In Good We Trust: Denver Biennial of the Americas

Bruce Mau

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The Denver Biennial of the Americas
Bruce Mau

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The aesthetic Project was founded in January 2007 and is a research project investigating art and aesthetics in management and organizational contexts. The project has its roots in the first Art of Management and Organization Conference in London in 2002, with successive conferences held in Paris, Krakow and The Banff Centre, Canada. From those events emerged an international network of academics, writers, artists, consultants and managers, all involved in exploring and experimenting with art in the context of management and organizational research. The Aesthesis Project will be developing extensive research and artistic projects internationally, with academic research fellows and associate creative practitioners, publications and consultancy.

http://www.essex.ac.uk/aesthesis/

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This edition of *Aesthesis* has had a long gestation period, in part due to its visual complexity. The contributors to this issue (except Bruce Mau) were originally convened by Ken Friedman and Laurene Vaughan for an international conference stream on design management, held over four days at the Art of Management and Organization Conference at The Banff Centre, Canada, in September 2008. For the next conference, in Istanbul, I see the need of this issue. Despite the emergence of subject matter and different disciplinary approaches to the subject of design, a generally stimulating and international dialogue emerged, and this issue of *Aesthesis* is the product of that dialogue. Not all the research contributors to the conference were able to continue working on their material for this issue, so for their input we thank Rob Austin and Daniel Horifi of Copenhagen Business School and Gökçe Dervisoglu of Istanbul Bilgi University. As to this issue—enormous thanks are due to Bruce Mau and the Bruce Mau Studio in Toronto and Chicago, to Seth Goldberg, Andrew Clark, and particularly Whitney Catlin! Ken Friedman’s art, design, performance, and media work, as well as his academic research and leadership, has straddled across many countries as it has industrial sectors and academic disciplines. From the extremities of Fluxus in the 1960s to his current academic role in Australia, it is a pleasure to have his editorial presence in this issue—and Laurene Vaughan, whose design leadership and project management is evident in her collaborative paper on this issue. Vaughan is part of a growing sector of design researchers and managers in Australia whose geographic location, far from inducing a sense of isolation, provides the impetus for global networking and international projects.

During the past two years *Aesthesis* Project has been centrally concerned with three objectives: first, bringing together creative practitioners (whether artists, managers or consultants) with scholars and researchers, breaking down the institutionalised barriers that keep us apart; second, encouraging and facilitating the visual presentation and interpretation of academic research; third, in part as a result of the second, encouraging public dissemination of research. It is with these objectives in mind that this diverse group of contributors have been brought together—designers, consultants, academics, design managers, design business managers and design project managers. Our theme is ‘design’, but the content is relevant to any organisation or manager concerned with developing and implementing innovation, innovation models, product or service development, it capability and the creative process, design audit and evaluation.

‘Design’ is still viewed as a ‘specialist’ discipline, largely associated with ‘making things’—and yet, what organisation, company or institution does not function ‘visually’ and by using design—from their web presence, corporate facilities, market communications, product design and packaging, branding. Who needs convincing that the leaders in global business invest massively in their design— from their strategic brand to new product development and service design innovation. The emphasis of this issue therefore, opening our Papers section with Robert Bauer and Ward Eagen’s seminal article, is thinking—using design concepts, processes, tools and models to implement creative and productive change, and this can be done in any organisational context. Far from being supplementary to extant organisational processes, as Rowe and Smart show with regard the biotech industry, thinking ‘design’ can be central to conceptualising those organisational processes at a basic level. Even Robertson’s ‘models’ of design thinking, used largely in a creative agency context, can be implemented in generic way within multiple business contexts.

However, as much as design can become both a mechanism for business or organisational development, the prevailing, namely instrumentalist and functional conception of design must be challenged—design as the mechanism through which art, culture and creativity can be exploited for corporate profit, design as both culture and aesthetics as well as industrial innovation and business ‘solutions’. Great design creates a new field—a virtual zone between business industry and culture, where both enter into dialogue and do so in a critical spirit. Culture does not have a monopoly on creativity, industry is not always the source of economic development, business is not the only means of generating wealth. Only in the critical dialogue between art culture and business industry, with its conflicts and contradictions, will we be able to ascertain the ‘what and how’ of developing our economies.

It is the purpose of this issue to hold these two dimensions in tension—the industrial application of design thinking and the broader aesthetic or cultural meaning of design, a meaning that is never wholly appropriated strategically or in fact can be, as it involves aesthetic and cultural values that are always shifting in their role in the experience of designer and consumer alike. We feature Tung-Jung Sung and Pai-Yung Chang’s systematic analytical measurement of a design consultant’s resources and capabilities, category by category; their analysis is highly useful in any design audit or context of rigorous organisational evaluation. We also feature Richard Fischer’s reflections on the new ‘artist entrepreneur’ and their role in the ‘new creative economy’, and Lucy Kinbello’s review of three of the most notable design exhibitions in recent years.

Most of our papers have emerged from the contributor’s professional experience, which is true of Rob Robertson and his agency, as well as Kelly Costello, Roger Meader and Jessie Gatto, where we find design as a mechanism through which innovation is conceptualised and implemented within organisational development, Laurene Vaughan, Nifeli Steward, Michael Durbar and Jeremy Hofle take us step by step through a University-based research project, where the design and development of an online digital video prototyping and annotation tool is undertaken reflectively, considering the methodological implications of their steps. Stefan Hofmild similarly stands in the gap between university research and industry, drawing on his experience of both, investigating the new frontier of interaction design. Kati Rottke offers what is probably the most unpredictable paper, moving from the framework of web design for urban planning in contemporary California to a visionary architectural project of the early 1960s—Cedric Price’s Fun Palace. Bruce Mau, who spends this issue, is one of the great designers and design thinkers of our time. His design practice, research, writing and management makes him stand out in the great philosophical and formal traditions of design and art history, but is dynamically future-oriented. Mau articulates the need for design as a political imperative—faced with global climate change and chronic economic instability—the obligation for massive change must be promoted in the way we live our lives, our communication, culture, cities, corporations, social and education systems.

The term ‘massive change’ has been a leitmotif for Mau’s approach to design in 2004 it was the title of a multi-media exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery and powerfully asserted the means by which design can address structural problems in areas as diverse as information, transportation, energy, materials, manufacturing, military, health and politics. The resultant book, *Massive Change: Bruce Mau and the Institute Without Boundaries (Phaidon)* is a major contribution to the history of design as a discipline, but more than that, conceptualised as a premier synthetic, multi-disciplinary framework for understanding our current situation, it is the way we live our lives, our communication, culture, cities, corporations, social and education systems.

Bruce Mau’s contribution here in *Aesthesis* emerges from his latest project: as Artistic Director of the International Cultural Event, The Denver Biennial of the Americas, he will demonstrate the centrality of design thinking to cultural politics as well as global wellbeing, our beliefs, values, lifestyles. It will become a platform that design has rarely had.

This issue has been a long journey of development—on behalf of the *Aesthesis* Project I hope you find it inspiring, instructive and useful.

Jonathan Vickery
Issue General Editor

**EDITORIAL**
LETTER TO THE FUTURE: IN GOOD WE TRUST

We find ourselves between things. In transition. We find ourselves asking questions, new questions. Questions of purpose.

Propelled by these questions we seek new possibilities for change. In this way we are on the cusp of a new era. The 21st century brings with it a sense of optimism for what is to come. I believe in this optimism and the sheer massive potential of this future. I have been witness to its roots over the past decade through a network of innovators, entrepreneurs, and creative thinkers. And, I witnessed it blossom to scale at an inspiring spectacle in August 2008. Never before had I experienced such spirited engagement with this future as I did during the Democratic National Convention held in Denver.

There was a sense that we were all in this together, actively participating in the optimism. My contribution at this historic moment was through a series of conversations about the future challenges of sustainability that we face as a nation and as a collective world. From this dialogue, so fresh in our memory and so recent as it has launched a new leader, we begin to move towards a new space of action.

This is the place in which we begin to imagine a new kind of cultural and civic "Biennial" engagement, that is based on the most fundamental creative acts: Innovation, the act of introducing something new into the world; and Entrepreneurship, the act of building a significant undertaking. Through our work on Massive Change we have documented and mapped the movement of change-makers broadening the discourse on the future of our collective world.

These innovators and entrepreneurs have been leading and participating in a movement to produce models of public good.

This movement is action-based in form and demands active participation by many. It is bound and interconnected by an organized and invisible cloud of trust across boundaries of disciplines, institutions, and geographies. I imagine the title of this movement as, "In Good We Trust". We will exhibit and articulate, engage participants, produce experiences, build networks, and launch new contributions to "In Good We Trust" in Denver in summer of 2010.

This project, a new and radically ambitious cultural project, takes its cue from the energized civic life currently characterizing Denver and innovations currently underway across the Americas and globally. It will be organized through the principles of "proof and possibility". We will present to the world the diverse creative practitioners that prove this movement is already active and we will catalyze the new possibilities they invite. It is my honor to serve as the first Creative Director of the Denver Biennial of the Americas and lead a vision of the inaugural program: In Good We Trust.

Bruce Mau
Chairman and CEO, Bruce Mau Design
Creative Director, Denver Biennial of the Americas
THE STATUS QUO IS NOT WORKING.
E.O. Wilson, the greatest living life scientist, tells us that if the entire global population lived like Americans, we would need the material substance of four additional planet Earths. We must change everything we do. In the future, even Americans won’t live like Americans.

EVERYTHING IS CHANGING.
The research of Ray Kurzweil show us that we are doubling our technological capacity every twelve months. In twenty years we will experience a million fold increase in our ability to move information, connect things and change the landscape. Kurzweil has described the 21st century as the equivalent of living through twenty thousand years of human progress.

EVERYTHING COMMUNICATES.
In the context of radically expanding information connectivity, there is no more “back of house.” There is no longer a separation between image and action: people can know everything. In fact, what you do is what you say.

THE NEW DESIGN IS NOT (ONLY) VISUAL.
Design is no longer principally visual or formal. It is not only about the static object. In fact, most design is invisible. The new design is about the cycle of matter and energy that intersects with intelligence and solidifies for a moment to create a visible object that provides utility and delight over time. When it is no longer useful, its matter and energy are redistributed to become the next generation of object.

THE NEW DESIGN IS FOREVER.
There is no garbage on an untouched forest floor. Waste becomes food in a continuous cycle of life. Our design objective is perpetuity — a way of living that we can operate in an endless cycle, forever.

DESIGN MAKES SMART THINGS SEXY.
The way we will change the world is by applying design to outdated models, and making the new, more intelligent way of doing things more compelling and sexy than the old. We have 40 years of evidence that going negative doesn’t work. The time has come for design.
Bruce Mau Design is a holistic idea factory and production lab. We believe in the business of cultural change. To identify, support, catalyze, celebrate, and distribute purpose-driven innovation we have assembled a unique interdisciplinary innovation studio.

We jump fences for our collaborators and partners by drawing from diverse practices ranging from communications, science, philosophy, economics, architecture, business, marketing, to the artists who are also designers, visionaries, activists, and global citizens.

BMD designs action and creates the positive change essential to flourish, succeed and prosper in the 21st century and beyond. BMD re-models and re-imagines the systems, services, experiences and products that we encounter in our daily lives. Through distributed problem solving and team-based multidisciplinary practices, we collaborate with clients by using design principles and methodologies in an optimistic, integrative and imaginative approach to confront complex problems and create sustainable, commercially-viable solutions with outstanding social, cultural, environmental and economic value. BMD uses the power of design to create a bright future in the following sectors:
IMAGINING THE FUTURE OF THE LIBRARY IN THE HOME OF MICROSOFT.

Designed by architect Rem Koolhaas and his Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), and Seattle-based LMN Architects, the new 355,000-square-foot Seattle Public Library opened in 2004. A community and cultural anchor for the city, the landmark building houses the Seattle library system’s main collection of books, government publications, periodicals, audio visual materials and the technology base required to access and distribute information from the physical collection online. The library is used by six to eight thousand people per day, and encourages and expresses the richness of the city’s public, cultural and intellectual life.

Prior to any design initiation, BMD and OMA undertook an investigation into the relevance of the contemporary library and the future of the library as an institution in the context of increasing capacity for the digital storage and distribution of knowledge. The leader of the library, CEO Deborah Jacobs, defined the library as the cornerstone of democracy. She explained that without access to information, democracy is false and worthless. After much discussion, a strategy was developed around the concept of the library as public space whose major purpose is to provide open access to knowledge, reinforce community, and provide a forum for public debate.
“DEVICES OF WONDER”

The Fundación Amador, a group consisting of senior members of the Panamanian cultural and business community, approached Gehry Partners to create the country’s most significant national monument, a new museum of biodiversity.

BMD became a collaborative partner on all aspects of the museum’s design, from writing the mission and mandate of the institution to developing its early conceptual model through the content and design of its various exhibitions and programming.

Built at the mouth of the Panama Canal, the 45,000-square-foot museum is intended to become an icon for the nation, a centre for learning, discovery and national pride. It will showcase the country’s ecological treasures and explore its rich and dynamic heritage, with a focus on the region’s ecosystems and natural history, and especially the historic and ecological importance of the Isthmus of Panama.

The Puente de Vida, as conceived by BMD and Gehry Partners, inverts the typical museum visitor’s experience. Instead of “pushing” information, the museum allows visitors to be “pulled” to information as they follow a path along which content has been framed and ordered. By combining culture and its imperatives with the stories of natural science, the exhibits go beyond the mere illustration of ideas to become functional models — memorable and accessible embodiments of otherwise abstract, yet fundamental scientific ideas.

These models are called “Devices of Wonder,” and their effect lies somewhere between art and science. The visual and physical impact of each Device inspires the primary scientific concept of wonder — “What is this? What’s going on here?” — and then proceeds to answer the question.
¡GUATEAMALA! BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE CULTURE OF LIFE.

BMD, in collaboration with the people of Guatemala and a diverse group of its leaders, produced a vision for the future that galvanized action and created a positive movement for the country going forward.

A 36-year guerrilla war has weakened Guatemala’s long history of strength, ingenuity and biological abundance. Outsiders have often imposed their own rule, making it difficult to develop independent national thought. And most emphatically, Guatemala’s indigenous population still lacks rights equal to its European conquerors.

The Fundación Proyecto de Vida, a collective of Guatemalan leaders from all walks of life, approached BMD with a provocative collaborative proposition: Can we co-imagine a vision of Guatemala powerful enough to galvanize action towards a positive, ongoing and self-sustaining movement of national resonance? Can we imagine an image more powerful than the negative images of poverty, violence and corruption that dominate the civic imagination?

Hundreds of thousands of Guatemalans are developing innovative solutions to these ongoing and ubiquitous problems, yet their work has been invisible and inaccessible. ¡GuateAmala!, a multi-year communications strategy, seeks to fuse the ambitions and challenges of Guatemala to the possibilities and potential developing in the world. The genesis of our idea is to help the people of Guatemala supersede isolation, environmental stress, political instability, and a lack of access to capital, technology, medicine, and education, and to take control of their country’s future and their lives.
World Leaders explored our capacity to invent the world, through the power of our creative imagination. Located on the shores of Lake Ontario, Harbourfront Centre is an innovative cultural organization that produces diverse arts programming ranging from international contemporary art to community-focused events, lessons, workshops, and recreational activities. The common denominator is leadership.

As a reflection, celebration, and organizing principle of the Centre’s breadth, variety, and challenging programming, a spectacle was conceived. World Leaders: A Festival of Creative Genius.

Highlighting the Festival were a series of 14 gala evenings, each a unique celebration — part homage, part performance — of a World Leader: an artist whose creative practice has changed the face of his or her discipline. Quincy Jones, Philippe Starck, Robert Rauschenberg, Frank Gehry, Pina Bausch, Issey Miyake, Peter Gabriel, Stephen Sondheim — each night one of the artists was presented with the Harbourfront Centre Prize, the range reflecting the full spectrum of the Centre’s programming. The World Leaders overlapped and intersected with each other and the Centre organized hundreds of events around it; lectures, conferences, celebrations. At times I was in tears because each one of them in their own way described our profound human capacity to imagine a better world.
MASSIVE CHANGE IS NOT ABOUT THE WORLD OF DESIGN; IT'S ABOUT THE DESIGN OF THE WORLD.

Design has emerged as one of the world's most powerful forces.

It has positioned us at the beginning of an unprecedented period of human possibility, where all economies and ecologies are becoming global, relational and interconnected.

For our studio, this project does not end. Instead, it has grown into a dedicated campaign, mapping the evolution of Massive Change, seeing it, celebrating it, and applying it with collaborators and partners.

We believe this work has reached a new and beautiful apex. What was once an aggregation of individuals' work has now become a collective movement of game-changers. Everywhere we turn we are awed by the goodness of people, of those embracing inquiry and asking questions of purpose. What we are seeing is a network — and networks within networks — distributing possibility, connecting in new ways, solving problems together and sharing their experience.
MASSIVE CHANGE
The Future of Global Design

1. Learn
2. Act

Design has entered an era where almost every time and almost everywhere a change is necessary. We are at a beginning of a new period of human history, where all economies and ecologies are becoming global, related, and interconnected.

WEBSITE / CURRICULUM An interactive and participatory website in parallel with a unique series of public events including lectures, symposia and workshops.

EXHIBITIONS An exploration and map of design’s power, promise and potential, the Massive Change exhibition – a touring exhibition – commissioned by the Vancouver Art Gallery, also displayed at the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago.

RADIO Originally broadcast on CIUT 89.5 FM in Toronto during 2003 and now is archived on the comprehensive Massive Change website. Each radio show – hosted by Institute Without Boundaries student Jennifer Leonard – offered interviews with provocative thinkers across disciplines.

BOOK Published internationally by Phaidon Press, explores our new design potential and celebrates our global capacities – while casting a cautious look at our limitations.
The moment when Barack Obama took the stage in Denver was perhaps the moment when the 21st century began. When historians define historical periods, beginnings and endings don’t necessarily line up with a calendar. That moment at the 2008 Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Denver we collectively took a step into the new world; we became a part of the energy, outlook, and possibility for the future that is evidenced at this extraordinary moment in history.

Our studio was challenged to explore the possibility of a sustainable America at the Green Constitutional Congress, an event associated with Dialog City. Inspired by the DNC, Dialog City was a non-partisan creative and civic catalyst whose mission was to spark dialogue across the city through innovative cultural initiatives. In working on this project, we began to experience Denver as a unique culture and place.

When we first said the words, “Imagine a Sustainable America,” they came out and fell to the ground. But if we are ever to become a sustainable nation, we must start by imagining it; we can’t get there if we don’t imagine it.

We’ve worked all over the world: across Europe, Asia, and the Americas. There is something specific in the spirit of Denver as a community: its enterprising willingness to move towards the new. I believe it was at the DNC in Denver that we started the 21st century, just eight years behind schedule.

Meeting Mayor John Hickenlooper was part of that experience of the new. I’ve never met a man who literally jumps out of airplanes to make his point. He embodies that new energy—entrepreneurial, taking thoughtful risk, setting the bar high and expecting more. When we spoke about the idea of an international cultural event, he talked about his commitment to end homelessness in his city—not to reduce homelessness but rather to eliminate it all together. He talked about the kinds of initiatives that are already underway in Denver and his commitment to seeing them put into action. We found commonality through our commitment to action.

WE TRUST
WHAT IS A BIENNIAL IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

The Mayor asked the question, “What is a biennial in the 21st century?” He was very clear, he said, “We have 200 biennials around the world, we don’t need another old world event, we don’t need number 201, we need something new. We need to redefine it for the 21st century.” He wanted the first of a new generation; the first of a new form of thinking about international cultural events. We began a process to think about the possibility of putting innovation at the center of the idea and the event.

Old categories and boundaries have been breaking down and new ways of connecting and collaborating are possible because of new techniques for working and communicating. The intersection of past projects and ideas we have developed at our studio and the articulation of the ambition and the hopes for the Biennial created an extraordinary opportunity. It is not by accident that it began in Denver.

You can feel the resonant frequencies in Obama’s campaign; the way ideas came together to mobilize a new kind of movement. We know we are going to have to change. Let’s take on that change and give that change direction, give it an agenda, become a catalyst for a new way of thinking. That led us to the concept of “In Good We Trust” (IGW1).

The underlying vision for In Good We Trust is our capacity to collectively and positively contribute to the world. We know that if we bring creative ideas and action together, this will be a powerful, liberating and unique experience. Let’s look at what’s going on out there — we want to be sure that it’s relevant to the people of Denver, that it’s relevant to the geopolitical context, something that is absolutely grounded in the culture of Denver.
This is about our collective ability to invent the future.
To imagine solutions for a new world,
To design our collective culture,
To forge our new agenda,
To address the challenges we share and

Shape the future we demand.
We will inspire people to higher possibilities
By creating platforms for participation to change the way we live. We trust in the power of people to deliver our world to greater good.
GREAT CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY

We have developed seven core thematic areas of focus for In Good We Trust. They include: Energy, Education, Health, Habitat, Environment, Economy and Technology. We are in a future that considers all the welfare of all life. Instead of thinking about human welfare or even a specific nation or state or city group, can we start to understand our place in the world as woven intricately into a much more complex ecological web that sustains us? What happens when we make holes in that web? What are the implications? You can see how these questions and themes are interconnected. It’s not about discreet entities but about the new kind of thinking that is fundamentally ecological, interdisciplinary and innovative.

“Often innovations in energy are actually about its combination with the environment. We know ultimately it is a holistic world view and our project will help people see the cross over.”

an immersive research and mapping process to identify and connect with some of the most compelling innovators who are working within and across these key areas. They are redefining the assumptions that ground these practices, often working across boundaries and creating new hybrid, interdisciplinary practices. We’re building questions under each one of these thematic areas.

How will we reconceive the role technology plays in innovating a better world? It’s not only about technology: it’s about technology for human purpose. What happens if you attach purpose to human technology? What’s the difference? Can we place quality of life at the center of innovation? Rather than simply innovating can we put an agenda at the core of innovation? Can we imagine

We believe that our world needs new systematic ways of solving the increasingly complex challenges we face.

7 THEMES
EDUCATION

We have evolved extraordinary capacities to connect, engage and circulate knowledge, nowhere is there greater potential to alter our behavior, create wealth, and produce positive collective return an investment than there exists in our educational systems. And yet, nowhere in our culture are we more passionate and less innovative than in education.

Bill Gates famously suggested that the high school system in America is so fundamentally flawed that it should be closed and reinvented. He argued that any business that failed as many of its clients as American high schools do would be driven into bankruptcy. And yet, we remain paralyzed by singularism — the deeply held idea that the existing model is the only model, no matter the evidence of failure.

We intend to explore radical pluralism — to take a stand against the notion of a singular solution and the manufacturing imagination of uniformity that currently dominates educational paradigms. We are in favor of an educational ecology of radical diversity designed to support what Howard Gardner calls “multiple intelligences”. This approach, an innovative and experimental culture being prototyped across the Americas, will blow the idea of education out of the classroom and into the future.

HOW DO WE DESIGN TEACHING WHEN STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO UNLIMITED KNOWLEDGE?
WHEN DOES EDUCATION HAPPEN? AND WHERE?
HOW DO WE DESIGN LIFELONG LEARNING?
HOW CAN WE DEVELOP METRICS THAT REFLECT THE VALUES AND CAPACITIES NEEDED IN THE ERA OF MASSIVE CHANGE?

HABITAT

Over the next half-century, we will welcome three to four billion children onto the surface of our planet. What story will we share with them? How will we build their homes, and write the script for their possibilities? Imagine drawing a line around the globe, with half of our global population of almost seven billion people on each side of the line. In the coming decades we need to build anew everything on one side of that line. To meet the needs of the coming generation by mid-century, we will need to build half the world — again.

Our buildings use 39% of our energy, 40% of our materials, create 38% of greenhouse gases, and are responsible for 30% of our landfills. Buckminster Fuller once asked, “do you have any idea how much your buildings weight?” While there have been extraordinary innovations in high level building systems and materials, our popular culture of housing remains strikingly conventional. We continue to carpet the landscape with post-war model homes, produced with profoundly wasteful methods. While architects build cultural and technical landmarks, the synthetic practice of architecture remains largely distant from the mass of production and the massive challenges it represents.

CAN WE IMAGINE MAKING DENSITY COOL?
CAN WE TRANSFORM SCHOOLS OF ARCHITECTURE INTO SCHOOLS FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT?
CAN WE MAINTAIN THE ORGANIC BEAUTY AND HUMAN RICHNESS OF THE FAVELA WHILE DELIVERING ADVANCED ECOCLOGICAL AND HUMAN SERVICES?
CAN WE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE EFFICIENCIES AND ECONOMIES OF MANUFACTURING, WITHOUT LOSING THE CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND WARM ECCENTRICITIES OF THE INDIVIDUAL HOME?
ECONOMY

The market is not a natural environment. It is a designed space, and how we design it determines who participates, what gets exchanged, and what has value. Hernando De Soto, Muhammad Yunus, and C. K. Prahalad have all demonstrated the potential and urgency in redesigning the market to meet the needs of the global poor. Hazel Henderson points out that enormous parts of our human cultural activity — what she calls the caring economy, the unpaid work done mostly by women and the elderly — are not measured and counted at all in our current economic models. We are making profoundly important decisions with clumsy tools like GDP that express only partial data.

From an environmental perspective, perhaps our greatest challenge — and one with profound potential and rewards — is to align and synchronize our ecological and economic practices. The current economic practices still assume that we can make our problems exterior to our economy. The accounting idea of “externalities” has infected our imagination, and caused untold damage. The most profound effect of the globalized era is the realization that there is no exterior to our economy or ecology. Our ambition with In Good We Trust is to demonstrate new ways of understanding, modeling, and visualizing our market activities to reflect a more innovative, holistic and comprehensive approach.

ENERGY

To understand the world (and its motivations and operations), think of it thermodynamically — 7 billion people consuming calories, expending energy, exerting forces, creating actions — with equal and opposite reactions. We have operated mostly as if our sources of energy were limitless, and their consumption without consequence.

Not surprising, since we have made the mechanics of energy largely invisible, effectively hiding the fact that an internal combustion engine is like driving a continuous explosion. Imagine a freeway as a river of fire, then ask yourself if there might not be some consequences.

More and more we collectively understand that Energy and its economy are radically important to our well being, our geopolitics and our future. Our decisions about energy interact with, and in some cases set the agenda for almost everything else we do — energy problems are also technology, health, economy, environment, education, and habitat problems. In fact, it was this insight that led us to our thematic approach for In Good We Trust.

CAN WE ESCAPE THE BINARY OPPOSITIONS OF FREE MARKET VS. REGULATION, CAPITALISM VS. SOCIALISM, AND INSTEAD DEVELOP DYNAMIC SYSTEMS THAT EMBRACE THE FULL POTENTIAL OF MARKET FORCES, PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS, AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SOCIAL ACTION?

CAN WE IMAGINE A REGULATORY SECTOR WITH THE DYNAMIC CAPACITY OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SECTOR?

CAN WE UNDERSTAND THE FULL ECOLOGICAL “COST” OF OUR ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, AND THE FULL ECONOMIC “VALUE” OF OUR ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS?

CAN WE RE-IMAGINE OUR PUBLIC SECTOR EXPENDITURES IN A MODEL THAT INCLUDES THE ASSET VALUE OF EDUCATIONAL, HEALTH CARE, CULTURAL AND INFRASTRUCTURAL INVESTMENTS?

HOW CAN WE CAPTURE THE SUN? HOW MUCH OF IT DO WE NEED TO CAPTURE? AND HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

HOW CAN WE USE THE EARTH ITSELF AS A SOURCE OF ENERGY?

IS THERE ENOUGH? HOW MUCH DO WE WASTE?

WHO IS DEFINING THE EDGE OF THE NEW ENERGY SCIENCE?


WHAT COULD A TIMELINE OF ENERGY FUTURES LOOK LIKE?
HEALTH

The principal discussion around health care — in both socialized and free market systems — has revolved around who will pay rather than the more fundamental question of what it is we are paying for? While the method of payment has been obsessively debated, the cultures, structures, and institutions of health care have remained largely impermeable to the processes of design. The discourse if you can call it that has been mired in finger pointing gridlock, reflecting an inability to understand and embrace a new distribution of knowledge and power that fundamentally changes the agency of the “patient” and the role of the medical and care giving system. Innovative and hyper-efficient new models developed to serve the poorest are challenging these brittle categories and demonstrating the economic and human potential of thinking of the caring experience as a process open to innovation and design.

It was Jaime Lerner, the long term Mayor of Curitiba, Brazil, who first explained to us that solving problems in the urban context could not be done in isolation, that a public transportation problem is also an energy problem, an economic problem, and a health problem. This holistic, systems thinking opens the discussion for a new approach. In Good We Trust will explore new distributed and collective innovations in health care that empower citizens, enhance human dignity, acknowledge death as part of life, and explore the full dynamic range of preventative, traditional, cultural and technological practices. In some cases, innovation involves getting back to traditional methods, and cultural practices in balance with life and natural systems.

ENVIRONMENT

In the environmental movement, since the appearance in 1962 of Rachel Carson’s profoundly influential “Silent Spring”, we have experienced over forty years of “going negative” — with disastrous results. Defining our future in negative terms — “give up this” and “don’t do that” and “sacrifice” — has been comprehensively rejected by the global population. Going backwards is not the answer. The strident tone has worked to raise awareness, mobilized a massive movement that is applying pressure for change, but has not yet fundamentally changed the way we live.

We have learned that the potential for Massive Change lies in our creativity — our ability to collectively re-imagine and reinvent the ways we do almost everything. But reinventing is not enough. The new solutions must be ecologically sound, and systematically conceived, but more importantly, they must be profoundly thrilling. Only a sexy, beautiful, exciting new approach will have any hope of dislodging the entrenched practice. Everywhere, artists and scientists, ecologists and technologists, designers and developers are collaborating to develop cool new ways of living in sympathy and harmony with the ecologies that support and sustain us. Our ambition with In Good We Trust is to engage and inspire our partners and participants in developing new equations for living that don’t steal from our children, or leave for them a toxic legacy.

CAN WE CHANGE THE DIALOGUE FROM NO YOU CAN’T TO YES WE CAN, FROM BACKWARDS TO FORWARDS? WHO IS IMAGINING A WORLD OF ABUNDANCE AND EQUITY, IN HARMONY WITH ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS? HOW MANY IS TOO MANY? IS THERE AN UPPER THRESHOLD FOR HUMAN POPULATION THAT WE SHOULD COLLECTIVELY UNDERSTAND, ACKNOWLEDGE AND REGULATE? WHERE ARE THE BIG ECOLOGICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND THE QUICK WINS? WHAT SHOULD WE DO FIRST?

HOW WILL WE FEED THE COMING BILLIONS?
CAN WE DEFINE HEALTH IN TERMS OF HAPPINESS?
CAN WE IMAGINE A NEW BOUNDARY OF “SELF,” AND A MORE COMPLEX UNDERSTANDING OF “HEALTHY” THAT INCORPORATES THE ECOLOGY THAT SUSTAINS US? IS LIVING LONGER OUR MEASURE OF SUCCESS?
CAN WE QUANTIFY THE CARING ECONOMY?
WHAT ARE THE ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ACCESS TO LONGEVITY?
HOW DO WE PLAN CIVIC LIFE TO ACCOMMODATE THE ELDERLY BOOMERS? WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC FUTURE OF RETIREMENT?
ARE THERE TECHNICAL AND ETHICAL LIMITS TO MEDICAL INTERVENTION?
TECHNOLOGY

Many of the challenges we face as a global society are problems of success not failure. Consider the technology of the automobile — perhaps the most “successful” design in human history, that over the course of the last hundred years spread to practically every culture and territory on the planet. Without the global culture of the automobile industry, would we be challenged by ever increasing air pollution or surging obesity rates?

We would likely not face the environmental crisis we confront today if we had not successfully designed the technologies of agriculture and medicine that together doubled global life expectancy. Without the successful technologies we now take for granted in our modern world, technologies that helped us beat back hunger, disease and ignorance, global population would likely still number around a billion, a number the ecology could easily absorb. So, how can we imagine technology playing a role in solving our global challenges without generating even more problematic unintended consequences for our future?

WE ARE IN CONSTANT INQUIRY.

HOW WILL WE CHANGE BEHAVIOR?
WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM INDIGENOUS PRACTICES?
WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM HISTORY?
WHERE IS THE SMART MONEY?
WHAT ARE THE NEW ECONOMIC MODELS?
WHAT ROLE WILL CHILDREN PLAY?
WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE OLD GUARD?
WHO ARE THE LEADERS?
AND WHO IS FUNDING LEADERSHIP?
WHO IS MAKING IT EASY?
WHO SAW THIS COMING?
WHO IS THINKING LONG TERM?
HOW CAN WE PARTICIPATE?
WHAT CAN I DO TODAY?
WHAT ORGANIZATIONS CAN I JOIN?
WHAT IS SIMPLE CHEAP AND EASY?
WHO IS INSPIRATIONAL?
WHAT IS THE NEW PARADIGM?
HOW BIG IS THIS BUSINESS?
WHO IS ASKING THE TOUGHEST QUESTIONS?
WHO IS GENERATING PRESSURE FOR CHANGE?

HOW DO WE DEVELOP SELF-CorrectING TECHNOLOGICAL PATHWAYS?
CAN WE IMAGINE SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGIES?
WHAT SIMPLE TECHNOLOGIES ARE WE LOSING IN OUR RUSH FOR THE NOVEL AND SPECTACULAR?
HOW DO WE OPEN THE INTERFACE OF INVENTION AND DISTRIBUTE POSSIBILITY?
THE MODEL FOR IN GOOD WE TRUST

In Massive Change we met a man named Stewart Brand. He told us, “If people think things are bad and getting worse, they behave selfishly, they close the borders, they circle the wagons, they do exactly what we don’t want. On the other hand, when they see that we are investing in our community, they want to be part of it, they open up.”

So it is important for people to know what is actually going on. The way that we began to think about this is a kind of format. And we realized that there’s actually a very simple diagram.

PROOF

Visualizes a global movement of innovation already happening

PROOF

Our approach is to show you 50 people in each one of the themes who are changing the world. You will meet 50 people who are transforming the way we do things. You will have no doubt that this is under way. We’re going to introduce you to extraordinary people and show you what they are doing.

POSSIBILITY

We want the people of Denver, the people of Colorado, and the people of the Americas to collaborate on new concepts and new possibilities.

What if we could launch projects from Denver that would radically change the world? What if Denver and the people who make this place could be part of strapping a rocket sled to these new possibilities? Could we find the kinds of projects that could really change the agenda? We started to try to find the people who are doing these things and looking for the possible projects that we might launch.

POSSIBILITY

Provides a launch platform for global change
“EVERYWHERE I GO I SAY ‘YOU GOTTA COME TO DENVER’.”

When we show people what we are doing here, consistently, almost to a person, people say “Oh my goodness, we have to go to Denver, how do we do this.” It has been an extraordinary experience over the last few months as we have focused on finding the extraordinary people to be part of this.

It is an unorthodox list, of course. One of the things we are focusing on is the notion of “Artscientist.” There is a great book called “ArtScience” that describes how art and science diverged and developed their own specialized cultures and languages, but are now reunifying to create a new kind of dialog. If you think about design, everything we do must be about both art and science. It must be about making things beautiful and compelling, but it also must stand on a foundation of innovation and technology.
WHAT AM I GOING TO EXPERIENCE?

LIVE LECTURES
A live lecture series at Denver's cultural institutions and performance theaters that are connected to other halls across the Americas. People from all over could actually experience what's going on in Denver, be a part of it, ask questions and really be connected to the extraordinary people and developments at In Good We Trust.

BYOB & B
A concept called Bring Your Own Best and Brightest, where countries from across the Americas would send their best and brightest people to Denver to take part in debates, dialogues, presentations and collaborations.
WHAT AM I GOING TO EXPERIENCE?

CENTRAL EXHIBITION
The central exhibition will be an immersive experience, engaging all the senses and stimulating ideas and action. We will use physical objects, images, cinema, sound, models, interactive displays, digital interfaces and any other media that make the exhibit as compelling as possible. Many of the ideas are not physically manifested, so a challenge will be to make the invisible visible so that people walk away with a real understanding.

WORLD CAFÉ JAM
A café where ideas are the primary stimulant; the public interacts with and engages innovators and change-makers in a series of public workshops.
WHAT AM I GOING TO EXPERIENCE?

DEMOS + Launches
Innovators will be invited to launch and demonstrate new ideas and technologies at In Good We Trust to break the boundaries of typical sector-specific launch venues. The public will be asked to engage the thinking and see the cross-pollination of possibilities.

TOURS + Educational Programming
The focus will be on immersive learning. Education will be organized around the seven themes with summer camps and other planned programs. Tours are to be interactive and non-linear, with the goal of engaging the public to action.
WHAT AM I GOING TO EXPERIENCE?

GOOD WE TRUST
EDUCATION PRIZE

PRIZES
Prizes can be effective in mobilizing innovation. The In Good We Trust prizes are awarded to the world leading thinkers who bring the most relevant and exciting ideas to each of the seven categories. This would also be a high-profile venue to award other prizes that share similar aspirations, such as the Buckminster Fuller Challenge prize.

DENVER DIALOGUES
Roundtables where citizens of Denver and innovators discuss the potential for the application of new ideas in the Denver area. People from other cities across the Americas could contribute their best ideas from their respective cities.
WHAT AM I GOING TO EXPERIENCE?

THIS YEAR’S KINDERGARTENER WILL GRADUATE WITH A MILLION TIMES THE CAPACITY TO MOVE INFORMATION AND SHAPE THEIR WORLD.

LOCAL AND HEMISPHERIC PARTNERSHIPS
In Good We Trust will partner with cultural institutions in Denver and across the Americas to find places where ideas and programs intersect. This could engage a whole new audience at a very different level, one that is relevant to local cultural experiences.

PARTIES WITH PURPOSE
A toolkit that allows people from far and wide to engage with In Good We Trust wherever they are by throwing a party with a purpose. The idea is to share the celebration and to help people get things done while having fun.
WHAT AM I GOING TO EXPERIENCE?

BE POSSIBILITY
The Power of people to deliver greater good.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

THE CITY

Denver has always been a city of innovation and a frontier for bold ideas. The entire city space will be activated, with the central exhibition space as its centre. People will be able to take part in IGWT across Denver, engaging the ideas and possibilities in unusual ways and unexpected places.
WHAT AM I GOING TO EXPERIENCE?

7 THETAMIC EXPERIENCES SYNTHESIZED BY 7 EXHIBITIONS ACTIVATED THROUGH 7 WEEKS OF EVENTS THAT LAUNCH 7 POSSIBILITIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY
AUDIENCE = PARTICIPANTS

Obama proved this more than anybody else. If you can give people a way to do it, they’re happy to get in there and do it. We want to activate, as much as possible, the entire community.

One of the things we consistently do in our work is to constantly foreground what we are actually trying to do. So often we start trying to do something and then

“"If people come to the show and consume it in a passive way, and say “cool” and walk away and go home and are not woken up to these new possibilities, we will count that as a failure.”

make a task list. We want to do an exhibition, so we make a list of tasks to do the exhibition and before long we’ve forgotten what we actually wanted to do in the world. With In Good We Trust, our objective is to change the way we live. So we are designing this very deliberately to be a transformative engagement; one that is full of possibilities.

It’s not about the show and an audience. It is all about participation. It’s about collaborating and collectively producing this new thing. And no one knows how to do that. We are figuring it out as we go.

If people come to the show and consume it in a passive way, and say “cool” and walk away and go home and are not woken up to these new possibilities, we will count that as a failure.

If we are going to do this – to inspire, to allow people to actually do things – we need points of entry. This is not about showing people things and then saying, ok, that’s good enough. This is not just a process of display; it’s about committing to the audience as separate, passive consumer culture.

This is moving towards a new kind of dialogue and engagement. We don’t want anyone to get away without contributing. It’s a different kind of membership approach. We want to build a platform from which we can launch action.

THE KIND OF PEOPLE WE ARE LOOKING FOR: ADVENTURERS GAME-CHANGERS ENTREPRENEURS CHALLENGERS INNOVATORS ARTSCIENTISTS OPTIMISTS INTERDISCIPLINARIANS COLLABORATORS...
In Good We Trust Will Celebrate Innovators Empower Citizens Engage Participants Build Experiences Connect Networks Accelerate a Movement Launch Possibilities.

What’s Possible?

Join the Movement, Contribute, Nominate, Collaborate, and Innovate!

In Good We Trust Denver Biennial of the Americas

Be Possible.

www.ingoodwetrust2010.com