



Photographic Collage by Ana Isabel Palacios | Photo by Andrea Mendoza

DESIS Newsletter #2 - Scaling Up

August / September 2010, DESIS INTERNATIONAL NETWORK www.desis-network.org

Editorial

Scaling-up: a new focus for the DESIS activities

by *Ezio Manzini*

For the DESIS community, 2010 will be a very important year: in its first part, DESIS Europe and DESIS USA made important steps forward. At the beginning of September, there will be two DESIS events in Shanghai, just after the Cumulus Conference: a DESIS Forum at the Shanghai Expo United Nations Pavilion, and a DESIS International meeting. Two weeks later, the first DESIS India event will be held in Bangalore, the 29th of September, just before the LENS conference. And later on, in November, an important initiative on Design and Social Innovation will take place in Rio. All these events have been, or will be, reported in this NewsLetter. What I would like to add here is a short note on what, in my view, are their implications.

From the beginning, the DESIS general aim has been to link social innovation and design. We did that looking at promising cases and using our design skills to increase their visibility and to empower them with dedicated solutions. Now, for several reasons, I think that the DESIS activities have to be better focalized. And that the new focus has to be on social innovation scaling-up: what design can do to multiply and synergize micro-events in order to generate large sustainable changes.

Of course, this statement should be discussed inside and outside the DESIS community. To do that, a first document ("DESIS Statement. Design as agent of sustainable changes") will be presented in Shanghai, at the Cumulus Conference and at DESIS Forum and Meeting. I hope that it will be a good starting point.

And now: Let Us Meet!

Once upon a time, Hans Ulrich Obrist, world-known art curator, decided to organize a conference with all that it comprises: papers presentations, key speeches, tours, dinners, posters, thematic sessions and coffee breaks. But it so happened that as people arrived, they found out that the only "real" thing happening was the coffee break. It may have deluded some assistants, but he argued that it is there, at the coffee breaks, where people meet and thus, where things actually happen. It is there where people find synergies and start up their own paths.

This newsletter is almost all devoted to deepen in the details of the academic events that will take place, as previously announced in the newsletter#1 and in our website, in Asia, specifically China and India, and of course, also in other dots of our net.

We hope that, beyond the coffee breaks, you will find the events rich and fruitful. Enjoy!

- *The editor*

Table of contents

- **DESIS Events** _ 2010 DESIS forum • DESIS international meeting • DESIS India 1st roundtable meeting
- **DESIS Voices** _ China • India
- **DESIS Dots in the net** _ USA • A dawning dot: Australia • Europe
- **Building-up Knowledge** _ Dwelling and Women • Short interview with Joon Sang Baek on P2P
- **DESIS Album** _ Lou Yongqi • Rao Qingfang • Miaosen Gong • Dianne Moy



2010 DESIS Forum at the EXPO UN Pavilion, Shanghai

DESIS Forum will be held as a section of the Cumulus Shanghai Conference on September 10th, at the UN Pavilion of the EXPO site. DESIS forum will present international initiatives on design for social innovation and sustainability, and explore the potential connection among global initiatives. It will be a light conference aiming at giving a vivid image on both social innovation and on what design can do to support it. Its ultimate goal will be to present this opportunity to global design community and, beyond that, to other potentially interested partners worldwide. For the agenda of the forum and more, please visit: <http://www.desis-china.org/index.asp>

DESIS-Network International meeting

On September 10th, DESIS members will be invited to attend the DESIS Network international meeting at the EXPO UN pavilion in Shanghai. The objectives of the meeting are to share past experiences among DESIS members, and to draw a clear roadmap for the future development of DESIS Network. The roadmap is proposed to be a holistic framework of ongoing and emerging DESIS initiatives around the world, and a concrete and feasible action plan to promote DESIS research and practice projects globally. For agenda and more, please visit: <http://www.desis-china.org/index.asp>

DESIS-India First Roundtable Meeting 29 September 2010

Organized by Shashank Metha (NID) Ahmedabad, the meeting is being keenly prepared by all members who have been sharing thoughts on the discussion agenda arriving to points such as (Sabina Dsilva):

1. The need to raise awareness regarding what makes a case qualifiable: Since one of the main objective of DESIS-India is collection of promising cases, it would be important to share with all members the criteria for spotting a case, what makes a case qualify: i.e. unique, sustainable and scalable.
2. Recording: a formatted system for recording the cases online, an online database of sorts and who could help us create it.
3. Draw a source of cases: If each DESIS-India member can commit to touching base with at least 10 local NGO's, local Govt. bodies, local research organizations and community associations, to begin with, then we could look forward to a good collection of cases.
4. Analyzing cases: With the support of DESIS networks around the world, cases could be analyzed and presented as new potential solutions that can be replicated in different contexts.
5. Sharing of cases: decide on what events we can organize locally and at a national level to share these cases and make more people aware to take on their implementation. Exhibitions, online dissemination, University events, Community events etc.



DESIS, The Chinese Perspective

By Prof. Lou Yongqi

After the establishment of DESIS-China network, we had to face with the issue on "China's national circumstances". Many hold the idea that in developed countries, when the development of material civilization comes to a high point, it's quite reasonable for the expansion from material design to immaterial design. However, China has just begun its transformation in growth mode from "quantity" to "quality", in addition, the entire society is still in the period of enlightenment on acknowledgement of "design" value. In this case, is it too early to talk about design on "social innovation" in China?

Read article at DESIS VOICES: www.desis-network.org



Endorsement between Cumulus and DESIS-Network

The Cumulus (International Association of Universities and Colleges of Art, Design and Media) Executive Board agreed to endorse DESIS-Network at the Executive Board Meeting in Roma, on June 22rd. Prof. Lou Yongqi, coordinator of DESIS-China proposed the Cumulus association to endorse the DESIS networks at the Executive Board meeting. The endorsement will be officially signed at the Cumulus Shanghai Conference in September, 2010.

Cumulus Conference 2010

: Young Creators for Better City & Better Life

On September 7 – 10th, College of Design and Innovation, Tongji University will host the Cumulus conference in Shanghai, China.

The conference will explore where and how young generation of designers can, through their talents and responsibility, improve our environment and life in a creatively way. The missions and visions of design education, design research and practice for young creators, together with the economic, political and social impacts will also be discussed during the conference., focusing on young generations, especially on their passion, innovation, responsibility and the impact to the improvement of the city and human life.

Prof. Lou Yongqi, coordinator of DESIS-China is the Secretary General of this Cumulus Conference. Prof. Ezio Manzini is invited as the academic advisor of one of the four subthemes.

The conference has received 40 papers on the sub-theme of Create for Sustainability & Social Innovation, accounting for one fourth of all received papers.

Quick features of 2010 Cumulus conference:

- Content: Conference, Keynote Speech, Working groups, Exhibition, ISE Shanghai Biennale, DESIS forum at UN Pavilion, Summer School, Cumulus Award
- Cumulus will celebrate its 20th anniversary of existence
- A large International Students' Exhibition on design will be held
- Combine with International Students' Exhibition of Shanghai Biennale
- A special Cumulus prize will be announced
- An endorsement between Cumulus and DESIS network will be signed
- Sub-theme:
 - Create for Sustainability & Social Innovation
 - Renaissance of local wisdom in globalization
 - Activate the conversation between old & young



For more information, please visit <http://www.cumulus2010tongji.org>



DESIS Seminar and Workshop at Jiangnan University “The New City, the New Countryside and The New Lifestyle: Design for Food Network”

By Miaosen Gong

On September the 12th, after Cumulus Conference, a DESIS Seminar and Workshop will be hosted at School of Design, Jiangnan University at Wuxi (less than one hour from Shanghai by train). Welcome you to visit and participate the activities.

The DESIS10@Wuxi workshop will follow the DESIS seminar since 13rd of September until 28th. The theme of it is “ The New City, the New Countryside and The New Lifestyle: Design for Food Network”.

A group of professors and researchers will be involved into the lecturer team. 28 students were enrolled to participate it. Please contact us as well if you have interests to involve it or contribute at:

miaosen.gong@gmail.com



DESIS-China facilitates Chinese Creative Industries Forum

On June 19th – 20th, Chinese Creative Industries Forum (CCIF) launched a successful program at Bridge 8, Jumen Road, Shanghai. CCIF aims to connect stakeholders of creative industries from Greater China, to enhance interdisciplinary communication, and to build knowledge resources for the development of creative industries in Greater China area. DESIS-China is committed to work together in making the CCIF conferences in Shanghai a unique, creative, innovative and interactive platform for ideas exchange and dialogues.

For more information, please visit <http://www.desis-china.org/index.asp>

INDIA

DESIS voices in India

By Sabina D'Silva

FLUTURA Sustainable Development & Social Innovation Ventures



India, this ancient civilization, is at a very interesting point. Tens of thousands of years of traditional ways of living now superimposed with rapid urbanization. It's like a giant banyan tree which is woken and shaken and polished and felled to become a 'slick and pruned city tree' overnight, too quick and too much for it and its people to handle.

As a nation, we are confused because we sometimes see only two choices; continue 'modernizing' at a pace not healthy, but necessary as we think it.....or continue with all our traditions but stay 'third world'! (Those fantastic two words which almost make us sound extra terrestrial!) There doesn't seem to be another choice. But we at DESIS know there is. So can we as DESIS-India become the catalyst to show our country a third and most beautiful choice? One that repackages our traditional ways of living to keep pace with our ambitions of progress and change? One that combines the best of modern and indigenous practices from around the world along with our own, to arrive at ways of living that are both modern and traditional, sustainable and progressive? This is the challenge we at DESIS-India must come together to solve.

I see DESIS being a key catalyst of change, building up a body of knowledge of local cases, sharing and exchanging with other DESIS partners around the world and using this knowledge base to become advisors to Government, Corporates and NGO's, to facilitate the implementation of these ideas, cases and new ways of living.

Here's to a new, peaceful and progressive India, and to a new, peaceful and progressive world!

THE LeNS Conference “Sustainability in design: NOW!”

Challenges and opportunities for Design Research, Education and Practice in the XXI Century,

29 September - 1 October 2010



The scope of the conference and of this proceedings is to make a significant contribution to catalyzing the learning and dissemination process of an emergent design knowledge-base, theory and practice, on design for sustainability, within the design community: a contribution to take up the challenge of Sustainability in Design, NOW!

The conference approach is to look at various stakeholders in this arena - designers, design educators and design researchers - as a unique and multi-polar learning community. This is a design community adopting a new ethos, promoting all possible synergies and processes of learning-by-sharing, enabling an effective knowledge base and know-how sharing, osmosis and cross-fertilization in an open and copy left ethos.

In this context, the conference aims at offering an understanding of the worldwide challenges and the opportunities so that designer-participants can be more active and effective in the transition towards a sustainable society. The conference aims to be both visionary and pragmatic, and to stimulate new ways of thinking.

Topics of Interest and proceedings structure

Papers have been submitted in the areas related to the conference sub-themes outlined below and the session are structured around the same three main themes.

1. Design Research for Sustainability (DRfS)

- Theory: papers presenting and discussing new theoretical considerations and contributions on the role of design in the transition towards sustainability
- Approaches, method and tools: papers presenting, analyzing and discussing new approaches, methods and tools to operatively enable designers in supporting and orienting the design process towards sustainability
- Experiences and proposals: papers presenting, analyzing and discussing concrete solutions and artifacts developed as results of research activities

2. Design Education for Sustainability (DEfS)

- Theory: papers presenting and discussing new DfS education strategies and curricula
- Approaches, method and tools: papers presenting, analyzing and discussing approaches, methods and tools to support DfS education
- Experiences and proposals: papers presenting, analyzing and discussing experiences on implemented courses/workshops/seminars on DfS
- Dissemination: papers presenting, analyzing and discussing strategies to disseminate DfS education

3. Design Practice for Sustainability (DPfS)

- Approaches, method and tools: papers presenting, analyzing and discussing approaches, methods and tools to operatively support DfS practice (within design agencies, companies, institutions, communities, etc.).
- Experiences and proposals: papers presenting, analyzing and discussing concrete solutions and artifacts developed by designers, companies, institutions, communities, etc.
- Dissemination: papers presenting, analyzing and discussing strategies to disseminate DfS practice

Each theme tackles four design levels:

- Selection of sustainable Material and Energy
- Product design for sustainability
- (Product-Service) System design for sustainability
- Design for social equity and sustainable social innovation.

To find out more and detailed program please visit: www.desis-network.org

DESIS USA Summer meeting 2010, New York, August 11



With the aim of settle a research agenda and work on some current questions such as:

- _How to explore and promote design-enabled social innovation in the American context.
- _How can design help catalyze social resources for sustainable change?
- _What is the specificity of social innovation in the U.S.?

DESIS Lab and partners, meet on August the 11th at Klein Conference Center NY. There, among the ongoing research issues, some other practical next steps were discussed: membership, funding opportunities, academic presence and opportunities, education challenges and opportunities, Web presence, etc.

There is to say that these local meetings and experiences are of great value to the network worldwide in order to learn from peer's experience.

AMPLIFY WORKSHOP N.Y.

Scenarios for Creative and Sustainable Lifestyles on the Lower East Side (LES) , August 10, 2010

ABRONA ARTS CENTER
HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT
www.henrystreet.org/arts
466 Grand Street, New York, City 10002
t212.598.0400 f212.505.8329

AMPLIFY

Creative & Sustainable Lifestyles in the Lower East Side

Opening reception
Aug 5, 2010, 6–8pm
Open
Aug 5–Sept 15, 2010

How to live a creative and sustainable life?
Designers, academics, organizations, and urban activists joined forces to identify individuals and communities that are creating more sustainable ways of living and working.
The exhibition will ask questions and demonstrate new ideas for solving old problems by showcasing installations about creative communities on the Lower East Side and around the world.
<http://amplifyingcreativecommunities.net>

A project by
Desis Lab

THE NEW SCHOOL

Project partners
GREEN MAP **Lower East Side Ecology Center** **DESIS**

Project granted by
THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION
2009 Cultural Innovation Fund grant

Supported by
DESIS NETWORK
Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability

Amplifying Creative Communities is a project of the DESIS Lab at Parsons The New School for Design, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation New York City Cultural Innovation Fund 2009.

The project aims to:

1. Listen out for Creative Communities in New York City who are taking quiet but significant steps toward more sustainable ways of living and working;
2. Work with these Creative Communities to learn about their social innovations;
3. Design with these Creative Communities to expand the capacity of their innovations;
4. Broadcast what we have learned about social innovation to other communities.

A DAWNING DOT DESIS Australia

DESIS network Australia, first steps

Text from ASIX: <http://www.asix.org.au/content/desis-network-australia-first-steps>

The Social Innovator Dialogues, www.sdialogues.org.au, hosted some great meetings between Ezio Manzini and the Australian design community in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney in July. The aim of these meetings was to link the design community and particularly, design schools and institutions, in Australia with the broader DESIS Network (Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability, www.desis-network.org), and to take the first steps towards an Australian node in this network. There was a lot of enthusiasm and support for the concept at these meetings as well as some real concerns for the practicalities of how to build a network that crosses departmental, institutional and geographical lines.

The collaborators behind the Social Innovator Dialogues, TACSI (The Australian Centre for Social Innovation), ASIX (Australian Social Innovation Exchange) and the Centre for Social Impact are excited to support this fledgling engagement between Ezio Manzini, DESIS and the Australian design community and to that end we've shared some DESIS documentation and contact lists with participants at those meetings and started this thread on ASIX for the community to come together and work out what next steps are possible.

Sustainability in a suburban context

By Dianne Moy - Australia

Australia cities are growing and sprawling. Suburbs expanding create pressure on many of our existing systems; longer production chains, increased pressure on transport systems, competition for peri-urban food zones, stress upon water and other ecological systems. Broadmeadows is an outer suburb of Melbourne under pressure. Its residents are highly multi-cultural (some 200 languages are spoken in the area), but are also low-income earners. Local jobs are disappearing as local industries are downsizing or have moved offshore, the area is also suffering from increased incidents of crime, and a lack of social cohesion. Yet amongst these 'problems' there are many opportunities and strengths. For the last 12 months the Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab (VEIL) has worked with the local council to explore more sustainable futures for local residents.



Find full article at: www.desis-network.org_dots-in-the-net

Europe

DESIS Europe

Tentative acupuncture of collaborative services in Nord-Pas-de-Calais



Which futures for the periurban areas? How to imagine both sustainable and qualitative ways of living between cities and countryside?

The Nord-Pas-de Calais Region in the north of France with the help of a local development agency proposed to work on the Pèvele area between Lille, Douais and Valenciennes: strong urbanisation; new lodging compound popping-up everywhere; destruction of agricultural land; heavy transportation traffic; difficulties to maintain social mix and balance between generations... all these phenomena tend to generate a sort of 'dorm-countryside'.

By means of a workshop organised at the ENSCI Les Ateliers in Paris by Strategic Design Scenarios, inspired by the DESIS catalogue of social innovations an in-vitro exploration has started.

Read more at Desis Europe blog:

<http://www.desis-network.org/?q=taxonomy/term/36>

Building-up Knowledge

recently published works from students

Dwelling and Women

On August 9th, architect Mónica Sánchez, member of DESIS Colombia, has presented her Masters thesis called 'Dwelling and Women: Inheritances, Autonomy, Realms and Alternative Spaces'.

More than an exploration aiming at projecting and actually building up more infrastructures (which in all cases she does), her thesis is a milestone to assess the issue women's dwelling among gender hindrances in the contemporary; in her own words: *"it is a trip around the world to the spaces and times of women"*.



The dissertation was presented using a series of PostCards with which she transported the audience to those sacred and meaningful spaces devoted to women and the possible re-readings that from architecture could nowadays emerge.

Issues such as co-housing, sisterhood, shelter, emotional refugees, violence, temporary and secret living among normal living and livelihood in contemporary cities are developed.

To find out more please visit the section 'Building-up knowledge' at:

www.desis-network.org

Short interview with Joon Sang Baek on P2P

By Michel Bauwens, 12th July 2010

Peer-to-Peer expert Michel Bauwens, Belgian national and friend of the DESIS international network based in Thailand, received an e-mail from Joon Sang Baek, a Ph.D. candidate at Politecnico di Milano, member of DESIS Europe and researching on the use of the Internet technologies to promote sustainable food production and consumption in Milan, in order to have a “virtual interview”.

Here some short answers to this virtual meeting:

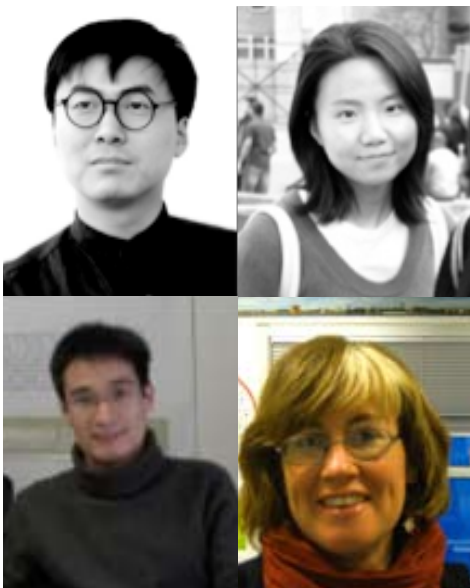
Joon Sang: You once said that technologies, especially ICT, can provide communication and S/W infrastructures of P2P and indeed today various collaborative social tools proliferate in our daily life that connects distributed knowledge and enables co-design and co-production. In your opinion, how will ICTs evolve to facilitate transformation of our society towards P2P?

Michel Bauwens: Peer to peer for me is the free aggregation of individuals around common interests and common value creation, and I believe this kind of technology is becoming universal, but there is an important hitch: when people create value together, they are usually able to form strong bonds and create their own infrastructures, think free software, Wikipedia, the shared design of arduino and many other examples of commons-based peer production, where user communities have their own infrastructure of cooperation, usually managed by a new type of for-benefit association such as the FLOSS Foundations.

To see the full interview please visit the ‘Building up Knowledge’ section: www.desis-network.org or visit: www.p2pfoundation.net

DESI album

space to introduce DESIS members



Prof. Lou Yongqi (left)
coordinator of DESIS-China Prof. Lou Yongqi is the Secretary General of this Cumulus Conference. Director of Studio Tao in Shanghai.

Rao Qingfang (right)
Trained as a communication designer in Beijing and Rotterdam, Rao Q. is inspired by MA design study in London, aspiring to apply systemic sustainable thinking in design to create social impact.

Miaosen Gong (left)
Ph.D. from Milan Polytechnic, Miaosen Gong runs the DESIS Research Center, School of Design, in Jiangnan University, China.

Dianne Moy (right)
VEIL (the Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab) - Project Coordinator at Melbourne University, Australia.