

COMPETE *Plus*

If you want the rainbow, you have
put up with the rain

By Vatsal Patel, Semester 5, USLM

UID FACULTY AT THE BARREIRA ART + DESIGN COLLEGE, SPAIN.

- By Anahita Suri, Assistant Professor, School of Fashion Design, UID and Hariesh K. Sankaran, Associate Director, School of Interior & Furniture Design, UID.

On September 10 & 11, 2020, Hariesh K. Sankaran, Associate Director of School of Interior & Furniture Design & Anahita Suri, Assistant Professor of School of Fashion Design, presented their research papers at the Design Challenges conference at the Barreira Art + Design College in Valencia, Spain.

The Official Center for Higher Studies Barreira Art + Design is a center specialized in artistic education with more than 60 years of experience in training. The Design Challenges conference was part of the International Conference of Creativity & Innovation in Design which brought together designers, researchers, thinkers, artists, educators and entrepreneurs from 11 countries, including Spain, Portugal, Germany, Switzerland, Mexico, United Kingdom, etc. Owing to the current global situation of Covid 19, the conference was held in a hybrid modality, with some presentations in person and some through video conference. The conference saw presentations on varied topics like Design Pedagogy, Studies in Design & Society, Educational Innovation in Artistic Matters, Design Sustainability & Social Responsibility and Entrepreneurial Experiences in Art & Design.

Participation in the conference was a great opportunity for the faculties of UID to present their research at a global platform. It also provided interaction and engagement with other presenters and created awareness on other challenges that designers are facing and addressing the world over. The publication is in process.

1. Impact of Mindful Space Design on Social Well Being by Hariesh K. Sankaran.

Hariesh K. Sankaran is an architect, product designer, urbanist, and the Associate Director at the School of Interior and Furniture Design, UID. His practice focuses on architecture, interiors, furniture & product and is based in Chennai. Over the period of years, his firm has worked on residential (architecture & interiors), retail branding, commercial complexes, office buildings, farmhouses, resorts, mixed residential use, apartments and hospitality projects. A key program of his practice has been aligned to enact effective altruism, where for every 5 projects he undertakes in the studio, he makes sure to do one project pro-bono for a family in an economically weaker community. Consequently, the studio has developed a reputation for working on Micro-housing projects, working within tight sites, and economic constraints.

His paper was based on his practice-based design research. The paper discusses his approach in understanding present behaviors, future probing and possible germination of healthy habits leading to designing lasting memories. The paper discusses three case studies and evolves a framework to create new environments moving towards an overall social upliftment and wellbeing.

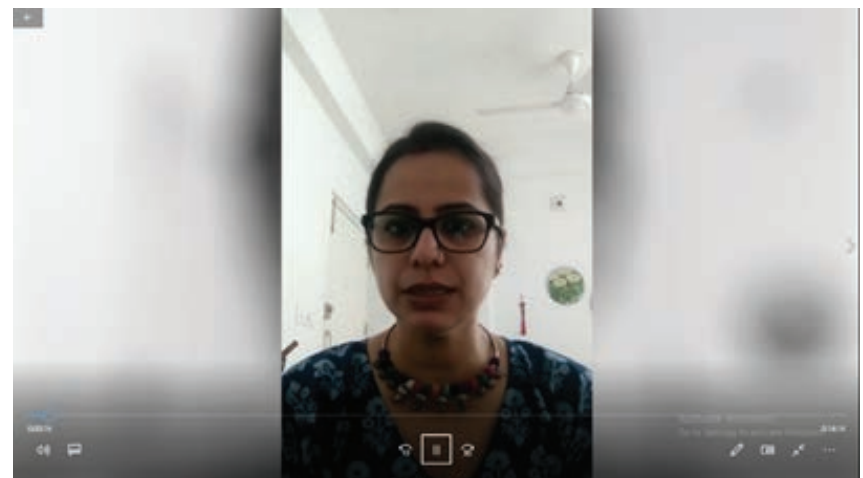


Screenshot from the presentation. Picture Credit: Hariesh K. Sankaran.

2. Designers as Social Activists in the Context of Craft Clusters in India by Anahita Suri.

Anahita Suri is a fashion designer, educator and researcher. In her decade long academic experience, she has worked at grass root level with various craft clusters leading to an interest in craft design. Her research focuses on Indian crafts as well as history, identity & culture of clothing in the contemporary world. She is an Assistant Professor at the School of Fashion Design, UID.

This paper focuses on the current challenges in the craft sector in India, the role of the Government, educational institutes and designers to revive these traditional handlooms and handicrafts through design intervention and product diversification and thus, empower the craftsmen through a symbiotic work modality that would in turn lead to ethical and environmental sustainability.



Screenshot from the presentation. Picture Credit: Anahita Suri.

REMOTE AREAS

Some crafts are practiced by tribal communities that live in regions with poor or no accessibility. Various Government efforts have been made to build road, rail access to these regions, get these products out in the national market and create visibility for the same. Examples are *Dongria Kondh* embroidery from Niyangiri Hills, *Toda* embroidery from Nilgiri Hills, *Longpi* pottery from Manipur, Cane and Bamboo crafts from North East India, *Lepcha* weave from Sikkim, etc.



Fig 1: Dongria Kondh Shawl from Niyangiri Hills, Odisha. Image Credit: www.tribeoftextiles.com



Fig 2: Longpi Pottery from Manipur. Image Credit: www.thuantscraft.wordpress.com

Screenshot from the presentation. Picture Credit: Anahita Suri.

MENSTRUATING IS NOT A SIN

- By Kishita Gupta, Batch 2017-22, UWSL
Student Research Associate, UWSL Centre for Women & Children

“Stop sacrificing a women’s self – esteem at the Alter of Menstrual Myths”

In this modern era where science has done wonders and where the world talks about women empowerment, yet a woman has to face a lot of socio-cultural taboo attached with a natural process. Menstruation is the natural phenomenon of the reproductive cycle. It is a phenomenon unique to girls. However, there have always existed various taboos and myths that tend to exclude women from many aspects of socio-cultural life. Yet it is depicted by the society as if a woman has done some sin after getting her regular period cycle.

In India, a mere mention of menstruation is considered as a taboo. Taboos are formed and established in a particular civilization by the ever-lasting thoughts and beliefs over a particular era. They become so embedded in our collective psyche that we refuse to let go of them even when the circumstances in which they originated change. An approach from the socio-cultural perspective shows that in the earlier times those taboos had logical reasoning, however, with the growing times, those reasons converted into rules made for a menstruating woman in the name of religion and culture.

There was a time when there were no proper hygienic means and which is why a woman was asked to take rest during the menstrual days and was kept away from the kitchen and the temples. However, now this has been largely misinterpreted by society as we can see from the case of Sabarimala Temple. In some areas, a woman in periods is not allowed to take a bath even now. Now let’s associate this with logical reasoning. Water is the most common medium of purification. In those times, women used to go directly to the water bodies to take a bath.

The key concern was to protect the water bodies, which is considered to be a Hindu Deity, from the pollution generated if a menstruating women bath in it. This highlights the possible reason why menstruating women were not allowed to take a bath especially for the first few days of their menstrual period.

Such taboos related to menstruation present in many societies impact a girl’s and women’s emotional state, mentality, lifestyle and most importantly her health. A report by the NGO, Dasra, published in 2014 suggests that almost 23 million girls drop out of school every year when they start menstruating due to lack of proper facilities such as lack of sanitary napkins, proper functional toilets and low awareness about what menstruation is. Further, a large number of women within rural India generally resort to using ashes, newspapers, dried leaves and husk sand which helps in absorption. Poor protection and inadequate laundry facilities may increase vulnerability to infection. Stigmas around menstruations can have significant implications for their mental health.

While menstruation has been made a ‘taboo’ and is called dirty, I feel that it is a great blessing. Nature has blessed us women with the chance to honour our emotional, sexual, physical and mental needs every month. So it’s time to remove all the superstitions attached with a natural process and honour the women in her periods rather than discarding her socially, culturally and religiously.



RED FOR INTERVIEW

- By Kunj Ganatra, Faculty, UWSB

Every year in September, UWSB gets involved with lots of pre placement activities. Right from acquiring hard skills and remembering various jargons that can help ace the campus placements, there are a few soft skills which although silent carries a lot of weight if executed in right way.

Many students underestimate the power of colors at job interviews. Of course the age old blue and grey and black suits play the perfect role and apply to all job types. The new age HR enthusiasts have often shared that a hint of pop colour adds grace and shows a bit of the candidate's personality which makes it easy for them during selection process. For example, a red tie or red socks often show confidence and adds in to the way the students/fresher/ candidate carries themselves.

A pastel yellow or lavender shirt often adds a fresh touch and shows a friendly nature in the candidate. In certain sales job, a friendly or extrovert nature is supposed to help enhance your skills at your workplace. A black is often classic and never goes wrong but it projects a dominance or dominating nature in a human. This is often why only candidates at managerial positions and above prefer to wear black at interviews. It helps them in acing the leadership position. Also a classic beige suit with a pristine white shirt helps perform well at the interview by creating a powerful personality as a candidate.



Have you ever been to a readymade garment store and counted the number of pinks or reds or greens available in formal wear shirts? All these three will make 25% of the stock as compared to the whites and blues which will be about 70% and the rest will be a few other shades.

Often a candidate should dress up according to the industry they are interviewing for. If they are going for an interview in an entertainment sector, anything colorful and vibrant will be considered positive. It reflects the nature and enthusiasm in the candidate. The same may not work if you are going for banking job interview.

Many corporates have uniforms for their employees at all levels, including polo tees and it doesn't really matter to them what color of clothes the candidate is wearing but it certainly tells a lot about the candidate's personality. An HR manager /interviewer will take about 7 seconds to scan through your resume and about 60 seconds to scan you from the way you dress up and shake hands. A fairly subtle shade of orange or maroon can also turn all heads and bring all the attention on you. The next step is to make sure you speak the right set of words to create a pleasing and winning performance.



TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL ONLINE LEARNING

- By Riva Patel, Adjunct Professor, USLM

Learning remotely during lockdown can be draining and online classes come with their own set of challenges. If you prepare well, it is actually much easier than you would think – all your classes are recorded, you don't have to travel to campus, the teacher is always one chat away and pants are always optional!

Here are a few key areas to consider to make sure you get the most value out of your next class.

SELF CARE

A healthy mind and body is important to your successful learning experience. Convey to your teacher for your learning needs. There are always flexible ways of participating in the class. And don't forget to move – get up, walk around, exercise if you can. There are plenty of apps that remind you to schedule your distractions. Mostly importantly, maintain healthy sleeping and eating habits.

SET DAILY GOALS FOR STUDYING

Decide what you hope to accomplish in your course each day. The goal should be specific and you should discipline yourself to actually follow through. Minimize distractions in your environment – both physical and digital like closing web browsers not relevant to learning or switching off the TV. This will help with motivation and beat procrastination.

CREATE A REGULAR STUDY SPACE

Set up a dedicated space for you to attend classes. It is easier to recall details if you are in the same space where you originally learned it. Make it separate from your bed or sofa – set a clear distinction between the space you study where you take breaks. This will also increase your productivity as it will establish a routine. It is important to distinguish what type of environment will work best for you which will help you keep your books, syllabi, forms, assignments etc. organised.

DO ONE THING AT A TIME

Once you've established your routine, think about how and when you would like to accomplish your work. Multi-tasking is less productive when you don't have a plan.

Researchers from Stanford University found that "People who are regularly bombarded with several streams of electronic information cannot pay attention, recall information, or switch from one job to another as well as those who complete one task at a time."

ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE

Participate in your online class. It is very easy to stay on mute, but involve yourself in class discussions and engage with fellow classmates. Focus on what other students are saying and have active debates. Also, taking notes during class will promote active learning and extend your attention span. It is always a good strategy to internalize knowledge. Be proactive in seeking your classmate's or teacher's help – don't wait until the last minute to clear doubts about the assignment or the course.

COLLABORATE AND LEVERAGE YOUR NETWORK

If you're having trouble with all (or any) of the above, pair up with a friend as an accountability partner! Your peers are the most valuable resource you have – from writing assignments, prepping for exams or just clarifying certain concepts you wouldn't want to ask your teacher. Be proactive and create a virtual study group. Having a supportive online community will be wonderful in the current environment of social isolation.

Online classes pose a unique challenge, albeit only if you are not prepared. If you focus on developing skills for effective learning, you will find that online classes are an excellent way to balance your domestic commitments and studies. The above points are only a starting point, but it is essential for you to figure out what works best for you.



THE 4:30PM CLUB

- By Ackshaj Anand, Semester 3, Animation and Motion Graphics, School of Communication Design, UID

A virtual bonfire for passionate students

This new life we've become accustomed to is leading everyone to think of all sorts of ways to recreate real-life interactions while sitting in front of a screen. As designers, and especially in our class of animation students, we're more than just blocks and names on a screen. We're a community that loves to share experiences, feelings and inspiration with each other. Every class across semesters has a sea of modules washing upon their shores each week, but we should look forward to diving into the waters past these dreaded deadlines and assignments. The 4:30PM club is the child of this idea, allowing us Animation students to be as close and connected as possible despite the ravine created by the pandemic. There's always something exciting in store every other day, from inspirational illustrations to breathtaking films, abound with hearty discussions.

The connection between a student and teacher goes beyond lectures and attendance. The best class environment is one where the ice has been broken and we're free to share and know things about each other as if we're all at the same level. Discord participation has been quintessential to this development. We have channels and forums for everything from recipes and music to pets and games. Sometimes students even do a live-stream of their work in progress, and any newcomer to a particular software can take away some tips and tricks. It's this very atmosphere that's allowed our monochrome classroom days to be painted with colours, giving birth to a wholesome club.



Illustration by Nirvaan Gangoly, Sem 3

Faculty members Rohit Karandadi and Supriya Tirkey came up with the idea, inspired by the interactions back in their college days. Thanks to them, the forty-one of us are able to experience the 4:30PM Club, consisting of Film Screenings, Sketching Sessions and Animation Appreciation. Needless to say, we begin at 4:30PM. The first part of the club was born out of a desire for everyone to understand Film Language and get in the habit of analyzing film as a medium of communication. It began soon after the Film Language and Appreciation module as student-run streaming and discussion sessions. Films of various genres, time periods and languages were collected from the students and twice a week, mostly towards the weekend, we would all gather on Discord and watch a randomly picked feature from the list. This is an entirely different experience compared to watching it alone, as now we have a platform for discussions where everyone adds their own views and points into the blend. In one instance, we watched *Coherence* (2013) and it was so mind-boggling that we spent over an hour trying to decode the complex movie together. We relished an assortment of films over the days, animated and live-action both, learning about how things like lighting and composition played key roles in different scenes.

Sprouting from this comes Animation Appreciation. In this, we meet up and view a plethora of animation shorts from various animation artists and directors across the world, ranging from music videos to short films. This is particularly enriching for us because we get to explore fantastic creations which we probably never even thought could exist. We discuss what we liked or didn't like after it's screened, from the story to the concept and the animation. Things like projector-based animation and sand animation often take us by surprise and it's always a delight to doodle side-by-side. We look forward to this every Wednesday.



Illustration by Rohit Karandadi, Faculty.

GRATEFUL TO THE DOCTORS

- By Nishtha Agrawal, Assistant Professor of Law, UWSL

Respect the white coat that all doctors wear;
Respect the stethoscope with which they hear;
Respect the prescriptions they write and tear;
Respect all doctors for they truly care!

To treat diseases, some doctors do dare;
They try their best for all patients to fare;
Some of them are dozens, pioneers rare;
Some do miraculous feats, at which all stare!

Wish doctors all, 'A Happy Doctors Day!'
Thank them for their hard work and pray today;
Remember, they keep diseases at bay;
Most doctors do their jobs in a humane way!

'Happy Doctor's Day



TEACHERS DAY: A DAY FOR REFLECTION AND SELECTION

- By Bhupinder Arora, Assistant Professor, UWSB

Every year, all educational institutions celebrate Teachers' Day on 5th September in India to mark the birthday of the nation's first President, scholar, philosopher and Bharat Ratna awardee, Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, who was born on this day in 1888. It is a day when students pay respect to their teachers by wishing them and by sending messages to them expressing their gratitude in shaping their lives. However, the passing of this day recently made me think of my role as a teacher, which requires being honest and sincere when sharing feedback with ones students. However, in my experience of interacting with students, I realised that they sometimes feel offended when such feedback is shared. Students judge teachers on the basis of how friendly they are rather than how sincere and concerned they are about their learning and success.

As a teacher, impression management in the eyes of students has become of primary importance instead of their learning. If we go back in history, if the great guru Chanakya would have indulged in such sycophancy, he would have happily stayed back in the Darbar of King Dhana Nanda of the Nanda dynasty. He would not have taken the pain to establish his protégé Chandragupta Maurya on the throne. Despite the humiliation and rejection that he had to face, he did not give up on saving the nation which he believed to be the responsibility of a teacher. Making a nation is the responsibility of a teacher and it is up to us to decide whether we want to see the small picture of our role or a larger view of a great responsibility.



SADAK 2 AND 'NEPOTISM'

- By Kavisha R. Chokshi, Semester 5, USLM

NEPOTISM seems to be a trending word, right? It's a raging debate on social media, where people have suddenly woken up to the injustice done in Bollywood. Apparently, all the star kids get more opportunities than "outsiders".

The main reason behind this new raging topic is Sushant Singh Rajput's "death by suicide".

Days after the incident, the trailer of movie "Sadak 2" turned out to be the most disliked video on YouTube. The movie was directed by Mahesh Bhatt, whose name cropped up in the case. With 95% dislikes, the video got comments like, "Guys, let's make this trailer the most disliked trailer in History of YouTube, let's not support nepotism....!" and "I am only here to dislike this trailer". But how far are such comments right?

Any talent ignored or suppressed is upsetting and also ceases the art from taking its true form. But things are not divided in black and white. Directors and producers, who invest an ample amount of time and wealth, have a right to choose people who'll work for them. At the end, making movies is not a charity. Director and artistes make movies to earn money, name and fame; speaking in the most philosophical way, to convey their thoughts to people through movies.

Many actors already associated with the world of Bollywood are simply amazing. Sanjay Dutt is irreplaceable, Alia Bhatt is a spectacular actor onscreen, among others. In "Uda Punjab", "Dear Zindagi" and "Highway" her acting undoubtedly justified her character. Similarly, it was Pooja Bhatt in the original Sadak.

If we compare the last movie of Sushant Singh Rajput – "Dil Bechara" with that of Sadak 2, the latter's trailer is far better. "Dil Bechara" was more like a trend to be followed than a movie to be watched. Likewise, disliking Sadak 2 is a trend rather than a genuine opinion and a fight against nepotism.

I am not promoting the trailer, but Sadak 2's trailer is really worth watching. Before, raising one's voices, one should know how genuine the agitation is? Or what the thing is actually about. Nepotism is worst where powerful people force other directors or producers to choose certain people, but when a person makes choices on his/her own, it is completely their lookout.

It may also happen that the talented lot fails to get anything and mediocre reach the top by mere virtue of their status, position or contact. But let's face it. Is it only in Bollywood? No. it's a human nature that people whom one already knows is easier to trust. And when it comes to high budgets to the tune of hundreds of crores, people are less likely to take a chance. I am not saying that nepotism isn't worth fighting against, but facts must be in place first. One must know the extent of fighting.

GLIMPSES FROM MY JOURNEY

- By Hetvi Desai, Sem 5, USLM

Rivie at the Hoxon Hotel, Paris is a great new restaurant that opened in the summer of 2019. The restaurant is on the hotel terrace. The design is relaxing and fun. The dishes are intriguing and tasty, and they have a wonderful selection of cocktails and boutique beers. It is worth checking the place out for an evening drink.



CELEBRATING CRAFTS OF INDIA

By: Anahita Suri, Assistant Professor, School of Fashion Design, UID

As part of the Craft and Culture module, the students of Masters of Fashion Design, Semester III, studied the various crafts of India to identify the design language and develop an appreciation for the various raw materials, indigenous techniques, visual language and above all, the rich Indian heritage.

A show and tell session was organized at the end of inputs for each region of India- East, West, North, South- where the students actively participated by dressing up in apparel and accessories from various handlooms across India, to celebrate the richness of these textiles and understand their application into contemporary designs. The students collected textiles, apparel, furniture, décor items, etc. from their homes and wardrobes of their mothers and grandmothers, to identify and record various handloom and handicraft products.

Here are some pictures of students dressed up in handloom fabrics of different regions of India.



Students wearing hand crafted fabrics of North India like Banarasi brocade, Phulkari, Chikankari, etc. Picture Credit: Shivani Singh.



Students showcasing crafts of East India like Gamcha weave, Kantha embroidery, Tant weave and Shantiniketan leather. Picture Credit: Shivani Singh.



Celebrating crafts of Central and West India like Gota Patti embroidery, Bandhej, Lehariya, Meenakari, etc. Picture Credit: Shivani Singh.



Students dressed up in handlooms of South India like Mysore silk, Ikat, Kasavu. Picture credit: Shivani Singh.

These sessions were fun and interactive and proved to be an effective way of learning by observing and peer learning as well. The students used this opportunity to dress up and were eager to see what their peers were up to. As the subject faculty, I was pleasantly surprised by their enthusiasm reflected in them being on time for every class- dressed up at 9 am!



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