

BRIGHTON PIER

المنظمة العالمية لجمعيات التصميم التخطيطي

國際平面設計社團協會

Интернациональный Консилиум Ассоциации Графического Дизайна

המועצה הבינלאומית של אגודות המעצבים הגרפיים

इन्टरनाशनल कौन्सिल ओफ ग्राफिक डिजाइन असोसिएशन्स

國際グラフィックデザイン協会協議会

세계그래픽디자인단체협의회

آئین بین المللی جماعت طراحان گرافیک

icograda®

07 Brighton BoardMessage

Issue 07 · Volume 2001/2003 · September 2003

Shaping History

BY ROBERT L. PETERS, PRESIDENT ICOGRADA, 2001-2003

Today is the tomorrow we dreamed of yesterday. Today is also the past we'll remember in the future – perhaps with nostalgia, perhaps with remorse. Design shapes most of our modern experience – though our profession is only beginning to understand the significant role we play in forming the world around us. The meaning of history is rarely apparent to those who shape it.

Design gives form to dreams. Need is the father of thought, necessity the mother of invention. In response to need, designers have since earliest times given shape to the tools, environments and messages and that define human existence – notably, still a work in progress. Konrad Lorenz said: "I've found the link between apes and civilised men – it's us." Designers also act as surrogate dreamers, creators of desire, propagators and propagandists – the latter resonating with George Orwell's assertion: "All art is propaganda."

We reap what we sow. Communication informs. Information empowers. Power brings action. Marshall McLuhan noted: "First we shape the world around us; then it shapes us." Is our profession even aware of the complex force we exert on aesthetic, technological, social, economic and political fronts? Are we working in a visionary manner? Can we help create a more equitable, balanced and sustainable future for all humankind?

We live in stories. The Maori say, "We walk backwards into the future," recognising that footprints inform navigation and forward progress. It takes all sorts to make the world – knowing the narratives of others paves paths to better understanding. Knowing our own past allows us to celebrate achievements, learn from our foibles, redress omissions and course-correct as necessary. Seeing is believing. History is valuable, yet often a contentious issue. Oliver Wendell Holmes stated: "A page of history is worth a volume of logic." Napoleon called

history: "A set of lies agreed upon." Jean-Henri Fabre quipped: "History records the names of royal bastards, but it cannot tell us the origin of wheat." H. G. Wells cautioned: "History is a race between education and catastrophe." A Portuguese proverb states: "What was hard to bear is sweet to remember."

Memory is the treasury and guardian of all things. This truism of Cicero applies equally well to history. Without an archival record and chronicle, memories can falter, documents disappear and decades go missing. Oral history is subject to opinion and selective omissions, and *prima facie* assumptions provide shaky foundations. Icograda's goal to establish an anthropology of graphic design – and thereby an in-depth understanding of our profession's interaction with economies, political processes and social development – has led to a strategic liaison with the University of Brighton regarding the location, classification, cataloguing and further development of the Icograda Archive, in concert with the existing Design History Research Centre Archives.

Tempus fugit. Beginning in Johannesburg (11 September 2001) the 750 days of this term have been a blur of activity for Icograda and its hard-working board – events in Melbourne, Vancouver, Brno, Beijing/Shanghai/Taipei, Barcelona, Ahmedabad and Brighton culminate at the xx Icograda Congress and General Assembly in Nagoya. Icograda has dramatically expanded its community (China and India alone represent 40% of the world population), furthered its online networks, and advanced its sharing of information. I thank each one in the worldwide family of Icograda who has shared wisdom, energy, friendship and support. Have we made a positive difference together in the past two years? Time will tell. ●



Robert L. Peters, President Icograda 2001-2003

CONTENTS

- 1 Shaping History
- 2 From Around the World
- 3 Icograda Board Meeting, Brighton
- 4 IEN Conference and Assembly
- 6 Icograda Archive Compiled in Brighton, U.K.
- 8 If There Were no Standards...
- 11 Considering Closer Collaboration
- 14 International Graphic Design Fair
- 15 Calendar of Events