

## **"Living, Learning, Leaving a Legacy" Design or Default?**

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### **We live in a "Designed" world.**

Today design, more than ever, affects the realities of where we live, how we live, how we relate to each other, and how we learn about and from each other. As Winston Churchill said: "...We shape [design] our buildings; thereafter they shape us." It is more than our buildings; we design our products, our places, and our experiences. Together these form a "man-made" eco-industrial reality which defines and shapes us.

But, is our man-made world truly designed? Or, have we unintentionally created a series of default conditions that have stressed both our ecosphere and our ethno sphere beyond recovery? Through our Designs and/or our Defaults, are we creating a future in which we will simply survive, sustain, or thrive and flourish?

When we design, we take on a responsibility, not just for form and function, but for the less obvious effects that our solutions have on people, culture, and the environment - whatever the scale. Merely serving commercial interests at the expense of the social fabric or the environment on which both society and commerce ultimately depend, denies the true potential of Design.

In the last year of his life, Buckminster Fuller said: "...Whether humanity is to continue and comprehensively prosper on Spaceship Earth depends entirely on the integrity of the human individuals..."

It is as a part of the "Human Community," not apart from it, that Design can transform innovation and discovery into real goods and services. Design can facilitate comprehensive solutions that align commercial interests with human, cultural, and environmental interests; respecting the intrinsic value of each.

The trajectory on which we find ourselves is connected to the past (the "old"), and, for good or bad it will take us into the future (the "new"). Like the past, the future will be of our making, but even more so. Unlike the past, the future will happen at a scale, speed, and scope foreign to our experience. What we design in the future will affect more people, in less time, and with greater impact.

### **"Design or Default" - the choice, and the legacy, is ours...**

Using an interactive presentation, the authors will engage in an exploration of some of the trajectories upon which we are traveling today, examining how we have met our needs through time; and the technical, societal, and political inflections that may have brought us to the present. Reflecting on the legacy of earlier design decisions, they will explore possible future trajectories and outcomes, considering the implications of Design on both our "man-made" eco-industrial reality and the greater ecology on which we all depend.

The authors will provide a framework that drives creative, multi-disciplinary collaboration; resulting in a dialogue that enhances and expands the product development process, leading to inclusive, anticipatory, and comprehensive solutions.