UNIV 241 – Great Works Symposium

What is Design?

Dimensions of “Design Life Now,”
Cooper Hewitt Museum – New York 2007
THE REBIRTH OF DESIGN

Function is out. Form is in. From radios to cars to toothbrushes, America is bowled over by style.
BOWLED OVER
An enameled metal bowl from Nate Berkus offers a fresh take on the Arts and Crafts aesthetic. $100 at Macy's, 146 Greene Street.

HAVING A BALL
The Porcelain Bowl Clock is based on an antique model in the Flirrme museum. Old-fashioned appeal and gadgety style. Roesler Antiques, 651 E. 70th St. $95. 212-722-4646.

A SIMPLE PI
The Ornamental Pi was designed by H. N. Fink from a 19th-century design but looks 21st-century modern. The first Pi clock sold for $17,000 at a New York auction. $100 at John A. Bost Furniture, 110 West 71st Street. $80,000 at Sotheby's.

THROUGH A GLASS B All
A glassware collection by the London-based designer Benoit Millot. Prices range from $30 to $1,000. Through a Glass Brigh

BENCHMARK
With a sleek frame and soft, fabric upholstery, the Louis Series sofa, designed by John Luber for Sutherland, is available in a variety of fabrics. $5,000 at Sutherland, 434 East 57th Street. 212-658-5530. www.sutherlandfurniture.com.

THE GET
The New Collectibles

Photography by Jens Mortensen
“All men (sic) are designers. All that we do, almost all the time, is design, for design is basic to all human activity. The planning and patterning of any act toward a desired, foreseeable end constitutes the design process. Any attempt to separate design to make it a thing in itself, works counter to the fact that design is the primary underlying matrix of life.”
Google Earth
DESIGN LIFE NOW
NATIONAL DESIGN TRIENNIAL 2006

Special Programs
December 8, 2006–July 29, 2007
www.cooperhewitt.org

Cooper Hewitt
National Design Museum
Take one capsule by mouth three times daily.
ReadyMade

HOW TO MAKE {ALMOST} EVERYTHING

A Do-It-Yourself Primer

You need this book, as the stuff of life piles up and things spin out of control, we could all use a little help. These never-before-seen designs and how-tos are full of surprises and wonder. Learn how to turn everyday objects into spellbinding inventions to give away to friends or keep for yourself! Our simple self-improvement techniques will make you smarter, better-looking, and more well-adjusted. Shoshana Berger and Grace Mahoney, the founders of Readymade magazine, have led and cared for this animal. It will not be domesticated. It runs wild and breathes free.
ENTERTAINING CUBE:

The whole series of cubes is constructed of 2\(\times\)2 Douglas Fir or Pine and 3/4" plywood panels, plus rope, fabrics, dowels, etc. All the cubes are 8\(\times\)8\(\times\)8 feet.

The 2\(\times\)2 struts are held together by 3/8" stove bolts, 3\(\frac{3}{4}\)" - 4" long.

There must be two opposing diagonals for stability.

By adding more panels and or shelves, hanging fabric screens, etc., you can modulate these environments as you see fit.
This is not...

- a pipe.
- an invasion.
- unemployment.
- pollution.

This is not...
Thinking about Design

• Design often equated with objects, as form, or arrangement of forms
• Design also commonly defined as a concept, sketch, model, or instructions for a product, often separated from manufacture or making
• Separation of design from making often seen in meaning of the term ‘industrial’ design
• Difficult to separate these two meanings of design; the way a design looks is related to the conditions of its manufacture
• This often involves manufacturers as well as designers, and of course, users
• Economic context for design is not one of the strong suits of “Design Life Now”
Design Life Now: design = life

- Creating materials that are ‘life-like’ – personalizing relation of user to object
- Appreciating aesthetic qualities of nature and natural materials transformed by designer
- Designing by integrating different (multi-) media to promote Interactivity and relate to experience of modern life
- Designing synthetic materials equal or surpass natural materials
- Ergonomics that relate design to the human body
- Robotics: machines that are more human via intelligence and relation with user
- Virtual Reality
- Mutation – man-made products that behave like organisms
- Bio-engineering
- Craft; craft as a human and social activity
- Co-existence of craft with advanced technologies
Design Life Now: Design as a social activity

- Collaboration
- Interactivity with user; non-professional voices
- Prefabricated housing
- Do-it-Yourself (DIY)
- Team Design
- Blogs and dissenting voices
- Group consensus
Design Life Now: Critique and alternatives

- Exhibitions are starting points not summations, especially with an expanding and contested subject such as design
- DLN underplays commercial context for design aside from manufacturers’ interest in progress
- DLN Emphasizes creativity of designers or teams of designers with little mention of market research and motivations of consumers
- DLN Ignores possible negative effects of the vicarious substituting for real experience
- DLN offers little clarity about what constitutes design research
- DLN offers little mention of what constitutes design education – how do designers ‘learn’ to be designers given such a broad definition of design?
Enjoy the Exhibition!