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HKDI

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DESIGN
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香港知專
設計學院

Member of VTC Group
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《ENERGY IS LIBERATED
MATTER, MATTER IS ENERGY
WAITING TO HAPPEN.》

BILL BRYSON, A SHORT HISTORY OF NEARLY EVERYTHING



ISSUE EIGHT 2014 HKDI

drop drop by

RE-DESIGNING
OUR RELATIONSHIP
WITH WATER

CASTING
SPELLS
OSCAR
WINNING
MAKE-UP

ALIEN
RESURRECTIONS
THE FANTASY
FASHION OF
HKDI ALUMNUS
ANGUS TSUI



ISSUE EIGHT

EDITOR'S LETTER

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA describes $E=mc^2$ as "the world's most famous equation—a mathematical formula with the power to transcend the barriers of language and culture." The E in the equation represents "energy", "m" is mass and "c" is the speed of light in a vacuum. The equation transformed our understanding of space, time, mass and, above all, of energy. Through Einstein's work the world understood there is equivalence between mass and energy, and that incremental increases of energy increase the mass of an object. Einstein's work on energy proved that time is not absolute and cannot be defined separately from space, but rather the two are interwoven into a single continuum known as spacetime, where events that occur at the same time for one observer could occur at different times for another. The transformation of mass – wood, plastic, cloth, brick, steel, stone – through energy is at the

heart of the design process. Creative energy when applied to inanimate objects, invests them with new shapes that enhance their use and beauty and in some sense weaves emotions within their molecules. We could almost say that Einstein's equation could be re-written for the design community as $E=mc^3$ where "E" is energy, "m" is mass and "c" is creativity cubed, surging at the speed of light through the design process and reshaping the space and time in which we live. We have chosen energy as the theme for this edition of SIGNED to pay homage to the transformational properties of design. Just as Einstein changed our world, so the energy of creative people draws the world through a metamorphosis that can make our planet more pleasing, less threatened by environmental damage and a place where people of all ages and races can live more harmoniously. All of these possibilities are explored in this issue through stories like *The Great Communicator*, which discovers how the American designer George Nelson changed domestic and office spaces through his innovative furniture and spatial designs; in *Casting Spells* where an Oscar winning make-up artist comes to HKDI to demonstrate

how creativity made the fantastical faces of *Harry Potter* characters; in *Brilliant Transformation*, where Dior's former haute joaillerie designer Christophe Lemaitre describes how he found a new creative narrative for precious stones by setting up his own couture jewellery company. Einstein's discoveries led to the development of nuclear weapons but all the stories created for this eighth edition of SIGNED magazine reveal that creative energy remains one of the most potent forces humanity

has at its disposal, as witnessed in *Drop by Drop*, which recounts how Yale's Sheila Levrant de Bretteville collaborated with HKDI students on a project to redesign our relationship with water. At this time, in this space we call Earth, designers, now more than ever, have a vital role to play in ensuring that future generations inherit a world where mass and energy are harnessed for the good of all.

DANIEL JEFFREYS
Editor-In-Chief

«THE
ENERGY
OF THE
MIND IS THE
ESSENCE
OF LIFE»
ARISTOTLE

1567

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COVER IMAGE A RENDERING OF AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION OF FELIX YEUNG'S DESIGN FOR STEPS DESCENDING INTO VICTORIA HARBOUR, INSPIRED BY THE STEP WELLS IN INDIA THAT ENCOURAGE SOCIAL INTERACTION.

The Hong Kong Design Institute is a member institution of the Vocational Training Council. For more information about HKDI, please check our website on www.hkdi.edu.hk, or email us at hkdi@vtc.edu.hk

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A retrospective of the works of **GEORGE NELSON** (1908-1986) at HKDI Gallery from March through June shows that a great designer should be an original thinker as well as a master of words and images. *DAISY ZHONG reports.*

COMMUNICATOR

THE GREAT

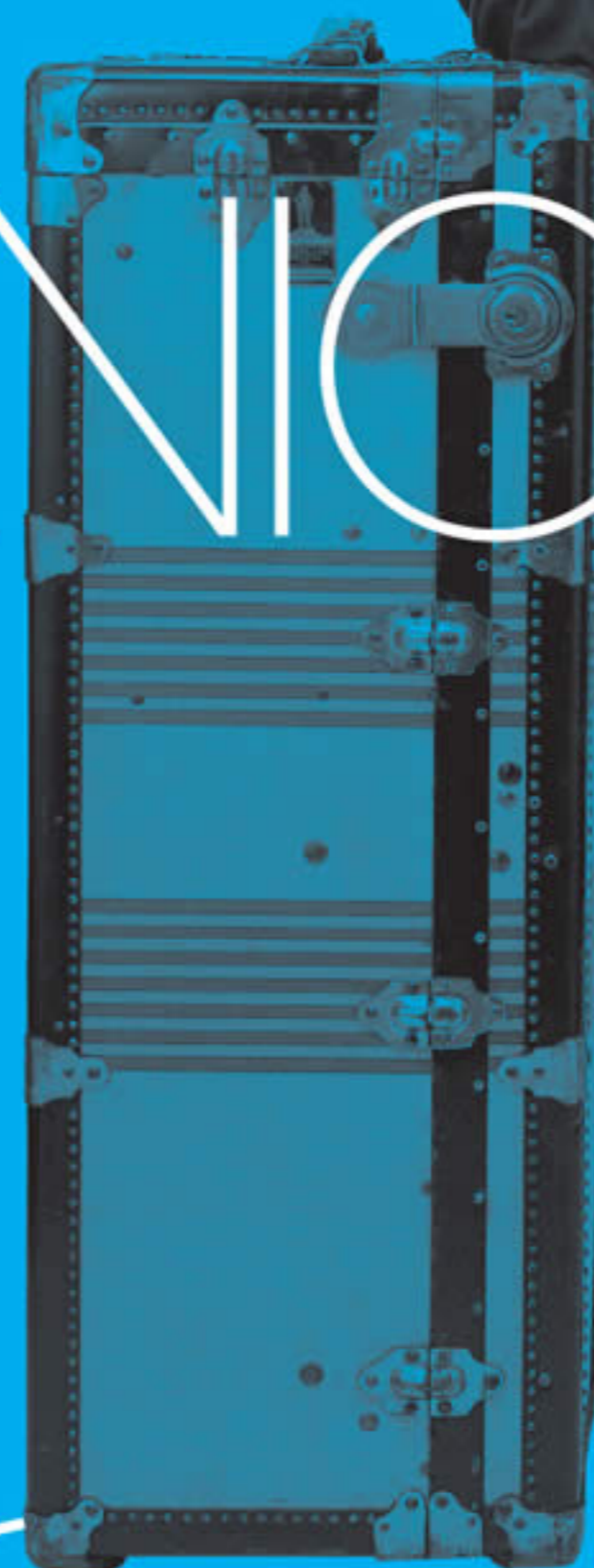
U.S. President Richard Nixon's "kitchen debate" with Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev during the 1959 American National Exhibition in Moscow was an iconic encounter, but it was the domestic setting where the debate took place that captured the imagination of three million Russian visitors and subverted perceptions on both sides of the ideological divide.

The "kitchen" was an installation within an 80,000-square-foot showcase for the American way of life at the height of the Cold War, and the architect behind it was George Nelson, a visionary proponent of the American Modernism movement as a designer, writer, social critic and impresario.

These labels are unable to fully capture Nelson's impact on design. With an architectural degree from Yale, his ambitions were universal and aimed at creating a new world order in design that would have a profound impact on the way people lived their lives.

A widely respected writer, lecturer, photographer and curator, Nelson knew instinctively that Americans were ready for a new way of looking at their everyday surroundings – and themselves. His appointment as design director at Herman Miller in 1947 was certainly not a safe choice – Nelson was still young and relatively inexperienced – but he proved himself a brilliant hire. A quarter of a century later, at the end of his tenure at Herman Miller, Nelson had transformed the company from a manufacturer of wooden furniture into the architect of the new American lifestyle, both at home and in the workplace.

But what Nelson was most passionate about was



June 2. The exhibition is the Hong Kong stop of an international tour that represents the first comprehensive retrospective devoted to Nelson. Organised by the Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein, Germany and sponsored by Herman Miller, the tour was launched in 2008 to commemorate the centenary of George Nelson's birth.

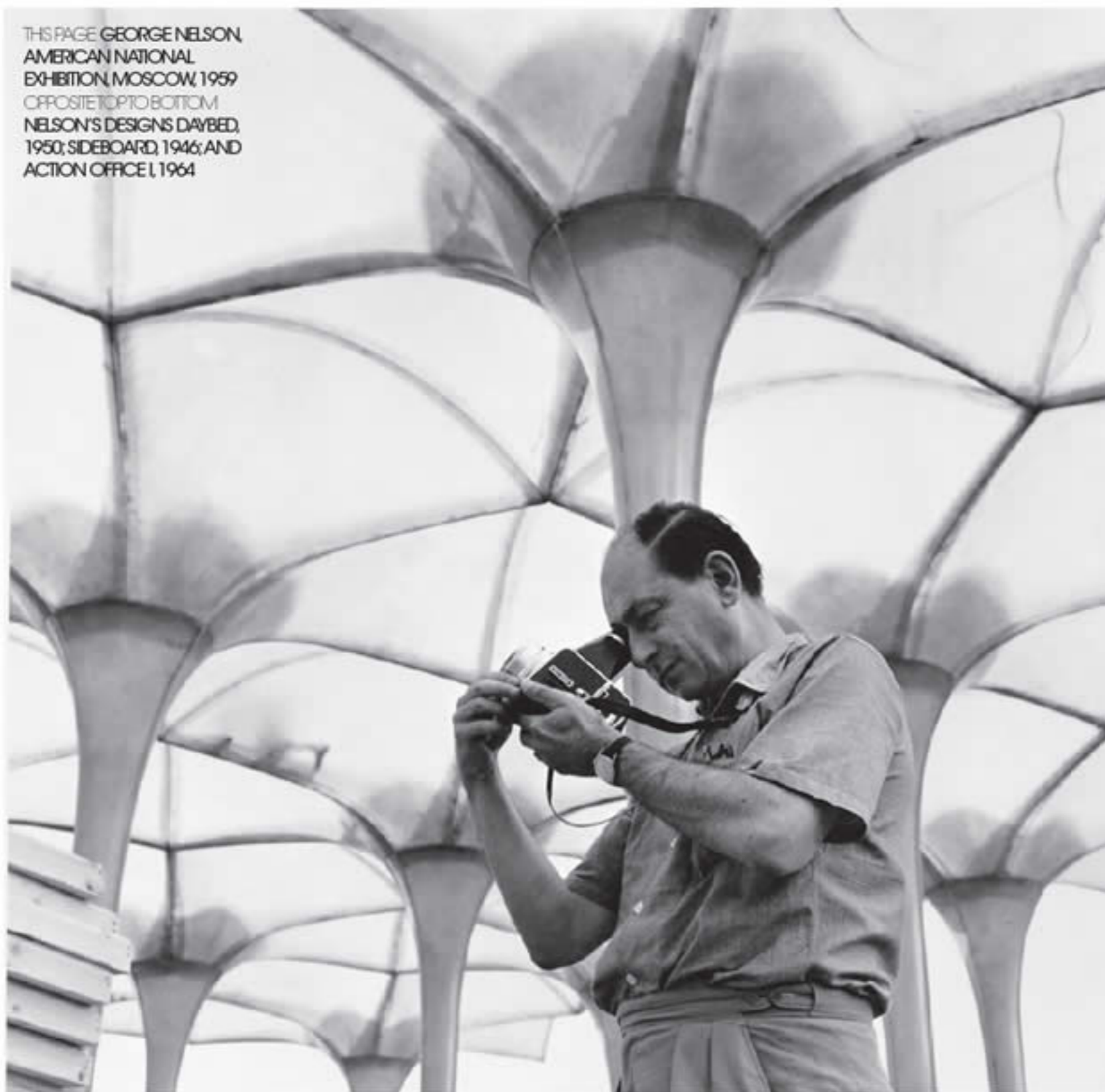
In the retrospective, more than 300 pieces are organised according to the five main themes of Nelson's career: home furniture design; office furniture design; corporate design; exhibition design and communication design.

The exhibition includes many pieces that are regarded as Nelson classics such as the Platform Bench (1945), the Ball Clock (1947), Coconut Chair (1956), the Marshmallow Sofa (1956) and the Bubble Lamps (1952 onwards) – but

communication. As evidenced by the kitchen debate, he aimed to convey new ideas and influence the world. Nelson's associate, designer Bruce Burdick once said, "George was a unique person who will be remembered for his thoughts and writings about design. His words were more important than the projects."

A full look at George Nelson's legacy will be on display at the HKDI Gallery from March 14 through

THIS PAGE: GEORGE NELSON POSING FOR A HERMAN MILLER ADVERT "TRAVELING MEN", CA. 1954. OPPOSITE: NELSON'S FREITZEL ARMCHAIR



THIS PAGE: GEORGE NELSON, AMERICAN NATIONAL EXHIBITION, MOSCOW, 1959. OPPOSITE TOP TO BOTTOM: NELSON'S DESIGNS DAYBED, 1950; SIDEBORD, 1946; AND ACTION OFFICE I, 1964

«ART, LIKE EVERY OTHER DISCIPLINE, IS NOT AN ISOLATED THING BUT INTIMATELY RELATED TO EVERYTHING IN CREATION.»

in fact Nelson was personally responsible for only the first of these and an early prototype of the last. Christopher Pullman, a former graphic design project leader at the office of George Nelson and now a Senior Critic at Yale School of Art, says, "I would characterise George's leadership style as hands-off and casual. After defining the problem, he would more or less leave it to you to propose a solution, which was both scary and liberating. He did not nit-pick. If he had things to add in the design process, they would often be in the form of casual drop-bys with course corrections embedded in wry comments or amusing stories with a moral at the end." Irving Harper, the principal associate for Nelson's office, described his design partner in the book *Compact Design Portfolio: George Nelson*, "George was heavily involved with the first group of furniture, but after that, his involvement was more minimal. He used to dream aloud about designs, and his ideas were mostly verbal... I would call him a Diaghilev of design."

Pullman also finds the comparison of Nelson with the legendary Russian ballet patron an apt one. "Like Diaghilev, George was sort of an impresario: he was an instigator and a collaborator, finding and directing talent towards a goal he could help articulate." A good example was his role at Herman Miller, he added. In addition to designing his own pieces, Nelson was the design director for furniture and assembled a long list of peers with whom to collaborate on a range of products, including Jane Thompson, Buckminster Fuller, Alexander Girard and Charles and Ray Eames. "In his own office he also depended on the skills of others to realise many products that bear his name," Pullman remarked. "George ran an eclectic office from the beginning. There were few others like it: Eames, and maybe Sutnar; later in the 60's, possibly an office like Chermayeff & Geismar's or Pentagram. This was (and still is) typical of offices built around the talents and charisma of one person." This hands-off style freed Nelson to deliver lectures, organise new approaches to art education, conceptualise exhibitions, write and think. Apart from design objects, the exhibition at HKDI also features communication designs including *Art X* (1953), the first multimedia presentation ever produced, which is cited as an important milestone in the field of education.

The project began as an evaluation of college curriculum at the University of Georgia, which Nelson believed was guilty of an overemphasis on isolated facts and techniques. "The most important thing to communicate to undergraduates was an awareness of relationships," he said. "Education, like the thinking of the man in the street, was sealed off into too many compartments." As a result, he and Charles Eames offered to present a sample lesson for an imaginary course in "communication" to explore relationships, which they labelled "*Art X*". The clip that is on display at the HKDI exhibition is a nine-minute show of three-screen slide projections using film and other automated tools from the course.

"*Art X* was not offered as an invention, but as a statement," Nelson said. "As a statement it said that there is no longer room in the world for barriers – political, economic, temporal, intellectual, scientific, racial, or any other kind. It said that art, like every other discipline, is not an isolated thing but intimately related to everything in creation." "He was an omnivore, a generalist, and at heart, an educator," Pullman said. As *Art X* and other items in the exhibition show, Nelson was involved in projects with much broader implications than individual pieces of furniture. He gave particular attention to educating society about values and ideas, famously saying, "The biggest single problem in the design field today revolves around the question of values. In relation to



BELOW TWO OF NELSON'S OFFICE TEAM WITH A MODEL OF HIS MIXED USE SPACE CONCEPT KNOWN AS JUNGLE GYM THAT WAS SHOWN AT THE AMERICAN NATIONAL EXHIBITION IN MOSCOW, 1959


« HE WAS AN OMNIVORE, A GENERALIST, AND AT HEART, AN EDUCATOR. »

this question, all other problems, while interesting, are superficial.”

As a keen observer, Nelson was known for articulating his insights into design and of his demand that projects must be centred within a “triangular tug of war” between function, technology, and social values, regardless of whether the subject is as big as a city or as small as a chair.

In the book *George Nelson on Design* (1979), Nelson wrote, “Traditionally we (designers) are not intellectual people and we do not go in much for speculation or introspection... (But now) the forces of the darkness are those pressing for the further dehumanisation of mankind and their power is that of the great industrial societies.”

He further argued that the modern designer should become sensitised to the issues of the environment, morality, and the new social configuration through a “generalist” approach, to become a “person who sees them as a whole” and an “urgently needed clarifier and intellectual leader”.

Put another way, a great designer should be an original thinker. Little wonder that it was Nelson who had “framed” the kitchen debate. 



LANGUAGE: THE CRITICAL DESIGN COMPONENT

BY CHRISTOPHER FULLMAN

A key project I worked on in George's office (1968-72) was for the Social Security Administration of the United States.

Field offices throughout the country were drowning in administrative costs. Huge error rates when claimants filled out forms were resulting in hours of repeat visits to correct incorrect or missing information. Our client wanted a complete review of the hundreds of Social Security forms, form letters and informational pamphlets, with the goal of reducing the error rate and improving the user experience.

In our research, we discovered that most individuals who go to the field offices to seek benefits are over 65, often with sight impairments, usually during a time of stress (retiring, injured, death of a spouse, etc), and many spoke English as a second language and had an average reading aptitude of a 5th grade student.

The key form these applicants were required to fill out was called SSA1. Printed in black on darkish green paper, the form had low contrast between paper and ink. It was also densely packed with information and, to save paper, the contents were compressed and type size was reduced. Information was sequentially confusing in that several responses were to be entered into a single box, resulting in missed data. Furthermore, its appearance and language was extremely bureaucratic and even threatening. Given the user profile, in almost every detail, the tone, appearance and functionality of SSA1 form predicted a poor experience and a poor outcome.

In the first-phase report that I wrote and designed, we shared these research observations with Social Security:

- *Your services affect people of every social, educational and age group.*
- *You don't have to compete for members.*
- *You don't have to sell anything.*
- *Social Security is the trustee of a person's legitimate earnings.*
- *It has nothing to do with welfare.*
- *Most contacts are made during a period of emotional stress.*
- *Your principal problem is simply to give the quality of service your members deserve.*
- *All of which adds up to a fundamental demand for humane, considerate, and direct communication materials.*

These basic, common-sense, relatively reductive and user-based objectives drove the design process and seemed to come naturally, both to George and to me. While it was clear that a basic formal re-organisation of the layout would help, our most important observation was that the language of the form was complex, legalistic and even hostile. The text was re-written in plain English, at a 5th grade level, and with a friendly tone. In other words, language turned out to be the critical design component in solving the Social Security log-jam. We both understood this and the success of the Social Security project turned on this observation.

I have carried the lessons learned from this collaboration throughout my career, which I have spent almost entirely in public service and teaching, thanks in large measure to this project. Language was a major tool in George's role as a designer and communicator. It enabled him to be a great writer, collaborator, persuader and storyteller.

DR DROP BY DR DROP

In October 2013 Yale University professor **SHEILA LEVRANT DE BRETTEVILLE** began exploring the water's edge at four Hong Kong harbours with an interdisciplinary group of students from HKDI. The issues that captured their attention formed the basis of some vivid and emotionally compelling work.

DANIEL JEFFREYS reports.

On March 29th the sky turned pitch black at midday and many Hong Kongers joked that they were witnessing the end of the world. The next day thunder and lightning clattered across the city for 90 minutes as a second storm intensified and the hourly precipitation rate rose to its highest since 1884.

On the evening of March 30th a black rainstorm of epic proportions struck Hong Kong, sending hailstones the size of baseballs through the roof of the Festival Walk shopping mall, which was soon inundated with water.

By 7pm, when Kowloon Tong's shoppers were running for cover, nature's feisty assault on the city had been under way for two days. Within an hour the black rainstorm signal had been hoisted, the first time this has ever happened in March.

According to senior meteorologists such early season lashing may soon become more frequent.

"The bad weather is a wake-up call to say that there will be more to come and it can come very quickly," says veteran weather watcher Leung Wing-mo, a spokesman for the Hong Kong Meteorological Society and the former assistant director of the Hong Kong Observatory. "Hailstorms may become more frequent and less localised. Look at this one and you find it hit almost everywhere in the city. This was never seen before."

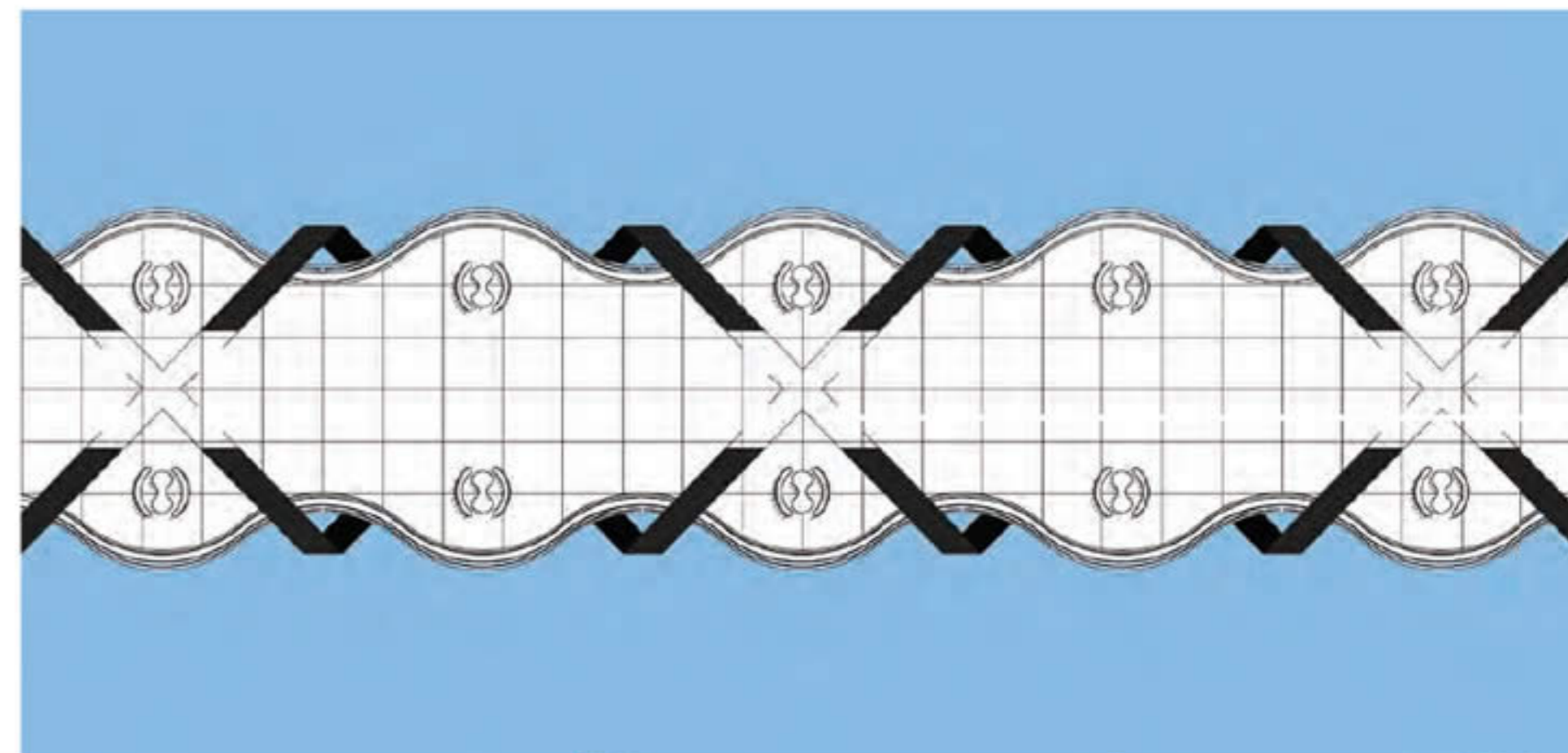
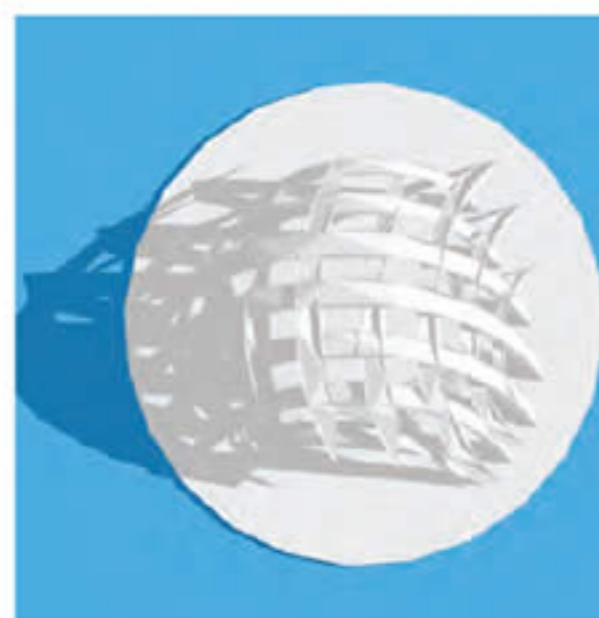
With a wicked stroke of irony the storms that hit Hong Kong coincided with showings of *Noah*, a new movie starring Russell Crowe that draws from the biblical story of a sinful earth drowned in rain by a vengeful God, with Noah's ark the only refuge for animals and a few chosen human beings.

The fascination with movies like

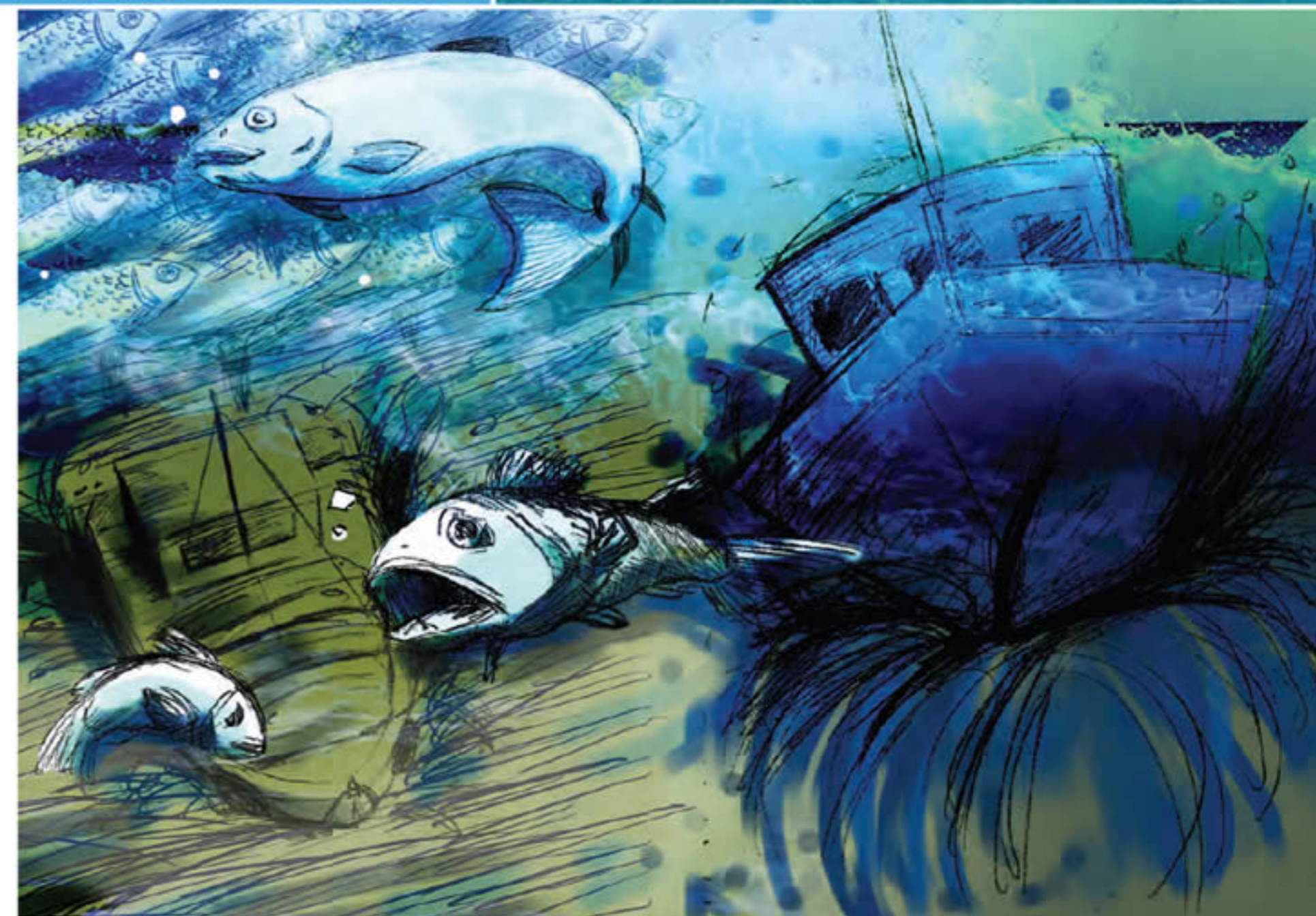
Noah and *The Day After Tomorrow* (where sudden climate change almost destroys Earth) is rooted in a growing awareness that nature is losing its patience. In Hollywood's version of global devastation there is usually a plucky band of human beings left to restart civilisation, but that would probably not happen. When a meteorite caused an ice age 66 million years ago during the so-called Cretaceous–Paleogene extinction event the dinosaurs (and 75 per cent of other species on earth) were eliminated.

Well aware of these issues and Hong Kong's vulnerability to climate change, Yale University Professor 2013 Sheila Levrant de Bretteville began a project with HKDI students in mid-2013 to study the water's edge at Tolo Harbour, Victoria Harbour, Junk Bay and Tai O.

The students involved in de Bretteville's project were asked to



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:
A DESIGN BY VICTOR SO OF A BRIDGE FOR JUNK BAY WITH SEATING AREAS
AN ARTIST IMPRESSION OF FELIX YEUNG'S DESIGN FOR STEPS THAT DESCEND FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE HARBOUR TO ENCOURAGE SOCIAL INTERACTION, INSPIRED BY STEP WELLS IN INDIA
A DRAWING BY JOJO LAUTO ILLUSTRATE THE SEA'S ANGER AT HUMAN INTERFERENCE IN TOLO HARBOUR
AN ARTIST IMPRESSION OF A RENTABLE SEMI-SUBMERSIBLE CAPSULE ON WATER DESIGNED BY MARCO LEUNG



create visual work to show how they saw water's potential to sustain Hong Kong, to highlight the fragile state of the city's water supply, the impact that the area's urbanisation has had upon water sources and changes in the quality of moisture in the air.

During the three months de Bretteville worked with HKDI students, she saw an increasing awareness and identification with water's power. "The attention of most students was captured by the disregard and disrespect for, as well as the preciousness of Hong Kong's abundant water. They each tried to draw people to pay more attention to water, the anger they imagined the water must feel and its power to damage and destroy.

"It's surprising that anyone could forget the presence of water moisture and the importance of Hong Kong's harbours," says de

« THIS IS A CITY THAT IS SO INTIMATELY CONNECTED TO THE PLANET'S ENDANGERED RELATIONSHIP WITH WATER »

Bretteville. "The humidity during all but a few months, the monsoon rains, the surrounding ocean, reservoirs, sea surges, typhoons and potential for flooding. This is a city that is intimately connected to the planet's endangered relationship with water sources, and it could be the most attentive to our need to preserve water and pay attention to the presence of moisture and the early warnings it can provide. Hong Kong should be expert in how best to take care, prepare and respond to expected dangers to come."

De Bretteville was invited to HKDI by the school's Principal, Leslie Lu, who did his Masters at Yale. She was captivated by the school's proximity to Junk Bay and soon found an article by Yim Wai Shu Wyss, Emeritus Professor of Geology and Earth Sciences at the University of Hong Kong. In her proposal to HKDI, she requested that a public lecture by Professor Yim take place shortly after her arrival so that the HKDI students would have a scientific basis for their work in regard to water and land

relations past, present and future.

In his research Yim identifies water vapour as a key factor in environmental changes. "Of the greenhouse gases, water vapour is much more abundant than carbon dioxide," says Yim. "A decrease in concentration by about 10% over 2000-2009 was found to slow the rate of increase in global surface temperature by about 25% compared to all other greenhouse gases."

According to a paper by Yim in the *Hong Kong Engineer* titled *Water vapour and climate change: Hong Kong's perspective*, water vapour distribution affects our climate "through floods and droughts, ice sheet expansion and retreat, the well-being of the planet's vegetation including food supply" while also having a profound effect on sea-levels.

Yim argues that heat generation

in urban areas, such as the Victoria Harbour basin, is an important means of atmospheric water vapour transfer. Hong Kongers also impact water vapour levels through fossil fuel consumption, land reclamation and water supply schemes, such as the import of water from Dongjiang, which have changed the regional natural water cycle.

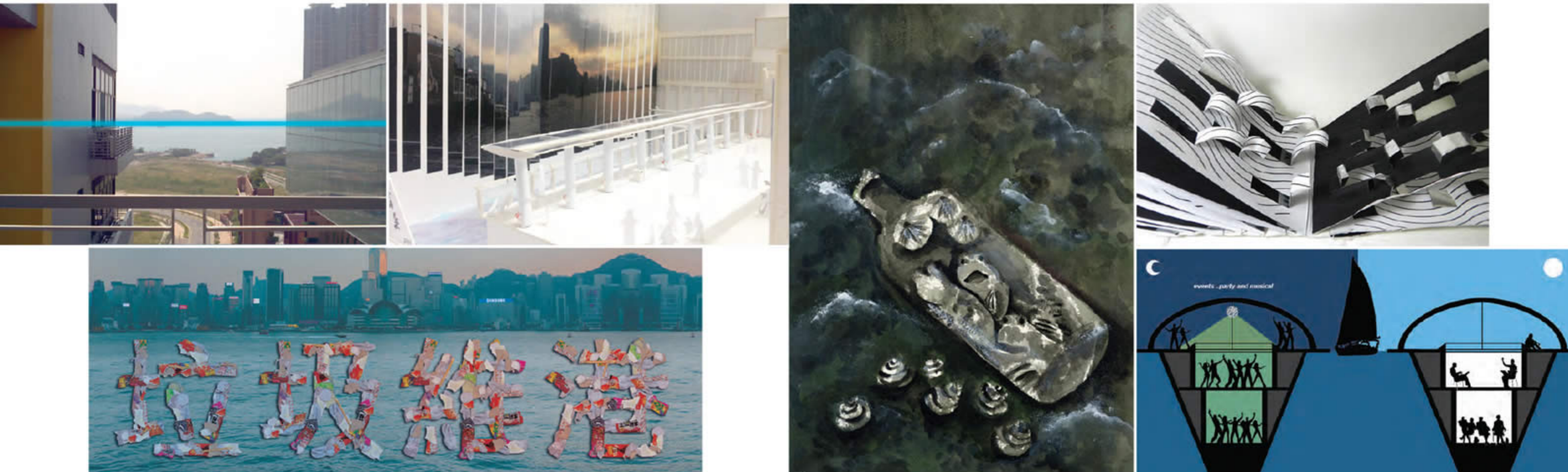
"When they are taken on their own, these factors might seem to have a minor effect but they are like water dripping on a rock," says de Bretteville. "Drop by drop the moisture erodes and changes the rock's shape. And

when there are multiple sources of change, the transformation takes place much faster."

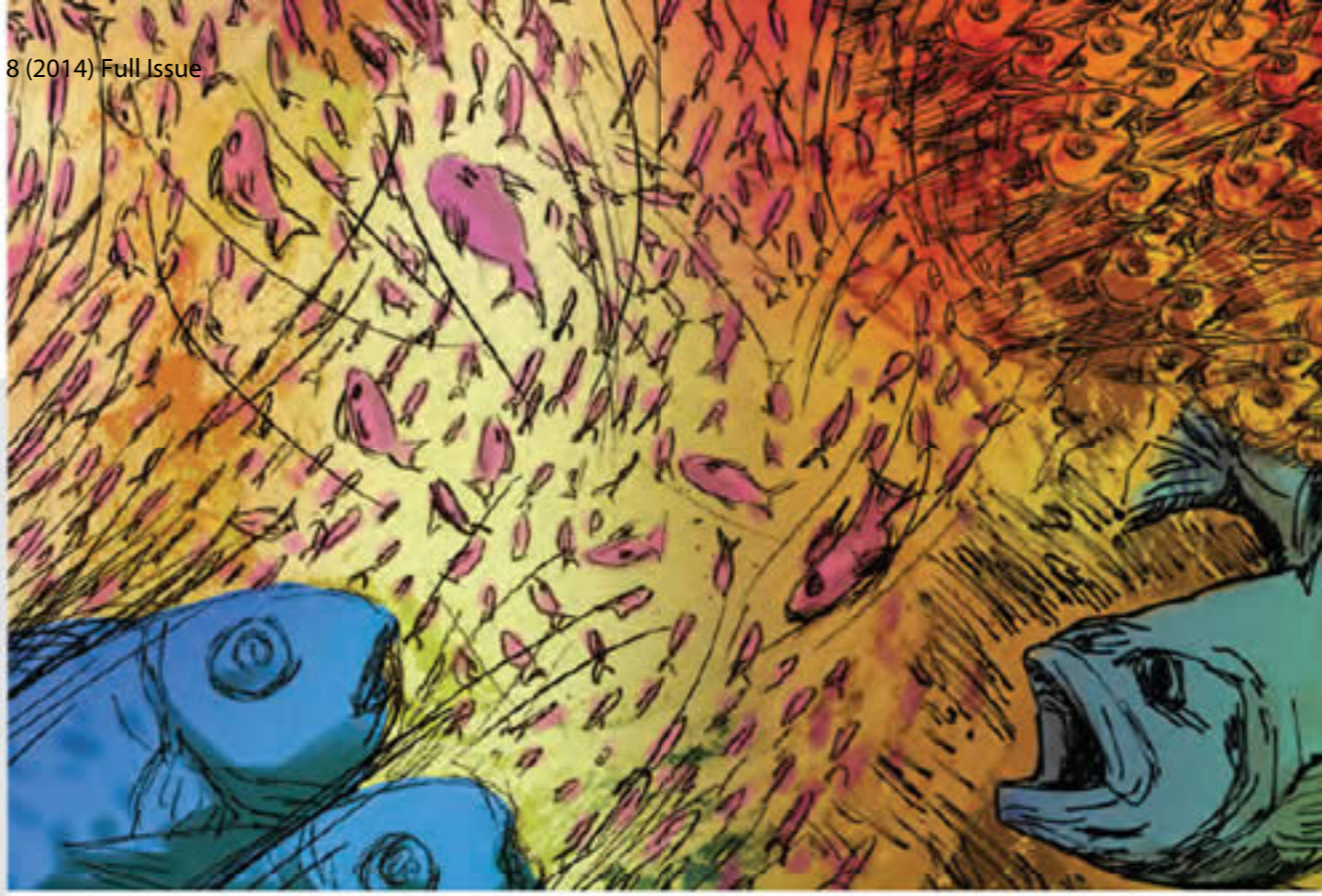
It was Yim's work regarding the vital role of water moisture that inspired de Bretteville's own poetic project at HKDI entitled *Water Moisture 2.0*, in which a blue line appears as we gaze from HKDI across the horizon at Junk Bay. The visibility of the laser beam intensifies with the amount of water moisture in the air.

In the same spirit, de Bretteville's project at HKDI was called 海角天涯 (border of the sky/corner of

CLOCKWISE FROM THE FAR LEFT: AN IMPRESSION OF SHEILA LEVRANT DE BRETTEVILLE'S PROJECT "MOISTURE 2.0" WHICH CONSISTS OF A LASER BEAM THAT BECOMES MORE VISIBLE AS MOISTURE LEVELS RISE; AN ARTIST IMPRESSION OF KENNY MAK'S WATER PAVILION FROM WHICH PEOPLE CAN WATCH THE SEA; AN ILLUSTRATION IN THE INTERACTIVE BOOKLET "MEETING" CREATED BY DORA YAU WHICH DEPICTS HOW MARINE WILDLIFE MEETS WITH HUMAN WASTE AND INFRASTRUCTURE; A BOOKLET CREATED BY CRIMSON CHAN SYMBOLISING THE CONFLICT BETWEEN HUMANITY AND THE SEA; MARCO LEUNG'S CAPSULE DESIGN; A POSTER DESIGNED TO HIGHLIGHT THE POLLUTION PROBLEM IN VICTORIA HARBOUR



« SO MANY STUDENTS HEARD,
UNDERSTOOD AND IDENTIFIED
WITH THE WATER'S RAGE AND
RESULTANT DESTRUCTION »



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT
A BOOKLET CREATED BY MOLLY
CHAN THAT COMBINES CHINESE
CALLIGRAPHY WITH IMAGES OF
MUDSKIPPER FISH
A DRAWING BY JOJO LAUTO
ILLUSTRATE THE ANGER OF THE SEA;
THE INTERACTIVE BOOKLET
"MEETING" CREATED BY DORA YAU



the ocean). For three months she worked with 32 students from a variety of disciplines, a feature she insisted on to help break down the divisions between departments. The results represent a remarkable archive of creativity especially as many of the students, such as Felix Yeung, were in their first year at HKDI. Yeung designed an elaborate set of stairs of varying widths descending to the water's edge at Junk Bay. Fellow first year student Victor So designed a 100 metre long viewing bridge across water flowing into Junk Bay, to give people a chance to observe the way water moves between sea and land.

Some of the projects showed great daring. Marco Leung designed a partially submerged floating room that would be open to the sky and have a view under water; Billy Chan created a video to capture the way the sea calls to us in anger at places like Victoria Harbour, even if we

are too preoccupied to perceive the water's pain at our indifference. Yammi Ngai created a video with a soundtrack of her own breathing to echo the waves and tides as a means to express the way the water must feel as land is "reclaimed" from the sea to build more structures.

Among the visually moving projects is a book created by Crimson Chan representing the conflict between water and humans, particularly those who live close to the sea in Hong Kong's few remaining fishing communities, such as Tai O, on the Lantau coastline.

"After human beings started to build their houses along the coast, the ocean became annoyed so she destroyed all the houses," says Chan, describing the inspiration for his book *Wood and Water*. "The human beings fought back by covering their houses with metal, but they were still not strong enough to withstand the power of the ocean."

Chan's book with its vivid patterns of waves sweeping through buildings is reminiscent of the tsunami that hit Japan in 2010, but his visual sources were closer to home. "I saw these ruins in Tai O and they showed me that living by the sea is very tough. You have to strengthen yourself to fight with the nature."

Student Dora Yau used her graphic design skills on her book called *Meeting*, which captures how marine wildlife interacts with human waste and the built infrastructure.

"I wanted to show that the environment is not weak and delicate and in need of our protection, but rather that people should be humble and contrite in the face of nature's strength," says Yau, who also spent time in Tai O to complete her project. "Tai O has a serious problem with water pollution and rapid urbanisation. Many of the traditional stilt houses have been abandoned, while the large influx of visitors

during the holidays brings a lot of waste. But after the trip, I discovered that the ecosystem there has tried to adapt with some marine creatures making a home in discarded bottles, shoes and cans."

Yau says that the project has transformed her view of the environment. "At the beginning, I tried to illustrate directly the serious pollution problem in Tai O, but after sharing with my classmates, I understood that we need to change our attitudes. We should not live as "egos", taking the role of ambassadors for the marine system.

Instead we should become "eco", which conveys the idea that people are only a part of the planet, and we should live in harmony with nature."

The progress of the 海角天涯 (border of the sky/corner of the ocean) projects has been a challenging pleasure for de Bretteville, who says she has been "touched and impressed" by the perseverance of project participants.

"These were mostly first year students and it took courage, determination and commitment for them to move forward from their own response to a particular site at


the same time as they were learning new design skills," she says. "As a maker and a teacher I cannot help but admire the work done by those young people, who supported one another and continued re-working their own 海角天涯 projects until their work was fully developed for others to see."

De Bretteville also found the insights in the students' work had a surprising depth.

"The most remarkable aspect of the student work was the degree to which so many students heard, understood and identified with the water's rage and resultant destruction," she says.

The 海角天涯 project lives on in an experimental website called, "Expect the Unexpected" which can be found at <http://hjty.imlab.cc/?p=540> and was designed by Weiyi I and Mazim Harvey, graduates of de Bretteville's program at Yale University who visited HKDI for three weeks this past autumn.

De Bretteville plans a return to Hong Kong before long to install what she calls "Water Moisture 5.0" which will "poetically make water vapour visible as part of raising awareness of its importance to our lives now and in the future."

With Hong Kong forecast to have its most tumultuous typhoon season in a generation this coming summer, she can't come back soon enough. Without a change in the way we live on this planet, humanity may soon find itself en route to a rendezvous with the fate that befell the dinosaurs. 

FEATURE

THIS PAGE A LOOK FROM THE XENOMORPH COLLECTION LEFT MODELS WEARING TSUI'S COLLECTION FAR LEFT ANGUS TSUI AT HIS GRADUATION SHOW

ALEN RESURRECTIONS

ANGUS TSUI burst on to the fashion scene, if you'll excuse the metaphor, with his striking Xenomorph graduation collection. He's now in the forefront of eco-friendly fashion design, recycling the bits that other designers discard into bold new creations that are impossible to ignore. TAIS ELIZE reports.

Almost a year has gone by since Angus Tsui graduated from the Hong Kong Design Institute with a Higher Diploma in Fashion Design and Development, yet the impressions left by his *Xenomorph* graduation collection remain as vivid as ever. The inspiration for that collection came from the famous *Alien* sci-fi movie franchise; the way Tsui translated the alien creature's form and function into spectacular garments drew us far into a distant galaxy, as we watched his fashion vision unfold on the runway.

Tsui was inspired, indeed obsessed, by the *Xenomorph* creature from *Alien*. Its exotic, sinuous yet extra-terrestrial structures and textures struck a deep chord with him. To create these marvelous silhouettes, he used 3D material shapes made through pleating, tucking and sewing – then he applied them to the garment to create the exoskeleton details.

Tsui chose a range of specific fabrics to help create the impression of real life *Xenomorphs* (in the

bringing the outfits to life; Tsui told us that they helped strengthen the forms and structures and enabled him to create the perfect exoskeleton feel for his *Xenomorph* pieces.

The collection itself is extremely innovative, not just for its design techniques and silhouettes, but also for the way it applies principles of sustainability through the use of a zero-waste technique. This technique aims to eliminate any elements of textile waste during the design process, according to creators of the EcoChic Design Award, which Tsui participated in and won in 2012.

According to the EcoChic Design Award organisers, "15% of textiles intended for clothing designs end up being unused." This is why zero-waste is both economical and efficient; it allows for discarded materials to become a resource for other designers or can even be an inspiration in the design process. All the irregular forms found in Tsui's designs are offcuts that have been created through the zero-waste approach.

Tsui's selection of materials and shapes are focused on raising awareness of wastage and pollution and he equates the destruction wrought by the *Xenomorph* in *Alien* to the abrasive and cavalier way human beings treat the environment. By abusing nature's resources,

we create a ravaged, damaged environment, according to Tsui, so he has placed himself at the other end of the eco-spectrum; creating sustainable fashion that's innovative, eye-catching and ecologically viable.

Tsui creates all his garments by hand, using 3D forming techniques. The pleats are created using a sewing machine; then he creates shapes by placing the pleats on the garment and hand stitching them. The time, effort and hard work that goes in to his pieces places them on a par with couture.

Other designers that work with 3D, like Iris van Herpen, use 3D printing to create complex designs from materials such as rubber and metal. Though Tsui is interested in experimenting with 3D printing techniques in the future to create complicated structures and forms, for now he wants to retain the sewing and hand stitching that give his garments such a strong element of craftsmanship.

Since Tsui left HKDI, he has won the Best Designer Award in the Cocktail Select Shop's Young Knitwear Designers Contest. The competition gave him a platform to develop a knitwear collection that will retail in Cocktail Select Shop later this year. It's the perfect first step for a young Hong Kong designer who has already set a clear direction for his work and his brand's aesthetics.

Tsui is currently studying at Nottingham Trent University for his Bachelor with Honours Degree in Arts and Fashion Design. He's also looking forward to a new venture at the end of this year, working in London with the renowned Upcycling Fashion Designer Orsola de Castro. The future of fashion is sure to include far more upcycling and less waste and Tsui seems destined to play an important role in making that happen. 



guise of catwalk models) using neoprene, organza and PVC. Neoprene is related to synthetic rubber, mostly used for laptop sleeves and orthopaedic braces. Organza is a thin and sheer fabric and PVC stands for plastic polyvinyl chloride, commonly referred to as vinyl. All these materials played a key role in





BRILLIANT TRANSFORMATION

Renowned French jeweller **CHRISTOPHE LEMAÎTRE** visited HKDI to discuss what it takes to design pieces that can command a place at one of Place Vendôme's globally renowned boutiques. He spoke to **DAISY ZHONG** about achieving a marriage of craftsmanship and creativity.



Working for big brands as a jewellery designer is frustrating because you have to work within a marketing strategy," says Christophe Lemaître. "You're constrained and it's impossible to follow your own creative instincts."

Lemaître now works as an independent designer, nurturing his personal creativity and extensive client list as a global traveller. He has found the change to be refreshing; as an artist jeweller, even working with the most prestigious fine jewellery brands in Paris and creating bespoke pieces for high-end customers, he found that the burgeoning influence of marketing people has become a problem for giant luxury brands.

"These companies invest vast quantities in marketing to have their brands visible in the most prestigious

shopping malls worldwide and marketing creates a tendency to observe what works for the audience and base a design on that," he says. "Because of the high financial stakes, the designers at the big houses need to follow a direction largely decided by the marketing department, and produce things that will sell. For this reason, creativity suffers – and the result is a jewellery world where everything becomes the same."

As part of Lemaître's trip to launch his latest collection in Hong Kong, the jeweller/artist visited HKDI in November 2013 to share his journey from being a young man who followed big brands to becoming a design jeweller and the master of his own creations.

After training in jewellery making and design, Lemaître attended the Institut National de Gemmologie

(National Institute of Gemology) to develop expertise about precious stones. His professional career began as an assistant for jewellery designer Pascal Morabito.

In 1998 when Bernard Arnault decided to launch Dior's first high jewellery collection, Lemaître was chosen to work in John Galliano's team. "I designed the jewellery together with two others, one was responsible for the style and the other being a designer/draftsman like me. I was researching Dior's design language, to understand its traditions and integrate the motifs and symbols used in haute couture into haute jewellery. It was a hugely rewarding experience."

His sense of aesthetics and professionalism in fine jewellery were further polished during his subsequent experience at the Place



MAIN PICTURE CHRISTOPHE LEMAÎTRE
CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT TO RIGHT COLOMBIERING,
COLETTE RING, BAGATELLE RING, BACCARAT RING,
LILY WHITE GOLD RING, AND ROSÉE RING, ALL
DESIGNED BY CHRISTOPHE LEMAÎTRE

Vendôme ateliers of Boucheron, Van Cleef and Arpels and Fred. “To stand out in this highly competitive industry, you need to excel in every aspect of jewellery-making: from design to production, from conceptualising to visualising to welding and polishing.”

The masterpieces that Lemaitre participated in creation included a Fred tiara for Jordan’s Princess Rania (“You need to be extremely careful when handling it because the joints are delicate”) and a belt for the king of Morocco by Boucheron.

As Lemaitre built up his reputation working on sophisticated and highly technical pieces, companies such as Bvlgari, Van Cleef and Arpels, Cartier, Fred and Chaumet began to regularly commission pieces from him that suited his highly developed expertise.

Lemaitre established his own atelier in 2009 at the Palais Royal, a 17th Century palace opposite

the Louvre composed of arcaded galleries surrounding a garden – and a renowned haunt of art and antique dealers. A large proportion of his clients, of course, come from Place Vendôme.

In 2012, during the Biennale des Antiquaires, one of Paris’ most prestigious fine art and jewellery shows, Lemaitre was charged with restoring Hollywood legend Elizabeth Taylor’s 1962 Bvlgari emerald necklace, accidentally broken at the exhibition, in just one day.

However, it is the other side of being an independent atelier that he finds most rewarding. “I know luxury trends, I know everyone in the Place Vendôme, but I also do my own creations: I am an artist designer who does custom-made pieces; I have my own aesthetics, and I can influence my clients.”

He believes that custom-made jewellery offers both creative freedoms for him and uniqueness for

his clients. “Creating unique pieces for private clients is just fantastic because the design of a unique jewel is linked to an encounter, a sharing and an exchange. The jewel will be shaped according to the wishes of the person who told me about his personal history, his desires and his passions. In my jewellery design, I found much more freedom; I found my true self.”

For Lemaitre, he can now base his design on creativity and keep going beyond where the marketing people would normally draw limits.

The other aspect of this freedom, says Lemaitre, concerns the selection and use of gemstones. “For example, in my 2013 Collection, I adopted some of the lesser-used gems in my works. One of my priorities as an independent jeweller is to find exceptional gemstones.”

He says that some of these stones would be impossible to use under the control of big companies. “Marketing

« I AM VERY AUDACIOUS AND I LIKE TO USE UNCONVENTIONAL STONES. »



is always about precious stones, which means limited choices. I am very audacious in choosing stones and I like to have non-conventional stones, yet marketing says I can’t use these because nobody knows them.”

For instance, feldspar, an unpopular material among jewellery makers, is one of Lemaitre’s favourite materials. “Feldspar is rarely used because its surface is not so bright; but I have found a piece that is different because it has the characteristics of a gemstone. Ten years ago, Cartier bought this piece from a mine in Congo and the brand planned to develop a new product. However, this was never realised because feldspar of this high level of quality is really rare, making it hard to mine in economical quantities.” The feldspar gemstone was therefore “forgotten” for 10 years until it had a chance to shine again with Lemaitre’s decision to purchase it and produce a truly unique piece.

Apart from feldspar, his favourite gemstones include diamonds, crystal, Lapis lazuli, spinels, Tourmaline

Paraiba, Tanzanite and Spessartite. “I like to experiment with different kinds of materials, colours and textures to create different effects and beautiful contrasts.”

And Hong Kong is the place Lemaitre has found to be the world’s best stone hunting ground to facilitate his pioneering work. “It’s no longer Basel or Israel. Most of the stones I use come from Hong Kong dealers. We’ve seen extraordinary pieces here.”


He says that it’s important to maintain good connections with jewellery dealers to obtain the best selling prices and offer his clientele the most cost efficient and highest quality products. “Recently, I’ve created a piece for the Aga Khan, who wanted to find an exceptional diamond for a wedding ring for his fiancée. The diamond I offered him weighed 6.8 carats of type 2A, indicating its rarity in clarity and brilliance. I got the diamond in competition with Harry Winston.”

Ultimately, jewellers are stone transformers and Lemaitre’s calloused yet nimble hands vividly

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT BAGATELLE NECKLACE AND MORPHEE NECKLACE, BOTH DESIGNED BY CHRISTOPHE LEMAITRE OPPOSITE CHRISTOPHE LEMAITRE WORKING AT HIS ATELIER

illustrate the intimate relationship between goldsmith and gemstone.

“For a successful jewellery designer, technical knowhow is as important as creativity. You need to know the gem, its texture and characteristics – and only when you understand these details can you make great design.”

To achieve the right balance of creativity and craftsmanship – that’s a piece of advice that every designer should bear in mind. 





EVENT

URBAN

LIFT

This summer, after eight months of development, three installations by young landscape architects from HKDI will be unveiled at the prestigious Tamar site on Hong Kong's harbour front. DAISY ZHONG reports on a project that seeks to create an engaging destination for city residents.

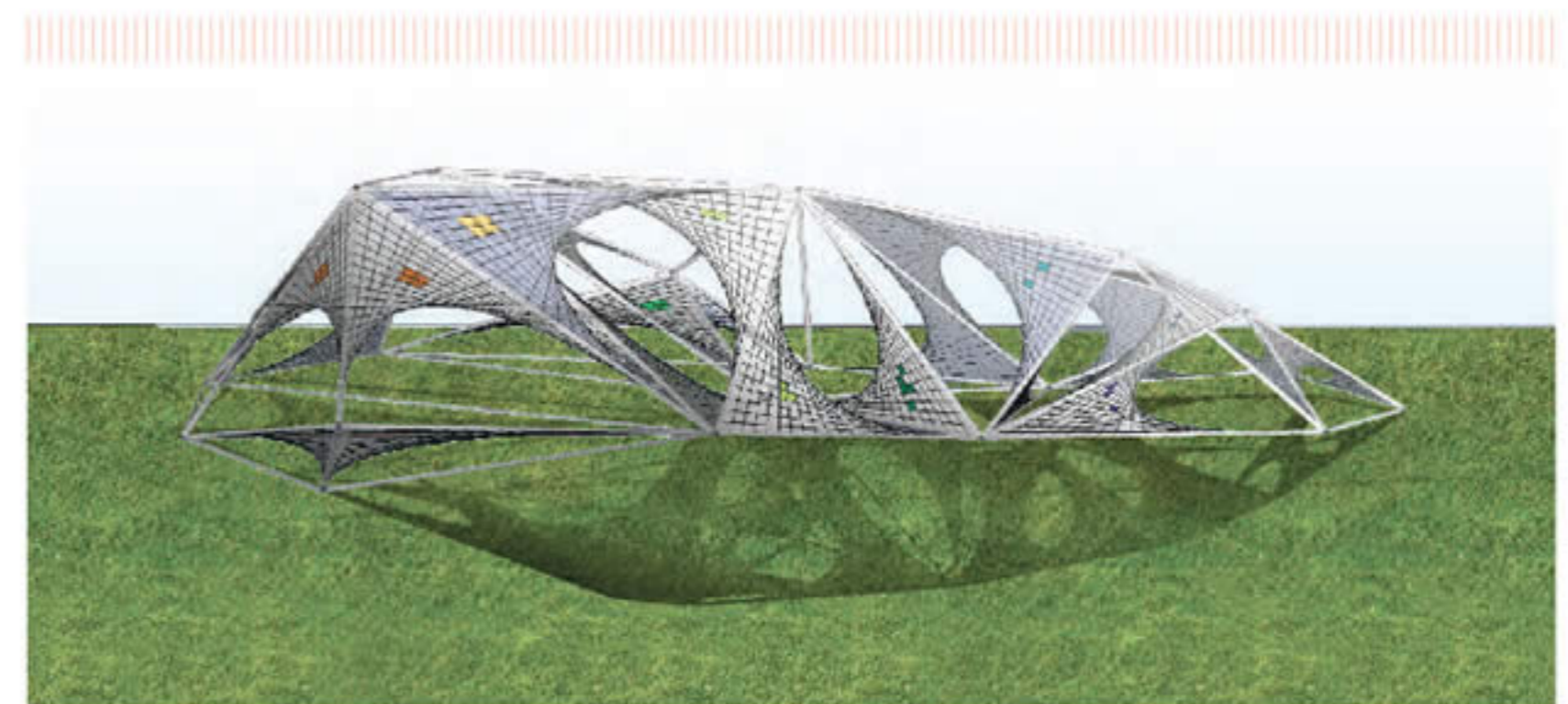
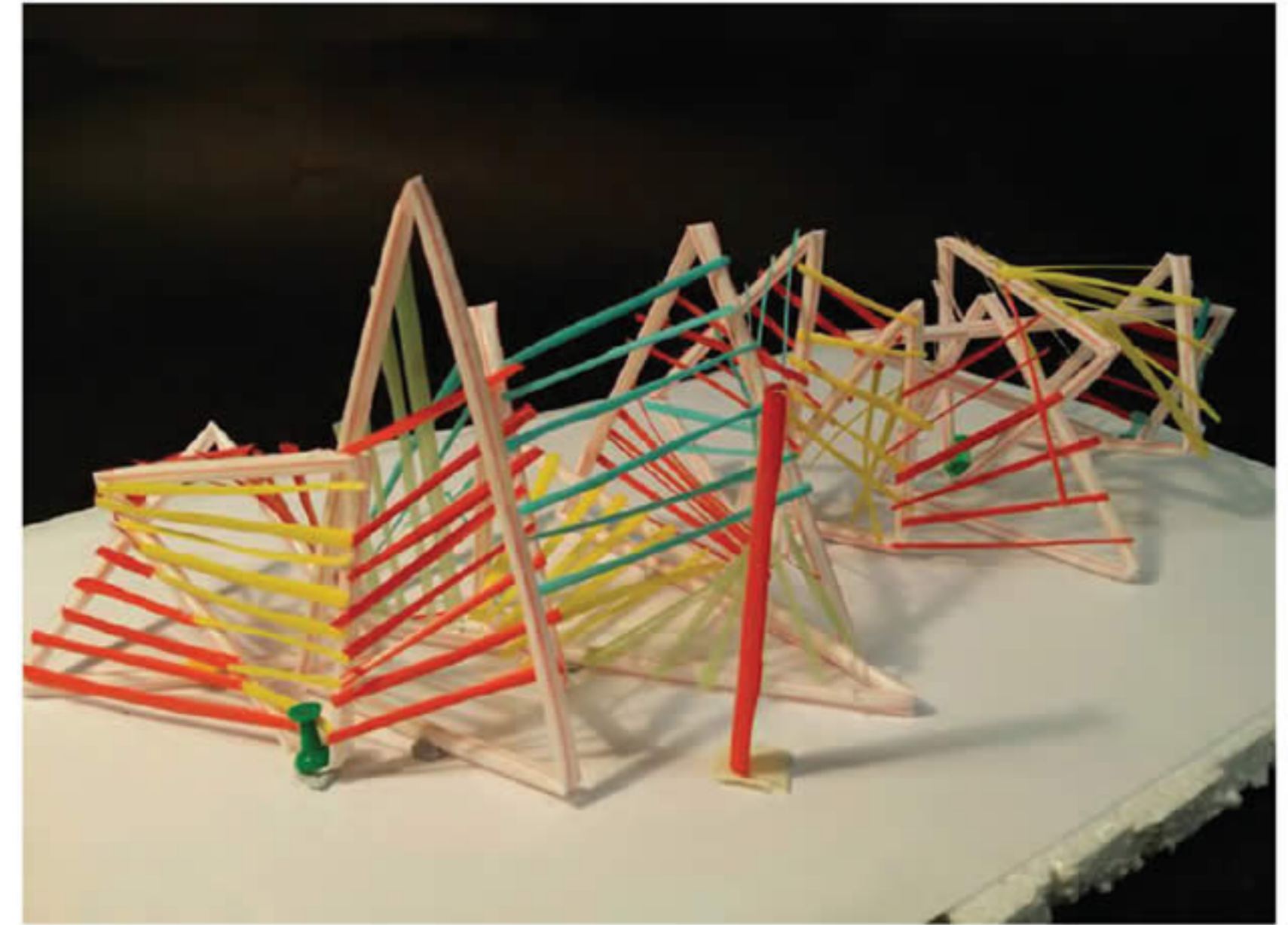
On a windy afternoon in late February, a crowd of people with determined expressions, stacks of documents and an abundance of ideas gathered on the grassland at Tamar Garden, a new public space adjacent to the HKSAR government headquarters. They were not there to "Occupy Central", although they also had a vision about shaping the city. The crowd was formed by three groups of HKDI students whose artworks will be installed at Tamar Garden from May through August. They were sharing their design concepts with professional architects and managers from the Garden's management team, for whom feasibility and safety are prime concerns.

"The installation will be displayed in public and you have to assume

people will come and use it in different and innovative ways, though sometimes not the ones you expect. Some people sit on the installation and others use it as a body-building apparatus, regardless of whether it's supposed to be interactive or not," says a manager from Tamar Garden's management team. "These scenarios mean that we need to give the visitors some hints as to how to appreciate the installation, or reinforce parts of the stainless steel supports to minimise maintenance and optimise visitor experience."

Issues such as these may not have been the first concern of the 10 students who proposed a 40-square-metre art installation called *Co-linear* for the Tamar site. Inspired by Gabriel Dawe's visual language of coloured threads, the team wanted to attach colourful hemp ropes to stainless steel rods by metal rings to form a net of three-dimensional hexagons to symbolise the relationship among people in society.

"It's a rare opportunity," says Sara Wong, project leader, prominent local artist and co-founder of Para/Site Art Space, a top Hong Kong gallery. "A number of student groups have been challenged regarding practical considerations such as safety, stability and scale. This project provides students real experience in



meeting these challenges, allowing them to think about landscape architecture from a new perspective."

The student project is part of the *ArtAlive@Park* initiative begun in 2009 by the Art Promotion Office of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, and continued in 2010 and 2012. The two main aims of the project are to bring art to public spaces and provide young artists from local educational institutions with a showcase for their talents.

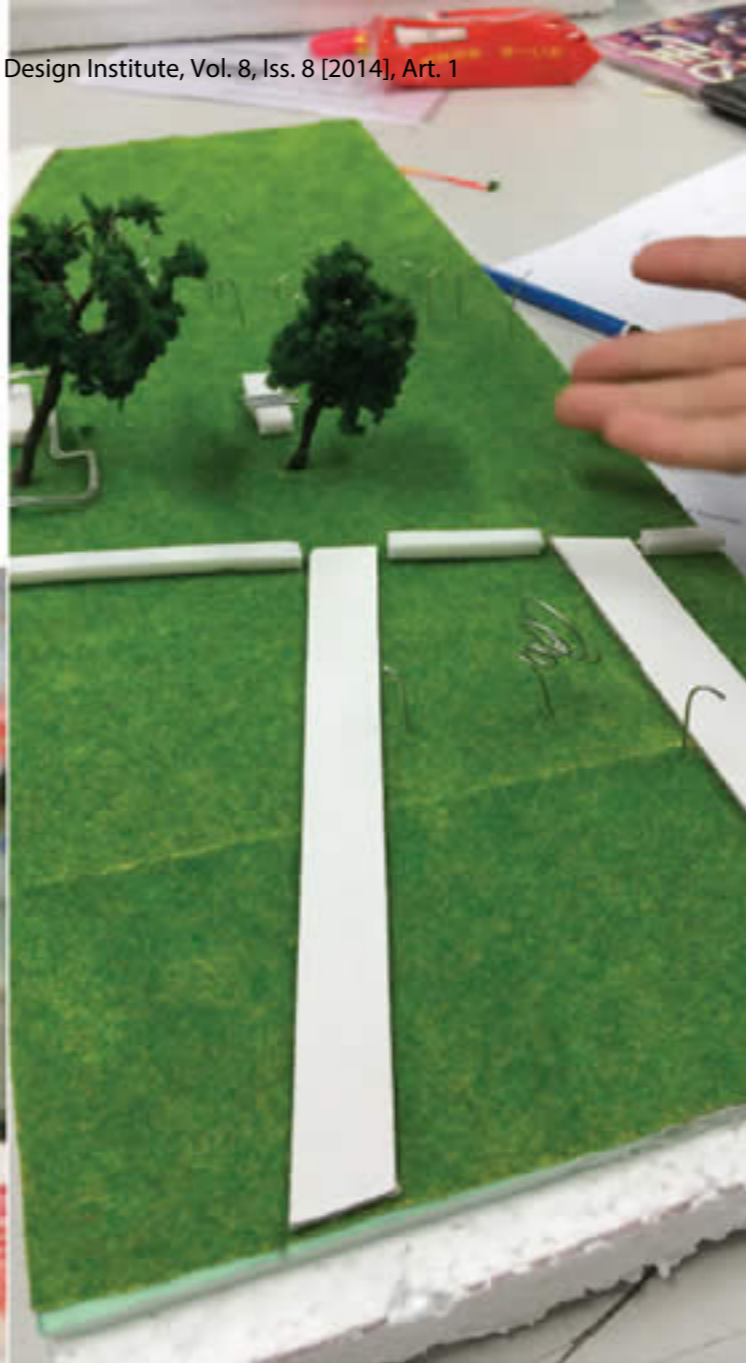
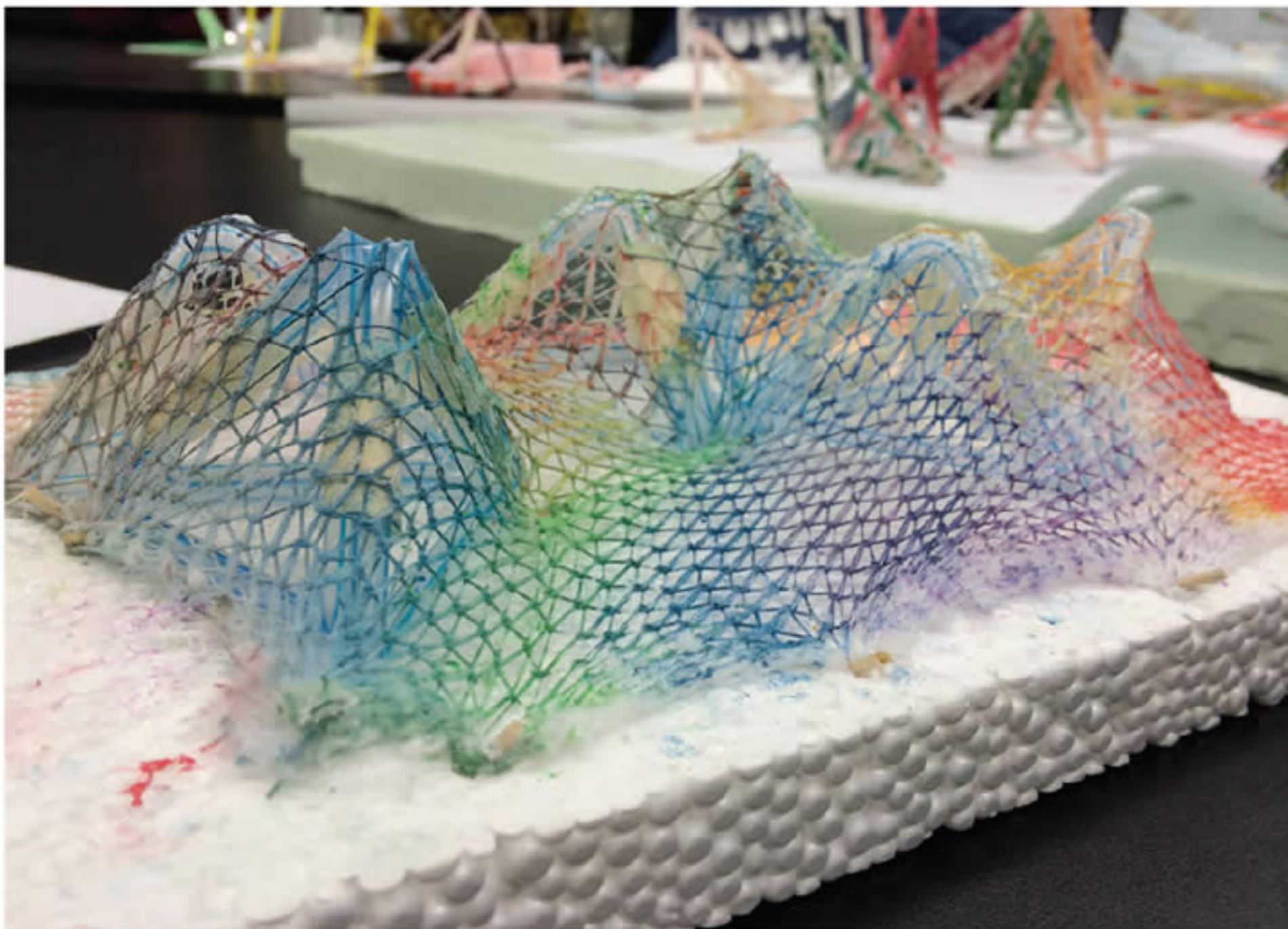
"In the tiny city of Hong Kong, there are more than

1,000 public spaces, including parks, botanical gardens, zoos, promenades and playgrounds," notes the foreword for the 2012 *ArtAlive@Park* exhibition. "As parks are important public spaces where citizens gather and relax, we hope that they can also become a backdrop for more interesting artistic encounters." Since the

ABOVE A MODEL OF THE CO-LINEAR PROJECT
BELOW AN ARTIST IMPRESSION OF CO-LINEAR

EVENT

THIS PAGE MODELS FOR THE
CO-LINEAR PROJECT
OPPOSITE PAGE MODELS FOR
THE RAISE UP PROJECT



architects are involved in the planning, design and direction of outdoor public areas, landmarks and structures to achieve environmental, social or aesthetic outcomes.

Yasmin Chir, another project leader and lecturer at HKDI said, "New Town Plaza in Shatin, developed in the 1980s, represented the first time the concept of Landscape Design was brought to Hong Kong. Currently, only a dozen companies are qualified to practice and the profession is not widely known. However, its contribution permeates every corner of Hong Kong; a landscape architect needs to undergo intensive training, encompassing basic design, planting design, landscape architecture theory and history, technology and visual communication. HKDI has offered the Higher Diploma in Landscape Architecture at HKDI since 2012 to fill this gap."

The central role of a landscape architect is to create a new sense of space through design based on a thorough review of the existing

environment. Wong says, "site context analysis involves the systematic investigation of historical, physical, cultural, and environmental conditions, and the influence of these conditions on the designed features and the other way round. For instance, the circulation of visitors influences their first sight of an artwork; we can help them to fully appreciate that artwork. The shift of sunlight and shadows cast by the headquarters buildings alters the perceived aesthetics. The art installation should not be isolated from the rest of the environment but should be part of the whole."

The Tamar project is unique, says Chir, partly because of the prominence of the site. "Our artist advisers have told us that their names seldom appear on work they have created for public spaces, whereas working for private clients it's not usually possible to display work in such a prestigious site."

The 4.2-hectare Tamar site is the former location of the Royal Naval dockyard of the British Forces Overseas Hong Kong, which remained here from the end of World War II until 1990, when the naval station moved to Ngong Shuen Chau. The site has witnessed many historical and controversial events, including the sunset farewell ceremony featuring the East Tamar Garrison parade, part of Hong Kong's handover from the United Kingdom to China on 30 June 1997. In 2003, at the end of the SARS epidemic, the Hong Kong government created the "Harbour Fest", a major concert event featuring the Rolling Stones,

« THE ART INSTALLATION SHOULD NOT BE ISOLATED FROM THE REST OF THE ENVIRONMENT »



inception of *ArtAlive@Park*, about 10 student artworks have been installed in various public spaces ranging from Hong Kong Park to Tuen Mun Park, and along the coastline from Tolo Bay to Victoria Harbour.

Students from the Landscape Programme at HKDI, who were invited to create installations for display at the Tamar Garden in summer 2014, have been working on their concepts since September 2013.

To start, Wong encouraged students to go to museums in Hong Kong, and identify which exhibitions fascinated them most and explain why. "By observing curated artefacts about Hong Kong's history and cityscape, we hoped to stimulate students' imaginations and thoughts in an artistic way," says Wong. After this activation process, the students made site visits and conducted site context analysis.

"Students in the Landscape Architecture programme are trained to understand the design of outdoor space, and be prepared to become landscape architects."

Unlike architects or interior designers, landscape



« STUDENTS ARE
RETHINKING THE
ROLE OF THE PARK
TO ENGAGE PEOPLE,
AS A PLACE FOR
COMMUNICATION
AND INTERACTION. »

The remainder of the pipe is hidden underground and travels in a complex way to represent the misunderstanding, distortion and mistrust of people's daily communications. Part of this underground arrangement can be seen through a piece of tempered glass.

"They separate the two communicators but allow the conversation to be transmitted. It's like a primitive communication tool," says Wong. "In all three installations, students are rethinking the role of the park to engage people, as a place for communication and interaction."

In January and February 2014, workshops were organised to help polish and develop design ideas into the three projects that will finally be installed in the Tamar Garden. Students created design models for expert scrutiny and comment. "We involved artists, who stimulated and inspired students to further develop their concepts; an architect to help students modify and refine designs into buildable items, in terms of material choice or structure; and construction engineers to see if any projects needed practical modifications."

And, of course, advice from the management team at Tamar Garden was critical as well. "What kind of issues might emerge in the construction process and what are their potential impact; these were the considerations we have needed to constantly bear in mind for the past two months."

Parallel to the process in which students refined and finalised their designs, the three installations were tendered to construction companies. In six weeks, starting from April, construction will take place and the artworks will be unveiled in May. This will be followed by art tours, parent-children carnivals, art workshops and music shows coordinated by Hulu Culture, a non-profit organisation created to promote local culture.

Wong concludes that the three artworks will transform the Tamar landscape through the manipulation of light, space and sound. "My expectation is that our students' actual artworks should lead to abstract thoughts and implications – those regarding communications, relationships or lifestyles. Even though they are tangible objects, their works address intangible issues."

Delivering intangible value is indeed one of the major contributions generated by the creative industry and something that will shape the future of Hong Kong in the most constructive sense.

to celebrate Hong Kong's emergence from economic crisis. However, this was heavily criticised as being "poorly organised" and "a waste of public funds".

The site now includes the HKSAR Government headquarters complex designed by Rocco Yim and Tamar Garden, where the three installations will be located. The site connects with cultural and convention facilities to the east, financial and commercial hubs to the south and Garden Road, which is rich in history and heritage, to the southwest.

Wong says the political, cultural and historical significance of the site have inspired students to propose many ideas to convey messages central to the governance and lifestyle of the city. Concepts such as "freedom of speech, reminiscences of heritage, workplace pressure and the disappearance of the ridge line in the city were put forward. Others included re-thinking people's leisure time and the role of the park; Hong Kongers don't think of the park as the place to go for relaxation, they'd rather play computer games, which also creates a lot of pressure."

The workplace pressure group are bringing their concept to life with an installation entitled *Raise Up*, which will lift up a piece of grassland with an installation of balloons beneath it to create a metaphor that positive energy can lighten pressure and uplift the spirit. The brightly coloured balloons will be a beacon, sending messages of hope to Admiralty's stressed white-collar community.

Another group has created a project named *Pipe Me Not*, which expresses concerns with issues of daily communications. The team uses pipes to connect two raised entrances where sounds can be inputted and conveyed.

ABOVE AN ARTIST
IMPRESSION OF THE PIPE
ME NOT PROJECT
RIGHT STUDENTS AND
PROJECT INSTRUCTORS
WITH THEIR DESIGN
MODELS



BRAND AWARENESS

HKDI's "Successful Brand Journey" seminars in Spring 2014 provided a number of insights into the creation of successful brands. Naturally, a number of differing perspectives were evident from the brand gurus; but SUMMER CAO heard that there are common themes, too.



Successful branding doesn't always lead to making money," says Michael Young, as he remembers one of his first lessons after setting up his studio in the fast-moving metropolis of Hong Kong. "In 2006, we designed some of the first Bluetooth rechargeable speakers in the world. We used a Hong Kong company who created a beautiful branding campaign for the product and had the best agencies do the marketing, with PR contacts all over the world. Then, within two years, everyone copied our design and it became really cheap."

However, despite the early setbacks, he quickly established a name in the product and industrial design world in Hong Kong and Asia at large. He has been involved in a range of product design including furniture, lighting, glassware, bags, bicycles and high-tech gadgets, earning three Red Dot awards since 2009. Both brands and manufacturers keenly sought his expertise, and in 2012 Young helped establish a new brand, 'EOQ'. With this came an open invitation to use manufacturing facilities to create anything he wanted.

On March 14, Young was one of the first two speakers to share their insights on how to develop a business and build up a brand in "Successful Brand Journey", a series of seminars held by the HKDI. Born in England in 1966, he was pushed into the design industry because he "had failed at everything else", he jokingly explained to the avid listeners. However, shortly after he graduated from Kingston University in 1992, the design guru quickly made his name. He opened his own studio in 1994, which operated in England, Iceland and Taiwan before finally settling in Hong Kong in 2006.

"When I arrived, I received plenty of press coverage



quite easily and many people asked me to work with them," Young says. However, he was not convinced that leaving Europe, where he had enjoyed 10 years of success, was a sensible choice. "It was stressful. I didn't know how to succeed. Although Hong Kong had plenty of manufacturing facilities, there was not much industrial design. It was a big risk. Fortunately, Hong Kong welcomed me and my design."

After some initial business hiccups, including the failure of his Bluetooth rechargeable speakers, Young realised he should focus on designing products that were functional and offer long-term use. "To be too innovative can be dangerous in business," he says. "The people who discover things first are not normally the ones who make the money." One of his key strategic moves was setting up EOQ, his furniture company. Today, it sells products worldwide and has become one of Hong Kong's most successful international brand stories.

To begin with, Young was not sure how best to use marketing communications and express EOQ's unique DNA to enhance the brand image. "We spent a fortune on photography, as well as the manufacturing environment," he says. "We actually created a brand new universe for the furniture to live in. It would have



ABOVE: YI CHAR AND BRAMAH PENDANT LAMP SHADE BY MICHAEL YOUNG FOR EOQ. OPPOSITE: MICHAEL YOUNG AND HIS BRAMAH PENDANT LAMP SHADE DESIGN

been very difficult for anyone else to have done this; it is our brand, our story, our DNA." EOQ's website is a story-telling platform with a contemporary chic, user-friendly design, which takes potential customers on virtual journey into this separate universe. Travelers can explore the finished products in a modern, stylish setting; yet they can also see videos on how each design is created by craftsmen, using the latest hi-tech equipment.

Young believes that the ultimate key to success is good ideas, something that cannot be achieved by branding and marketing. "I pray that I have good ideas because, for me, marketing isn't enough," Young

« IT WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY DIFFICULT FOR ANYONE ELSE TO HAVE DONE THIS; IT IS OUR BRAND, OUR STORY, OUR DNA. »

MICHAEL YOUNG

«IT'S
IMPORTANT
TO CREATE
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TO MOVE
A BRAND
FORWARD.»

LULU CHEUNG



ABOVE AND
OPPOSITE
OUTFITS
FROM LULU
CHEUNG'S
FW 2014
COLLECTION
BELOW LULU
CHEUNG

says. "You have to have a product which is genuine and speaks to people. If you work with authentic things, it helps good design and authentic branding. Real things help. I always work with business partners who invest in good ideas, so this helps me succeed."

LuLu Cheung, the second speaker in the "Successful Brand Journey" seminar series, shares many of Young's beliefs: "Today, everybody is focused on the market," she says. "But I think what people should think about is whether your heart and ideas can be felt by others through your design, whether it moves them."

Known for her slick and discreet feminine collections, the Indonesian-born Chinese fashion designer is one of the best known of today's Hong Kong talents. Her clothes are avidly sought after by socialites and celebrities and she has become an established favourite of Hong Kong's wealthy circle, not just because of her design flair but also for her business acumen.

Cheung fell in love with fashion at childhood, and first tried her hand with her mother's scissors. She obtained a diploma at the Hong Kong Institute of Fashion Design before working at her uncle's boutiques. In 1992, she opened her first boutique in Hong Kong before launching her personal label LuLu Cheung in 1996. Having worked hard to establish her place in fashion, she exudes qualities frequently found in other successful professional women.

It is the qualities Cheung recognised in herself and other women that inspired her to create her subdued and clean silhouettes. "From the very beginning, I have been designing for professional women," she says. "They possess good fashion sense, sophisticated taste and radiate confidence. I hope my designs help them express these characteristics."

With more than 30 years of experience in the fashion industry, Cheung has seen first-hand how fast this world and the people in it have changed. One thing that has endured, however, is that good designs always last. "Coco Chanel injected her personality, perception of art, life experiences and philosophy into her designs; these all blended together to become her iconic work," she says. "Nowadays, fashion designers use branding and marketing campaigns to differentiate their work


from the competition. Although the branding methods people use today are different, at the end of the day the most successful brand is the one that is remembered."

Cheung believes that many designers can be deceived by the concept of success, which can be viewed from numerous perspectives. "Success in terms of the market doesn't necessarily mean the success of the brand," she says. "It's hard to strike the right balance between the different requirements of building a good brand." To address this, she offers two basic principles.

The first is passion, which Cheung believes is the prerequisite for fashion designers who want their designs to resonate with their audience. The second is to step away from the fashion design world and work with other team members in order to send out consistent brand messages.

"It's important to create synergy to move a brand forward," she says. "In this circle, nobody talks about 'my design' any more – they talk about 'my brand'. Branding is now an integral part of the whole fashion industry. The question is now whether you can communicate your unique style. That's why brand consistency and integrity are so important."

"For example, my brand style is discreet beauty; I brief the sales team to provide marketing services that reinforce this kind of feeling. I want to build a team who can communicate the same message to the customers. If you have a low advertising profile, you have to pay a great deal of attention to detail. High quality service and attractive boutiques are powerful tools for conveying brand stories to customers."

Like the seminar series' name suggests, building a successful brand is a journey that requires constant commitment and effort. Cheung's words sum up this spirit, "To build up a brand, first you have to have passion; then let yourself be guided by vision, think about how to maintain your energy and to never let it die. There are challenges in each phase and you have to cope with them one by one." 



CASTING SPELLS

Oscar-winning make-up artist **MARK COULIER** shares his treasure trove of experience and professional techniques with HKDI students, and talks to **SUMMER CAO** about a career creating wonders for the big screen.

he Lord Voldemort character in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series of novels is probably one of the best-known anti-heroes in fiction, largely thanks to the blockbuster movie adaptations. "He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named" haunts the plot throughout the series of novels but remains elusive until the fourth installment, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, in which he regains his body and finally shows his "real" face. And this is where our story begins.

In Rowling's words, Voldemort has "snake-like eyes and nostrils". These horrifying features are sure signs of a nefarious character, yet they also leave space for the reader's imagination. When the Dark Lord emerged from the confinements of the page and appeared on the big screen in 2005, his appearance lived up to fans'

expectations, thanks to the magic of make-up artist Mark Coulier.

Working closely with the author, movie director Mike Newell and veteran actor Ralph Fiennes who played Voldemort, Coulier decided to give the villain protruding brows, with no eyebrows, emaciated cheeks, a bald scalp and a network of veins on bloodless skin. The sinister make up took Coulier and his team two hours to complete, and was achieved with a little help from gelatin and a painter's skilled hands.

More importantly, Coulier contributed to the crucial decision to digitally remove Voldemort's nose. "There was a huge debate about whether Ralph Fiennes should keep his human nose," Coulier says. "My opinion was always that he should lose it, because Voldemort should be a freak. He shouldn't be able to walk around in public where people could recognise him."

"When Ralph Fiennes started on the film, he was not sure either. When everybody had left the room, he asked my opinion, which I think did have an effect on the final decision."

"Make-up design is a joint process," Coulier adds. "A make-up artist has to work their ideas into conversations with directors and point them toward the outcome he

wants. Maybe you're completely wrong, and then you have to find another way to express their vision."

Having created visual effects for a range of hit films like the Harry Potter series, Coulier produced his technical masterpiece for the movie *The Iron Lady*, a biopic about Margaret Thatcher starring Meryl Streep. In 2011, outshining his previous supervisor who had worked on *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2*, Coulier won the





Academy Award for Best Makeup for *The Iron Lady* with J. Roy Helland.

“Standing on the stage and receiving the Oscar was the most gratifying moment of my career,” says Coulier. “I’m proud because we did get pretty close to matching Thatcher as far as possible, without making the look too rubbery or precise – I just wanted it to look real. And I think we achieved that.”

However, glamorous moments such as holding an Oscar aloft and having celebrities hail your name is nothing, compared to the impact it has upon the winner’s career.

“Before I won the Oscar, nobody knew who I was, even though I had been doing this for 25 years,” Coulier says. “I could have struggled on unnoticed for the rest of my life. So, over the years, I had to build up a network and always found my jobs on recommendation. The Oscar changed my stature in the film industry and I don’t need to chase after work like I did in the past.”

With this in mind, Coulier recommends people who want to try their hand in the industry to



«FOR ME, ART IS WHAT YOU CREATE FOR YOURSELF AND FOR OTHER PEOPLE, AND IT ULTIMATELY HAS TO BE SEEN.»

be well prepared for the exhausting reality. He believes that passion and hard work are two major elements which can enable one to transform the drudgery of film-making into a fun-laden experience.

“It’s getting increasingly difficult to get into this industry because the knowhow has become so accessible – and there are more people trying to do it,” Coulier reveals. “I receive 30 to 40 enquiries every week. Unless they send me some good photographs of their work, they will never get a job or become a trainee. I won’t even have a guy sweeping the floor unless they’re really interested in getting into the industry.”

Coulier himself had a passion for creating models and other objects at an early age. Instead of being intimidated by the horror movies he saw with his father, he was fascinated by the scary make-up worn by the actors. Since then, the seeds of a career in the film



PREVIOUS PAGE A CLOSEUP VIEW OF VOLDEMORT PLAYED BY RALPH FENNES IN THE HARRY POTTER MOVIE SERIES
OPPOSITE PAGE MERYL STREEP AS MARGARET THATCHER IN *THE IRON LADY*
THIS PAGE DANIEL BRÜHL MADE UP AS NIKI LAUDA AFTER HIS FERRY SMASH IN *RUSH*

When Coulier started his career as a make-up artist, he was immediately obsessed with creating things from bits and pieces. He seems to have added a twist to the old saying “practice makes perfect” by proving that “obsession makes better still.”

For example, Coulier spent three months making a big blue creature that only flashed across a *Star Wars* episode for five seconds or less. He made full-size Centaurs, half-human half-horse creatures, with floppy hair and painted details just as a lighting reference for a Harry Potter movie.

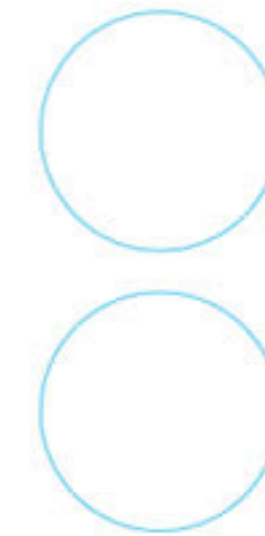
When he created the famous scene that shows the inflation of the unpleasant Aunt Marge in the film adaptation of *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, he spent six months studying the human body’s reaction to being filled with air, making sure every part of the character grew proportionately. He even devised an electric air-pump for rubber gloves that could inflate the fingers in the order the director preferred. “That was the most technically complicated make-up I have ever done,” Coulier recalls.

Although the machine was not used in the end, and the six-months’ work by Coulier and the other 20 or so members of his make-up team is only shown on screen for three minutes, he regards the whole process as a precious experience because he truly enjoyed it. However, he admits that seeing his finished work on screen is also of prime importance.

industry were sown. “People spend most of their time at work,” says Coulier. “It’s important to do something you’re passionate about.”

Talented and creative, Coulier entered the London College of Art, studying illustration. However, when he graduated, his flair for make-up and passion for movies pushed him into the film industry. The final nudge came from the movie *The Godfather*, in which Dick Smith, “The Godfather of Make-Up” created an impressive jowl for Marlon Brando, who starred in the film as Don Corleone.

“I was fascinated by the amount of work done on Marlon Brando,” says Coulier. “It’s still one of my favourite make-ups today. It’s beautifully done, totally real. It really did age Brando about 20 years without using any prosthetics. All that was done to his face was dental plumper to fatten his face shape.”



"I guess people who are creative in the commercial world are generally needy in terms of others' feedback," says Coulier. "I would consider true artists as those who get satisfaction just from doing their job, without the need for anyone else to see their work. But that's not me. For me, art is what you create for yourself and for other people, and it ultimately has to be seen."

Coulier's work is definitely regarded with admiration, respect and sometimes surprise, not only by the audience, but also by experienced actors and directors who use make-up on a regular basis.

"I made Tilda Swinton look 85 years old last year for a film she did with Duncan Jarman," Coulier recalls of an occasion when he used prosthetics to create a very natural look. "After studying Tilda's face, the actor Jeff Goldblum – who



« THE OSCAR CHANGED MY STATURE IN THE FILM INDUSTRY AND I DON'T NEED TO CHASE AFTER WORK LIKE I DID IN THE PAST. »



is very familiar with prosthetics – said 'When did prosthetics get this good in real life?' which was a very nice little comment."

"When we were doing *Rush*, which included a very tight close-up on Daniel Brühl's blood-smeared eye, director Ron Howard came over and said 'Mark, I have been doing this for a long time and I'm familiar with prosthetics. These are really the best edges I've seen – I can't see where it's blended with the skin.'"

Coulier's widely acclaimed reputation is built on years of experience, which is meticulously stored on his computer. "I have a database in Microsoft Outlook that contains all my snippets of information," says Coulier. "As you go along with your career, you have to always keep an eye on what other people are doing. You have to be a sponge."



his aging make-up is as natural as possible, he behaves like a paparazzi, carrying a long lens camera and secretly taking pictures of those with aged skins. He revealed that the inspiration of his Oscar-winning make-up for Meryl Streep came from an old lady on a London bus.

Coulier also draws from the natural world to identify contrasting colours that work together, whether they come from a beautiful sunset, a dangerous reptile or even flies and cockroaches. All these inspirations are painstakingly and meticulously added to his Outlook file, like a wizard storing up spells for his next battle with the restrictive forces of reality. Coulier's conjuring tricks with the human face prove beyond doubt that, even though film can create some extraordinary effects, without the astonishing work of make-up artists, the effects would be mere sleight of hand rather than genuine magic. ☺

"Recently, I was sticking a beard on for a film. I was asking people what glue they use to swim in water with beards and have waves crash over them, and questions like 'what if we lose it in the water and how many duplicates do we need to have' – little snippets of information. I always ask other people what they use, especially when they've done a really nice piece of make-up."

Coulier also uses his talent for observation as a way of developing source images for his work. To ensure that

OPPOSITE PAGE ABOVE MICHAEL JENIN MADE UP AS A ZOMBIE FOR *WORLD WAR Z* BELOW MARK COULIER AND J. ROY HELLAND WINNING THE OSCAR FOR *THE IRON LADY* THIS PAGE ABOVE MARK COULIER PUTTING MAKE-UP ON A HKDI STUDENT BELOW A SCULPTURE OF VOLDEMORT AS A BABY MADE BY MARK COULIER



EAST MEETS WEST

A unique fashion shoot involving young designers from Hong Kong and Belgium took place at HKDI in February. **LINDA VAN WAESBERGE** directed the shoot and shared her insights into the contemporary fashion industry with **DAISY ZHONG**.



Linda van Waesberge finds it impossible to identify herself with any single, conventional job title. She started out in the music industry, yet this advertising, production, fashion, lifestyle and retail consultant has also become an event organiser, exhibition curator, a showroom manager, radio reporter, stylist, personal shopper, and to round things off, an expert tour guide to Brussels.

"In the East, people like to be clear with their job titles. I tried to think of a title that accurately describes everything I do and, in the end, I settled on 'Creative

Consultant'. That's because the system is the same across the industries in which I work - it's about people who create. I give advice on anything creative, it might be fashion, but it could equally be a flower shop, a sofa or a chair."

This multi-faceted Belgian creative expert helped Charles Kaisin set up the *Dress Code* exhibition at HKDI in March 2014. And for the last exhibition event in February, she led a styling and photography workshop for students from the Fashion and Image Design Department (FID). They were invited to mix and match

their fashion designs with work created by young Belgian designers and brought to Hong Kong by van Waesberge. "For example, I spotted a really beautiful floral skirt made by one of the FID students, and I thought I could combine this with a top from a young Belgian designer to create a really nice effect."

The workshop ran for three days, culminating in a fashion shoot by Frank Pinckers, a Belgian photographer who has been based in Singapore for 15 years. Students from the FID acted as stylists and models, with the HKDI campus building as the backdrop. "It's a truly

« CREATIVITY IS ONLY PART OF THE JOB »

amazing building, so I want to make full use of its roof and gardens, its amazing view and its architecture. I want to do the fashion shoots everywhere that's interesting."

Van Waesberge sees a wild sense of creativity which connects young designers from the opposite ends of the Eurasian continent. "It's interesting to see the similarities in the work, imagination and creativity shared by students from Europe and those here. Actually, there's no difference. At this stage of their careers, young designers all focus on creativity. It is about standing out from the crowd and forming personalities."

But she adds that later, when they join the industry, it will be a different story. "Creativity is only a part of the job. The things

you don't learn at school are all about real life: price tags and business plans, knowing about what to do, when and why. You must be realistic. There is intense competition because nowadays there is too much everywhere – not only luxury fashion, but also high street fashion and everything in between. Collections are raining down all over the place and it's too much for customers and buyers alike. A designer dress can be half-price within three months – things quickly lose their value."

For this reason, Van Waesberge believes "it's very important to define new possibilities in terms of how to present your work". She cited Belgian fashion designer Bruno Pieters, whose brand "Honest By" is created without reference to seasons and is transparently priced. Every product on his website displays detailed information about the materials, manufacturing, price calculations and carbon footprint. "I think this is a pioneering approach because the current system of fashion weeks,

where new collections are launched twice a year at tremendous cost, cannot be sustainable."

Van Waesberge stresses that the Internet and social media have created a platform where newcomers can present their work in a creative way. "Communication is easy and free. You can find out information and work out where to compete. You can interact with corporations all over the world. My mother may not buy online but everyone else does. All the other customers, young girls, their friends - they order loads of stuff and track brands down. I'm not talking about the future: it's today, happening right now. Shops that don't think like this will definitely lose out."

Within worldwide trends, there are regional variations, too. As a creative veteran with 15 years experience in the major fashion and design capitals, Van Waesberge eloquently identifies the difference between the working environments of East and West: "Here (in Hong Kong) everything is neat and clear and very well-organised. (In Europe) we can change our mind and adjust

PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANK PINCKERS, ASSISTANT JOHANNA VLAEMINCK; STYLING & PRODUCTION BY LINDA VAN WAESBERGE; MAKE-UP BY IP OTTUNG; ROSTA YEUNG, PO WING, ANGUS, LI SHUK YIN, UNA, KING PATRICK, BRYAN, TANG HAYTUNG, OSCAR, CHAN KA KUI, TAM TSI IN INGRID, YAN WING, SZE RAINE, NG TSZYAN MINI, SETO KIYAN REBECCA; DESIGNS FROM CHAN SIN YING, CANDY LAW, WINGYAN, WONG PO CHU, CHEUNG WING SHAN, YEUNG CHING YEE, TSOI KAM NAAU, DEVALUX, DORIANE VAN OVEREEM, EDDY ANEMAN, FILLES A PAPA, KATRIEN VAN HECKE, KRIST, LOUISE LÉCONTE, MARINE SERRÉ, MATTIA VAN SEVEREN, OLMA HAINAUT, WIM BRUYNOOGHE, YEUNG TSI WING, MA HAK YUI GLORIA, AND YUNG HOI YAN



ABOVE PHOTOGRAPHER FRANK PINCKERS TAKING A PHOTO OF STUDENTS
BELOW FROM LEFT PINCKERS, LINDA VAN WAESBERGE AND PINCKERS' ASSISTANT JOHANNA VLAEMINCK



quickly, but here, it takes longer. People here are more hesitant about unforeseen change, but it's nice – they like to be organised and safe, it's a different way of thinking.

"But the main difference for young designers is that here you feel more stimulated. What I admire here is the positive energy. In Europe, we're overwhelmed with frightening daily reports about the economic crisis. But when you come here there is more dynamism. People work hard, very hard, but I don't hear them complaining. Yesterday, I made a note of our business hours – 10am to 10:30pm. No problem! But in Belgium if people had to work after 6 or during weekends, they would go on strike.

"Especially today, if you want to go on, you need to work hard because the competition is enormous. If you like what you do, you don't even think in terms of working hours. For designers, the creative process is always ongoing – it never stops. The mentality of working hard and not complaining is going to really make a difference here."



Hong Kong artist
PAK SHEUNG CHUEN
 is burnishing his
 already impressive
 reputation by
 creating work that
 seeks to understand
 the part of the self
 that is inaccessible
 through reasoning.
 SUMMER CAO reports.

From the traditional Chinese point of view, creators of great art are regarded as good people. They not only possess artistic ingenuity, but also other qualities, such as integrity, honesty and confidence. These qualities are perceived to radiate from their art, either through calligraphy or from paintings of subjects such as bamboo, plum blossom, pine trees and rocks.

However, as techniques and subjects have quickly evolved in the hurly-burly of the contemporary Chinese art scene, the spiritual connection between artists and their work has often been lost. One man who has stood against the seemingly irrevocable tide of commerce is Pak Sheung Chuen, who regards art as something purely for reflection and self-expression.

"I was always fascinated by the Chinese mountain and water paintings because of the way they absorb one's mind into the surroundings, so you become at one with nature," says Pak. "Art is something that should be done beautifully, in accordance with one's heart – and without paying attention to market demands, which inevitably contaminate creativity."

"Nowadays in China, it's very hard to find an art piece embedded with the creator's spirituality, and most of the art pieces are unbelievably similar," Pak added as he sat in a coffee shop, where his unassuming intellectual demeanour, youth and coy expression made him seem like a shy student. By contrast, his discourse suggested a maturity that's normally found in people over 60, the age when, according to Confucius, men are expected to face any situation with equanimity. Paradoxically, Pak's daily pursuits are, in his own words, "crazy and mad", prompting him to descend into what he calls "a state of deracination" to stay creative.

Famously, in 2005 he laid a 10-metre-long yellow

ribbon across Hennessy Road to record marchers' footprints during Hong Kong's annual July 1st demonstration. Then he cut the ribbon into foot-long strips and tied them up around Tian'anmen Square, Beijing. In another "whim", he decided to stay at a random location in Hong Kong and wait for acquaintances to show up. One night, he stood in front of a residential building and photographed the lights shining from the windows of each apartment at intervals through the night. He left at 5am in the morning, by which time all the lights had been extinguished.

Actions such as these are extraordinary in terms of both their eccentricity and transience. They're also indicative of what Pak pursues most keenly – an exploration of his inner life, keeping commercial elements at bay. "Art is a window through which I can see myself," Pak says. "I reveal my truest side in art."

For Pak, this is in no way a contrivance; it provides him with an impetus, driven by a need to release the intensity of his feelings. "My inspiration always comes from my body," says Pak. "Sometimes I am overwhelmed by a deluge of sentimentality, and the urge to express it find its own way in art. After creating a piece of art, I feel deeply relieved."

One of his most famous works, *Page 22*, resulted from him venting his anger. When Pak left Hong Kong in 2008 for a one-year exchange programme in New York, he found that he was almost completely unknown in the US and felt deeply alienated. He began to regard himself as a lonely island in an unfamiliar sea. Before long, his body started to react too, and he broke out in a rash.

"It was natural that I started to cast around for ways to release these emotions that were damaging my health," Pak recalls. He found his salvation in the public library on 58th Street. In three months,

OPPOSITE:
 ABOUT 172 CM,
 A PERFORMANCE
 ART PROJECT BY
 PAK SHEUNG CHUEN
 IN 2006 FOR WHICH
 HE USED HIS HEIGHT
 TO MEASURE PUBLIC
 ARCHITECTURE

he kept a routine of visiting the library in the morning and folding the upper corner of page 22 of every other book on the shelves. He only stopped when half the books in the library bore one of his folded corners.

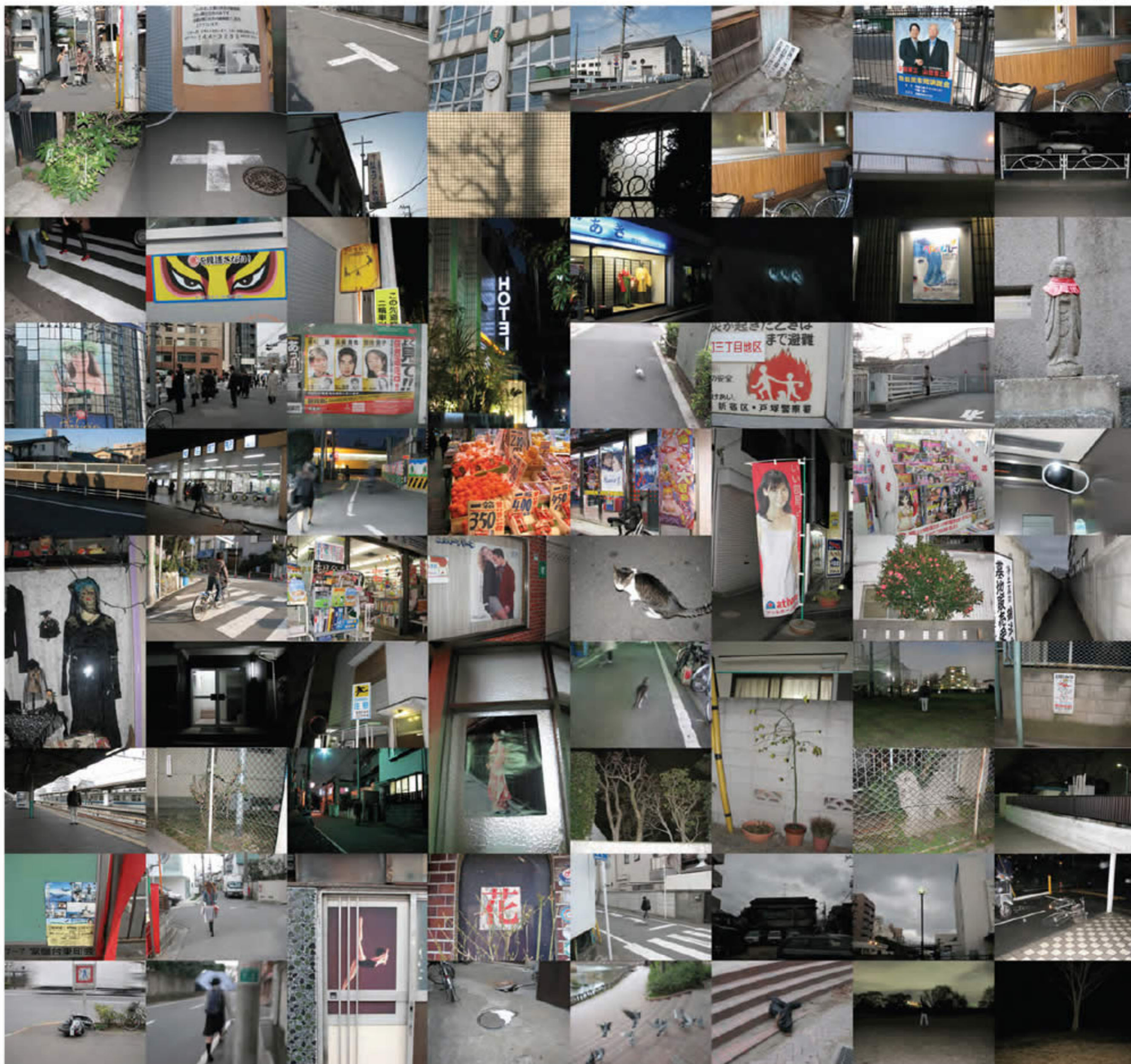
"It was like a ritual that gave order to my daily life, keeping me anchored," Pak says. "It also had other purposes. To begin with, it was like a cry that I, as a famous artist in Hong Kong, was so neglected in New York. Secondly, it served as a satire on New Yorkers who strive

« PART OF THE PROCESS INVOLVES MAKING MY FEELINGS KNOWN »

so hard to be recognised. Ironically, because the books were in a famous library my installation became part of a big institution the moment it was finished. I even brag about my work being on permanent exhibition in libraries in my CV."

Interestingly yet not unexpectedly, the results of his "vandalism" – the objects through which his anger was expressed – went on to become commodities at art fairs because some of the books he marked were removed from libraries. "A lot of my work turned out to have the same destiny," Pak concludes, "Before they came to fulfill the needs of the market, they must have first and foremost fulfilled my own – folding

BELOW IMAGES CAPTURING PAK SHUENG CHUEN'S PERFORMANCE ART



the book leaves in the library really made me feel more balanced, both mentally and physically."

Pak may find that work relieves his stress, but unlike other methods of dealing with pressure, such as running, swimming, sleeping and listening to music, art requires some two-way communication, and a combination of sense and sensibility. "Part of the process involves making my feelings known to others," Pak says. "It usually takes a long time for me to think of a good idea to get my message across and reach a group of people."

Sympathetic to the economically disadvantaged, Pak searched for artistic ways to help people in need and spread a little kindness in society. In 2005, Pak made *A Little Flower for the Passer-by*, in which he put five one-dollar coins in the shape of a flower on a street corner, waiting for those in need to pick them up. Along with the flower, he also drew a twig and put down a date, which would remain after the money had gone, signifying luck and blessings being passed on.

"For me, media is not a concern either," Pak says. "The way I work only requires two things: looking into myself and showing what I find to others, using whatever methods necessary."

Pak's uncompromising attitude towards art has brought him both regional and international fame. In 2013, he was awarded The Best Artist in the Visual Arts category by the Hong Kong Art Development Council. In 2012, he won The Best Artist title in the Chinese Contemporary Art Awards, and received the Frieze London Best Stand Prize from the Frieze London Art Fair. He also represented Hong Kong artists at the 53rd Venice Biennale in 2009.

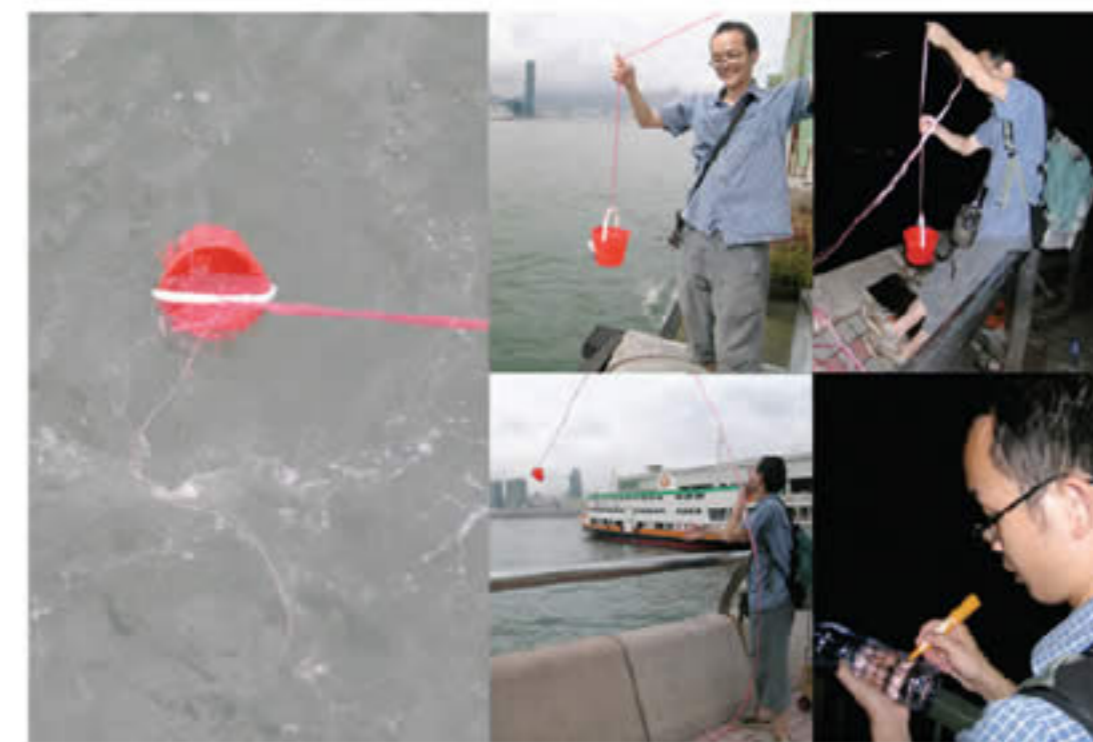


ARTIST



In the light of Pak's star-studded achievements, HKDI invited him to teach for half a year. "Art is very different from design," Pak says. "Design is created to meet the needs of the market, while art is just to meet one's own needs." Pak's lectures revolved around how creative people can get to know their true self and discover what they want to do most. "It is very preliminary, yet it's a prerequisite if one wants to lead a creative life," Pak says. "It's putting

the cart before the horse to value of a piece of art by its price." According to Pak, self-reflection is the key to staying creative – and it's a habit that can be cultivated. For him, most of the time it involves the process of removing reasoning and entering the realm of Freudian sub-consciousness, where the truest feelings hide. "The 'mystery' of my creative process is to place myself in a state of deracination," Pak says. "Only in this state can I see my true self. Without it, I cannot create properly." When Pak lets his feelings flow, he's usually unsure of where the process will lead him to or what he's going to create. "People assume that an experienced artist like me must know what I'm doing," Pak jokes. "But



ALL IMAGES PAK SHEUNG CHUEN

that's wrong. The creative process is actually a personal journey, engaged with a side of myself that I even don't know about." With this in mind, it's not surprising that Pak also enjoys the process of analysing himself through his work. After all, his work is created while his reasoning

OPPOSITE PAGE ABOVE VALLEY TRIP (2007), A PERFORMANCE ART PROJECT BY PAK SHEUNG CHUEN IN JAPAN
BELOW WAITING FOR ALL THE PEOPLE TO SLEEP (2006), A PERFORMANCE ART PROJECT BY PAK SHEUNG CHUEN
THIS PAGE THE HORIZON PLACED AT HOME PERFORMANCE ART MADE BY PAK SHEUNG CHUEN IN 2004

capacity is temporarily disengaged. "A simple example is when I draw little doodles in my notebook," he says while drawing small lines that quickly transform into a shade. "An image shows up naturally. Sometimes, the intensely drawn lines might signify violence or a past wound."

Pak believes that there is an energy circle that runs through one's eyes, pen and hand. "If the energy that flows between them is balanced, one will feel very comfortable," Pak explains. "The energy of your body (sub-consciousness) flows out from the tip of the pen, and creates an image that contains that energy. In return, the image is received through the eyes by one's brain."

Pak also believes this process can help those who experience mild depression, a condition commonly found in city dwellers. As a result, he has written about his own experiences using art as a way to know oneself and release negative emotions in a book called *Dan Shen Kan III*, to be published this May.

"This method works like Chinese medicine," Pak explains. "Instead of cutting off the cancer, it accepts and transforms it – in my case, the depression or sentimentality I experience is the part of me that fuels my creativity."

With Pak's book coming out soon, a revival of Chinese aesthetics from the grassroots level might be in prospect, which might teach a lesson to today's gilded army of increasingly mercenary artists.

If this happens, Chinese abstract and performance art might gain the recognition it deserves and begin to rival the appeal of more traditional work where images of bamboos, plum blossoms, pine trees and rocks still hold sway. ㉔

DESIGNED FOR LIVING

In the wake of his two exhibitions at HKDI, Belgian design master **CHARLES KAISIN** returned to Hong Kong and talked about the launch of his new book. *SUMMER CAO reports.*

Hong Kong in early spring is often gripped by a cold, damp indolence and this year was no different. On March 1st, it was a delight to find a brightly lit warm space at the Eslite Bookstore in Causeway Bay, with two ceiling-high bookshelves flanking the space to suggest a pair of French windows, opening onto a world of knowledge. Within the space, there was an unusual glow coming from two large orange beehive-shaped seats, known as K-Benches, which created a chic and cosy atmosphere. The benches can be arranged in a variety of shapes and this pair had been organized as an "S" and a circle to seat thirty people who had come to hear Charles Kaisin, the K-Bench's inventor.

Presented by HKDI Gallery, the event was designed to provide the Hong Kong public with an opportunity to participate in a face-to-face conversation with Kaisin, who has spent the last nine months curating the *Dress Code* and *Design in Motion* exhibitions at HKDI in association with Belgian Spirit, an initiative of the three Belgian Regions of Brussels, Flanders and Wallonia.

Belgian Spirit was set up in 2011 to promote Belgian architecture, design and fashion in Asia through the Business of Design Week (BoDW) in Hong Kong and other events. The main goal of Belgian Spirit is to create and develop long-term collaborations between Belgian designers and their Asian counterparts, and Kaisin has been a key figure in driving forward the group's ambitions, with the *Design in Motion* exhibition dedicated to his transformative and often surreal experiments with recycled materials.

Kaisin's aim is to change the public's perception about recycling, an area where innovative design and quality execution have traditionally been in short supply. To mark his exhibition, Kaisin has created a book called *Design in Motion*, which is published by the Hong Kong Design Institute and the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Lee Wai Lee). The book, which features articles written by Kaisin and his peers, explores some of the key issues faced by the modern design communities. Catering to local as well as international readers, the text is written in English with

Chinese translations. The book also assembles an interesting range of images that encourage readers to adopt a more artistic perspective on life, showing that designers can do more than thinking and designing. They can actually live design – a luxury available to anyone, as long as they can think creatively and put inspiration into action. ☺

BELOW THE COVER OF CHARLES KAISIN'S BOOK *DESIGN IN MOTION* BOTTOM FROM LEFT LESLIE LU, HKDI PRINCIPAL, QUEENIE LAU, CURATOR OF HKDI & ME (LEE WAI LEE) AND CHARLES KAISIN AT THE BOOK LAUNCH



«ABSURDITY AND ANTI-ABSURDITY ARE THE TWO POLES OF CREATIVE ENERGY.»

KARL LAGERFELD