turns, ups and downs while some bridges are almost like rollercoasters. The possibilities are almost endless. But do we have a bridge already made when we begin? If one believes in the concepts of fate, destiny or predestination, then yes. It is all decided and we simply go through the motions. But if you don't then I would say our bridge gets built as we walk it. What direction it takes, its strengths, its precariousness, its adventurousness et al is governed by every choice we make. So in a manner of speaking the bridge is a series of effects we tread upon as we pass through time. Quite 'effective', ain't it?!

Bad puns aside, lets then return to that searching look. The look, besides ensuring that we are still there and not lost to our own selves, is also to reflect upon the choices we have made. As humans we are intuitive beings who instinctively learn.



But actually applying that learning is quite another thing. As humans, we are curious and our curiosities manifest in many forms. Some are one off pass-bys, some present themselves often and eventually lose their draw but some have an allure that if once indulged in, plant a seed which grows into a wild weed with very attractive flowers, which spreads along the path as temptation and before long the weed fruits into an insidious addiction. When this happens it is that momentary faraway searching look which can be a life saver because if we do spot our self we can still pull ourselves back onto the sturdy and safe mid-section of the bridge. But these are fleeting moments which cannot be captured if one lacks intent, focus and determination. Being in love isn't very different from this even though the differences are as critical as they are sensitive. However, to talk of all that here will be too much of a digression from the oath we have currently set out on.

If we are conscious of which weather invokes that pause of reflection within us, I believe we should just let it happen without any resistance from our self and as much as possible, from our circumstances. In today's day and age it is especially necessary as it is getting easier by the day to completely lose one's inner self to what lies outside. Indulgence on occasion is fine, sometimes necessary even. But as Kabir says, too much of even good things is harmful. Being conscious of our own selves is imperative. And these weather-pauses serve as boosters to consciousness. Weather is not just the climate outside but also the climate within us. And we can no longer deny the adverse effects of climate change. Thus, weather is not something to merely talk and complain about but also to sometimes pause in and reflect within.

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