

To be is to do

Identity/Integrity. For an event-filled week in June, the Czech city of Brno became the world capital for visual communication. In concert with the 20th Brno Biennial, local hosts and Icograda organised a two day 'Identity/Integrity' Conference, an Icograda Regional Meeting (with delegates from 30 countries) and the inauguration of the *Icograda Education Network* (with educators from 26 countries). In addition, an historic joint meeting of the entire boards of Icograda, ICSD and IPI took place. Many parallel exhibits and design events contributed to the ambiance.

Shaping the future. Many issues crowd today's visual communication landscape. The world is saturated with identities, brands, signs, messages and media – almost all shaped by designers. Transnational corporations with powerful brands overwhelm local industries. We all suffer from information overload. Individuals resent being singled out as targets of aggressive marketing. Brand fatigue is increasingly expressed through anti-corporate campaigns and 'culture jamming.'

Integrating new values. Rapid changes in the world's social, cultural and economic structures demand new approaches. In this age of multinational marketing and global interdependence, designers are urged to re-evaluate their role in shaping the future of the communities in which they practice. Are we working with respect to diverse cultures and vernacular? Can designers still make useful contributions to humankind's collective visual vocabulary? How do designers best serve clients as well as clients' clients?

Power and responsibility. Designers have significant power in the world today. We bear responsibility for how things are consumed, for how people are depicted, for how media is deployed, and for how messages are composed. We recognise that it is the role of design to help transform the future. Design can be a significant agent of change.

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

New approaches. The practice of past decades to homogenise, monopolise and dominate markets is being re-examined. There are calls for design to become more holistic, inclusive, sensitive, eclectic and empowering. Icograda's aims for the 'Identity/Integrity' Conference in Brno were to bring new perspectives to Corporate Identity – to define new approaches and to examine new ways to shape the future. The generous sharing of best practices, extension of professional expertise and the enriched dialogue that resulted are testament to successful results.

Common beginnings. Icograda and the Brno Biennial both were born at a time of great growth for graphic design. The year 1963 was a time of post-war reconstruction, a time in which socio-economic and political boundaries were being re-entrenched. The culture of consumption was rapidly growing on one hand – in direct contrast to restrictive spheres of influence and collectivism. Resolve to find new, humane solutions existed worldwide. In the past 39 years, both Icograda and the Brno Biennial have become vehicles for ideas, visual images, information and individuals to cross otherwise impenetrable borders. Both have created connections and community.

East meets West. We achieved our goal of situating Brno at an intersection of Identity/Integrity channels – Corporate Identity, Cultural Identity and Personal Identity. Brno became the crossroads between East and West, as well as a locus for the international Icograda 'family gathering' of practitioners, educators, students and design associations. We will long remember the encounters and discourse enjoyed in this special place. ●



Icograda President Robert L. Peters

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