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## Publisher's note

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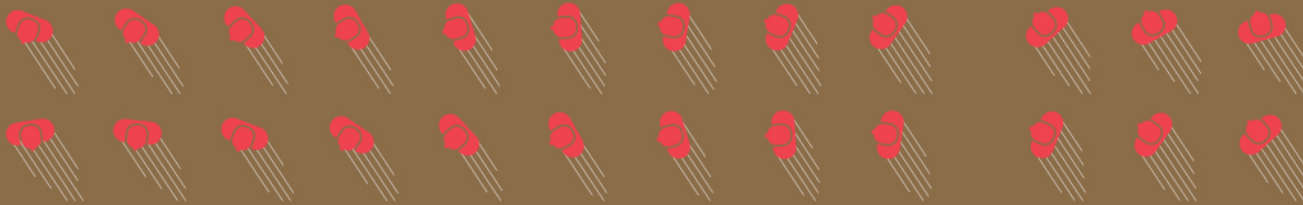
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If the 20th century was all about industrialisation, then the 21st century is all about disruption. We have entered an era where technology has transformed the very essence of our lives. And when technology and design merge, they have a great chemical reaction that enables new ideas to be more readily acceptable and endearing.

In this issue of SIGNED, we continue to expose and explore how tech and design shape our experience. Take our story on shopping, it's one of the most frequent things we do, so how is technology shaping the future of retail? The answers are as interesting as the questions. We also investigate the viability of blockchain and how it changes the process of participation in design, by making a system of individual contribution more transparent and accountable.

Back on the HKDI campus, we had a sneak preview of the amazing Media Lab, where abstract ideas are explored and adapted to create everyday solutions to entertainment. Our exhibition on silk, one of the most revered and popular materials in the world, is a fascinating journey into our history.

What is the most fun for us is seeing how design takes shape, and how design "shapes" cities and societies. We hop over to Shenzhen, a buzzing city for designers. All this sparks conversations. And the beauty of conversations is that no technology can replace simple human exchange.

From all of us at SIGNED, we wish you a great year ahead filled with exhilarating conversations.

Desiree Au  
Publisher