ONLINE EDUCATION: TEACHING IN A TIME OF CHANGE

• Paper / Proposal Title:

Cameras Wide Shut!

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• Abstract:

This article aims to tell about the transition of the Basic Design Course at Işık University’s Industrial Design undergraduate program into an online course from a studio-based course. As of March 2020, with the rapid increase of the Covid-19 epidemic in our country, new conditions for our current higher education system had started to develop. Within a few weeks, we started running our studio online as if being literally teleported to computer screens from the actual studio environment. It was sudden! It was unexpected! It was a paradigm shift! We both, as instructors and students, had our difficulties ahead. During the classes, students were not very willing to turn their cameras and microphones on, since it was stated by the university administration that there was no obligation for doing it so. In this regard, at first only few of them kept their cameras and microphones on. It was difficult for us to have a dialogue on a pitch-black virtual classroom screen, namely Blackboard, which only contained their names. We suddenly found ourselves at the state of losing the eye contact, the exchange of gestures, and mimics. Maybe those were the things that we took for granted in the conventional studio setting. Our students faced curfew restrictions due to their age. Being able to go out in a limited timeframe
was psychologically a difficult condition. In addition, it also made it difficult for them to supply materials for their studio work. So, as both parts we struggled in the beginning but then tried to find ways out to bring the vivid studio environment back. With this paper, we aim to discuss how we did this online as we tried to remind our students that they were not alone and isolated in their newly begun design journey. As designers, we always find a way out!

• Author(s) Biography:

Pınar Özemir

Pınar Özemir received her BA degree in Landscape Architecture (Istanbul University), MSc and PhD Degrees in Industrial Design (Istanbul Technical University). She was a visiting researcher at Sheffield Hallam University Art and Design Research Centre in 2012. She works as a full-time assistant professor at Istanbul Technical University Industrial Design Department and a part-time assistant professor at Işık University Industrial Design Department. She teaches Basic Design, Project and Visual Communication courses at undergraduate level and Visualization in Design Research at graduate level. Her research areas are foundational design education, design visualization and product semantics. As well as being an academician, she is personally interested in digital art phenomenon and practices digital art as an illustrator.

Ebru Erenler Polat

Ebru Erenler Polat was graduated from Anadolu University Industrial Design Department in 2018. After her graduation, she studied wearable technology in Eskişehir Technical University, Fashion and Textile design department for 1 year. Since 2019, she has been working as a Research Assistant at Işık University and she continues her Master's degree in Eskişehir Technical University, Department of Industrial Design. She is currently in the research phase of her thesis titled "Using Virtual Reality as a Training Tool in Industrial Design".