

The 5th International Conference on Design Principles and Practices

2-4 February 2011

Sapienza University of Rome, Italy

I had the wonderful opportunity once again to attend and present at the International Conference on Design Principles and Practices. As always, the conference brought a large mix of designers (teachers, researchers, business leaders, and practitioners) of all disciplines such as graphic design, industrial design, product design, fashion, architecture, interior design, urban design, engineers, IT, film. We were from all over the world through the common thread “DESIGN”! It was a fascinating cross-disciplinary conference to explore core values, ethics, process and future of design.

Presentation on February 3, 2011

Visual translation: Experimental typography through cross-cultural process

My presentation was on my teaching experience in China. I was invited to teach at Guanzhou Academy of Fine Arts to give a three-week typography workshop in 2009. As a native of Hirosaki, Japan, who trained in the United States and Switzerland, I have always been curious about how the design process could cross cultural boundary — Asian and Western languages in particular. Can visual concepts be translated into the Asian culture using simple English words? Will the language barriers cause students to shy away from the assignment or be bold with their ability to control and treat type as well as to experiment with type? At what point during the development of exercises would I see a cultural uniqueness of the students’ processes and/or approaches?

After the presentation, we had nice discussions about how Chinese students approached the exercises at the beginning in a similar way as my students in the US. The cultural influence did surface when we introduced images. One member of the audience noticed how students seemed more experimental using foreign words. I was pleased to share this information with other designers.



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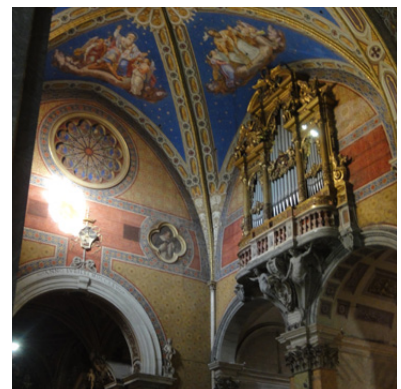
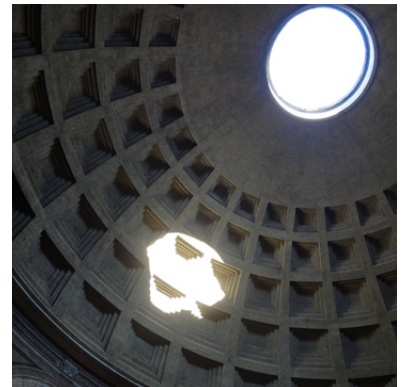


Presentation



Conference dinner

During the three-day conference, I attended sessions/presentations that focused on typography, design education/curriculum and interdisciplinary projects. The evening speakers were also fantastic. Milano based architect Stefano Boeri presented his special interest and enthusiasm of creating the magazine *Abitare*. Gillian Crampton Smith, a former graphic designer from England, now working in an interaction design program in Venice, spoke about her interesting career transition. Sustainable fashion designer Orsola de Castro of *From Somewhere* inspired us with her philosophy and style. The president of an international design program based in France was ready to influence the world with his vision and an industrial designer Stefano Giovannoni from *Alessi* challenged us with the capitalistic approach of his business model.



Rome in 5 hours – pictures from my walk

I would like to thank Julie Mostov, Associate Vice Provost of International Programs for the travel award and Jennifer Hayes, Program Manager for making flight arrangements. I also wish to thank David Raizman, the Department Head of Media Arts and Design for additional support.

For more information about the conference:
<http://designprinciplesandpractices.com/conference-2011>