



AIGA Design Educators Conference
AIGA Honolulu

Geographics: Design, Education, and the Transnational Terrain

Thursday, December 13–Saturday, December 15, 2012
The East-West Center and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
Honolulu, Hawai'i; USA

Call for Proposals

Conference Description

Many design educators in different parts of the world today are working in what may be called a transnational context. The boundaries that define the field of higher education have become increasingly fluid, and professors, students, programs, and curricula are moving back and forth between distant regions of the world as never before. The design projects, research, and institutions that result retain a unique cultural complexity because they promote meanings and values that often transcend the cultures and boundaries of the nations within which they originate.

The conference *Geographics: Design, Education, and the Transnational Terrain* will provide international design educators the opportunity to share examples of design projects and programs that have been implemented within a transnational context, while allowing others to present theoretical or reflective positions about what it means to design within a transnational context today. The conference will also be open to presentations from practitioners who design within transnational contexts and who view design as a strategic framework for intercultural collaboration and intersection. The conference will use the term “transnational” to describe the ways in which designs moves through a wide range of contemporary and historical geographic contexts, including the movement of design between multiple nations and other geopolitical entities; the movement of design between peoples who define themselves as belonging to different geopolitical entities, regardless of their location or national affiliation; and the movement of design against the constraints of any particular national, international, or global geographic construct.

By examining the movement of design projects, ideas, and institutions throughout a wide variety of global contexts, we hope to stimulate discussion about design education and how it engages some of the following questions: How do graphic design practices and products take shape within a given transnational context, and consequently give shape to it? How is this context revealed in the design products we make as well as the ideas and values that fortify such products? How do graphic designers explore, support, and reinforce notions of multi-national cultural identity that move beyond nationality and universality within their contemporary practice? How are design educators working to establish new connections or to facilitate existing connections between different global regions and peoples? How can design educators formulate research objectives that better respond to their own transnational contexts—ones that respond to the specificity of cultures and yet reach beyond the commodification of cultural difference?

Conference Audience

The conference *Geographics: Design, Education, and the Transnational Terrain* will bring together nationally and internationally renowned design educators and practitioners as a community of individuals with global interests. The conference will offer experienced educators the opportunity to share examples of transnational projects and ideas that have worked well for them, and will allow interested educators to learn about transnational design education from the ground up. While the conference will focus on the ways in which the transnational experience has informed education and practice within the graphic design discipline, we will also welcome compelling proposals that address aspects of transnational design more generally (historically and/or theoretically).

Conference Format and Structure

The conference will take place over three days (Thursday through Saturday) and will consist of three thematic strands. These strands will allow conference participants to address the ways in which design projects, design ideas, and design institutions move within transnational contexts. Two renowned design thinkers will launch each conference strand by presenting their ideas about the ways in which transnational design operates today. These opening sessions will then be followed by consecutive paper sessions, which will continue throughout the second and third days of the conference.

Theme 1: Design Projects

The "Design Projects" conference strand will allow design educators to present examples of transnational project work in its many forms. This strand can include projects that have been created through direct collaboration between people living in different regions; projects that have ended up transcending national boundaries, regardless of their makers' original intentions; projects created by a designer living in one country or cultural region for people living in another; projects that have facilitated communication between peoples of many different regions; and the discussion of international and transnational projects throughout history.

Potential themes for this strand might include the design of cultural heritage exchanges, diplomatic materials, ethnographic exhibitions, multinational design collaborations, the representation of cultural boundaries or boundary transcendence, travel and tourism materials, student collaborations, transnational activism, transnational branding and identity development, and transnational service projects.

Theme 2: Design Ideas

The "Design Ideas" conference strand will allow design educators to present theoretical or critical positions that discuss the ways in which design ideas move across borders, either historically or within contemporary global contexts.

Potential themes for this strand might include the discussion or critique of center vs. periphery theory, changing geographic constructs, critical gender theory, critical race theory, cultural independence vs. interdependence, design as cultural boundary, design as cultural imperialism, design as development, dislocation/diaspora, globalization theory, indigenous perspectives, international corporations and capitalism, historical geography, hybridity, multilingualism in design, the representation of place as a product of the transnational experience, resistance to transnational enterprises, transculturation, and transnational identity construction.

Theme 3: Design Institutions

The "Design Institutions" conference strand will allow design educators and administrators to exemplify or criticize the ways in which a wide variety of design institutions have served or are serving as transnational educational enterprises. Presentations within this strand can include the representation of specific programs, schools, and organizations as well as the discussion of the ways in which such institutions operate. Potential themes for this strand might include the representation or critique of "franchise" universities, Fulbright and other teaching exchange programs, international colleges and universities, international design organizations, the global institutionalization of the design profession, NGOs, study abroad programs, transnational curricula, transnational design publishing, and transnational education advocacy.

Submitting A Conference Proposal

All proposals will be evaluated via a peer-review process. Proposals must be written in English and must clearly describe the transnational context of your design project work, research, and/or institutional experience. Each proposal must include the following:

- Your name, your institutional affiliation, and your contact information, including your telephone number, your mailing address, and your e-mail address.
- The title of your paper or presentation, and the conference theme that it pertains to.

- A concise abstract of 250 words or less. Please do not include images at this stage of the proposal process.
- A concise, single-page CV.
- The above information must appear on two letter-size pages. Proposals that are longer than two pages will not be accepted.

Each proposal should be submitted to Stuart McKee at the following e-mail address: sdmckee@usfca.edu. Each proposal should be submitted as a PDF file, using last name, first initial, middle initial, and conference title as the document titling format, as follows: "SmithAB.Geographics.pdf".

Deadlines

Proposals must be received by end of day February 15, 2012. Notice of acceptance will be provided to all proposal authors on or before March 15, 2012. Accepted authors will be required to submit full papers with complete images by September 1, 2012.

If you have any questions about submitting your proposal, please contact Stuart McKee at sdmckee@usfca.edu.

Geographics: Design, Education, and the Transnational Terrain Conference Organizing Committee:

Anne Bush, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
Chae Ho Lee, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
Stuart McKee, University of San Francisco
Lucille Tenazas, Parsons The New School for Design
Karen Zimmermann, University of Arizona

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