Experiential Design – Rethinking relations between people, objects and environments

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Future in motion: An intercultural collaboration to create interactive, playful, and inclusive social spaces

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• Abstract (300 words):
In this case study, intercultural design teams responded to a provocation to develop concepts for interactive, playful, and inclusive social spaces. In order to articulate their concepts to a wider audience, teammates collaboratively designed and produced video sketches to bring these imagined environments to life.

Working remotely, with members located in the Middle East and North America, some teams identified and designed for a singular space—for example, creating a safe and welcoming environment for conversations about world religions. Others selected what they determined to be parallel locations in both geographic regions (e.g. public community spaces on their academic campuses) in order to engage audiences in both
cultures and consider how they might respond to the same concept. Along these lines, another team created a concept of an interactive “constellation” that addresses the universality of aspirational thinking. Comprised of crowd-sourced life goals, this idea could be shared in any cultural setting, and the team’s video prototype demonstrates how it might work in Doha, Qatar and Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The authors introduce methods for intercultural team-building, design ideation and co-creation to encourage critical thinking about the social implications of space; designing for more inclusive interactions; using motion design as a UX prototyping tool; and developing intercultural competencies. Navigating differences in personal and cultural values was central not only to each team’s process, but also to their final outcomes.

Project outcomes reinforce the dynamic interplay between intercultural engagement, spatial interaction design, and the process of producing collaborative video as an ideation and prototyping tool for spatial and experiential design concepts. Moreover, the project proposes an approach for engaging designers in better understanding themselves and others, dealing constructively with conflict, and ultimately discussing and making design decisions based upon the value of diversity and inclusion.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

1. Kelly Murdoch-Kitt
   An Assistant Professor at the University of Michigan, Kelly Murdoch-Kitt is drawn to design through her keen interest in people, systems, and interpersonal interactions. She strives to create effective, socially responsible, and delightful concepts and solutions. Professor Murdoch-Kitt’s work and teaching integrate visual communication, interaction, user experience, and service design with behavior change and social engagement, drawing on her professional experience as a UX strategist in the San Francisco Bay Area.

   Her current research, in partnership with Prof. Denielle Emans of VCUArts Qatar, examines and develops methods and tools to promote effective intercultural design collaboration, and how related tangible activities and outcomes increase trust and commitment in digital interactions. In their international classroom collaborations, Murdoch-Kitt and Emans often use motion design as a collaborative tool for visualizing spatial and experiential concepts developed across international design teams.

   Murdoch-Kitt and Emans recently co-authored a case study about long-distance intercultural collaboration for the forthcoming Collaboration in Design Education
2. **Denielle Emans**

Denielle Emans is an Associate Professor of Graphic Design at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar) and a Ph.D. Candidate within the Centre for Communication and Social Change at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. She holds a Master’s degree in Graphic Design from North Carolina State University’s School of Design and a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. At VCUarts Qatar she has developed courses in design for social innovation, sustainability, and activism to encourage students to engage with creative action through various modes and mediums of visual communication.

Passionate about intercultural learning, visual storytelling, and empowering creative teams with design-based methods, Prof. Emans' recent research examines and develops methods and tools to promote effective intercultural design collaboration. She enjoys bringing these topics to life for her students through virtual interactions with Professor Kelly Murdoch-Kitt’s design classes at the University of Michigan’s Stamps School of Art and Design. In addition to co-authoring chapters for the Routledge Handbook of Sustainable Design and the Springer Handbook of Sustainability and Social Science Research, Emans and Murdoch-Kitt were jointly recognized by the Design Incubation Teaching Awards for their ongoing intercultural design collaborations in sustainability.