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## Editor's letter

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## EDITOR'S LETTER



**B**efore the concept of “design” even emerged, the practice had a much more commonsense application - to create relevant objects, spaces and functional attributes that enhance the way society and people live.

As William Lidwell stated in *Universal Principles of Design*: The best designers sometimes disregard the principles of design. When they do so, however, there is usually some compensating merit attained at the cost of the violation. Unless you are certain of doing as well, it is best to abide by the principles.

These days, perhaps our audacious imagination has taken design to a “supersonic” level. There are designs that bear merits of beauty and ostentation, but when you take away the superficiality, what does it do for its user?

It’s a question that will be forever debated and analysed by the design world, but here lies its true purpose. The way we ponder the future of design is so in sync with the development of society that it is at once a reflection of what we are, and where we envision we will be. It is a measure of reality with a dose of fantasy, and that makes design an amazing discipline.

Having spent years supporting design through my editorial work and non-profit endeavours, I am pleased to be taking the helm of *SIGNED*, a magazine that celebrates the vision Hong Kong holds. Our line-up is as eclectic and inspiring as our city - a combination of East and West, old and new.

Check out Business of Design Week’s amazing line-up this year with its partner city, Barcelona, while looking back at the evolution of something quintessentially Hong Kong - the qipao.

We also speak with HKDI alumni to find out how the institute has inspired them and prepared them for their careers, and take a peek at the amazing Image Lab 360° at PMQ.

Celebrating the evolution of Hong Kong, we speak with renowned photographer Tse Ming Chong, whose work captures the changes of our city.

The possibilities of design are endless and we hope you will join us on this journey of discovery and introspection, because we all play a part in “designing Hong Kong”.

Desiree Au  
*Publisher*