

Design as a tool of disruption

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I STILL REMEMBER, not many years ago, when on finishing high school I had to take a decision on what to study, feeling the anguish of many of my friends. From night to morning one had to make one of the most important decisions in life, even though we all asked ourselves very many times: What are you going to be when you grow up? Up until then, few of us had really asked what we wanted to be.

Fortunately, since I reached the age of reason, I always wanted to be an architect; therefore, that critical moment was something very natural for me, but for several friends it was extremely stressful and I ask myself whether today they repent the decision they made. In particular, I remember one of my friends who, when it occurred to him to tell his parents that he wanted to be a designer, he possibly didn't even really know what kind of designer he wanted to be. His parents literally hit the roof: What do you mean, designer!!! Why do that? Who will keep you the rest of your life? Why, when there are careers as important as law or engineering, did he want to be a designer? Almost as though it was a sin or he did it from laziness to facing up to a "real career". My friend ended up studying another profession, a real career", and now I can be sure that he was sorry.

But the interesting part of this and many other similar anecdotes is to understand the context surrounding the creative and design professions for decades. How carelessly an enormous section of society has taken to careers of design, and what consequences has this had on society and on the designers themselves. I believe that in many cases even the design schools themselves have been accomplices of this lack of seriousness, and when

I say lack of seriousness I refer to the severity with which we ask ourselves about the importance of design in society, the ability to change the world through design.

I am one of those who is convinced that design is a catalyzer, a great tool for changing the things we do not like about the world; but in order to attain it we must change culture and the manner of seeing ourselves as designers. We therefore have to demand of ourselves, of all those forming this guild, that we are the first to take the responsibility of improving the world seriously. Only by beginning in our own home will we then be able to demand the parents of thousands of possible students of design that they also take the profession seriously.

Only by beginning at home will we then be able to achieve that our processes as tools of innovation are valued in other fields of society. Only by beginning at home will we be able to understand that design is not limited to spaces and objects, but that design is in reality a magical lens with which we are able to see the world as it should be, and not only as it is.

Fortunately, this idea that the processes of design possess qualities which can be used in many other environments has set in motion a movement worldwide which the majority call Design thinking, which is precisely that: to condense the processes of design in such a way that they can be utilized to resolve complex problems, problems which are not necessarily limited to design in its traditional definition.

Nowadays, we are thus able to find countries which have decided to effect public policy with a vision of design, and it is not only a matter of form but of background. In this way we find companies today which are engaged in providing consultation to industries, such as medicine, in order to try and find cures for illnesses by means of tools of design. Luckily a movement is beginning which possesses the possibility of placing the creative industries in a relevant role in society, helping to make the world a more empathetic and respectful place for our children's generations. This is a responsibility which it is in our hands not to waste. **g**



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