



Editorial

The world is changing very rapidly and there is an increasing demand to develop new products. Many new design institutions are being set up world wide to meet the demands of changing context and to improve the quality of life. The design culture in India is still in embryonic stage with not more than 100 designers trained in a year. However, the recent trends are very encouraging with the set up of new design studios and design establishment in corporate world. Indigenous development of Indica and Scorpio are two live examples. In July 2002, IIT Kanpur started its Design Programme to train students for MDes degree.

The design-phase of a product is very crucial and most aspects of product life are conceived in this stage like the way an embryo develops in a mother's womb. Therefore, modern designers are required to consider all aspects of a product from its conception to death. Creativity, innovation and novelty are basic elements of an effective design.

We invite experts from other design institutions and industries to conduct workshops and teach at IIT campus on design aspects like user centered design, human computer interface, ergonomics, creativity, and visual communication. The experience has been very rich and rewarding. These interactions also bring institutions and industries closer which is an essential feature of design. Three articles have been contributed by the guest faculty on important topics like creativity, ergonomics, and design process.



The classes and laboratory sessions in the Design Programme are highly interactive. The students are so creative that the instructors have to be very careful in not imposing their views on the students. Rather, it is a two way process of learning. We agree with “...not to trust any single process including the one we teach them” expressed by Prof Bernard Roth in his article on design projects. We have invited three students to write articles on their work and their perception on an exciting workshop on “Form”.

Our students extensively use newly developed ‘4I’ Laboratory. A student can give shape to his ideas within a few days of its inception using its latest computer controlled machines. If he is not satisfied with his prototype, it will take another day or two to come up with an improved version. Thus the excitement of the idea is easily sustainable. The article on ‘4i’ lab describes its capabilities and strength.

The design education requires a vision on many other aspects like sustainability, flexibility, environmental concerns, etc. The future products should be designed to use less resources with high values so that everybody, including the people of the populous countries like China and India are benefited with the limited global resources. A flexible approach is required to think of alternative solutions with the spirit of team-work involving experts of different fields of different institutions.

This issue is presented with the hope that designers will be playing a very healthy and proactive role in improving the life style of people.

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