A sampling of the 2400+ fine arts and design students at the Rhode Island School of Design. 8 of them spoke at the IDSANED conference on the future of education, notetaking by @johnmaeda

ECOLOGY AND COMMUNITY

Mackenzie Younger: I took a class at Brown that involved a green house.

- Interest in life ... how it connects to everyday living.
- How could I get such an interest in greenhouses on campus?
- Papers, flyers? What could work?
- Wearing a green jacket and taking photos of people wearing it really worked!
- As an artist, trained to use visual medium. Could paint sunflowers. But could also grow sunflowers too.
- As an artist in the community I can see the advantage of being outwards bound I can look larger with my work (broader).
- As artists and designers we tend to build community within ourselves, but it's important that we reach out to other communities even smlaler ones.
- I've done lobbies like in the Bronx and all over -- making a mural of how Manhattan used to look like with oak trees and streams plants important seeds.
- REACHING OUT as a universal form.
- JM is branching out and we're all branching out and I branch out to people that aren't just inside RISD.
- We want to build our own experience.
- For every 5 minutes you walk , take 10 minutes to listen and observe. My father told me this whenever we visited the forest.
- Think about, "Why is this plant dying? Why isn't there something more indigenous here? What do we need to keep the soil rich? Brings birds and butterflies back.
- Don't design just to please the human element -- you're leaving out the ecosystem to keep the balance in order.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Jessica Herron: I'm doing UX design for the MS Surface Project at Brown

- It's really cool. It enables going beyond the scale of a screen.
- Crossing computer science and the museum world.
- No other way to display these massive information pieces.
- Learning through experience instead of teachers "telling me what to know."
- To Nemes: Paradigms like Khan Academy make you think different about learning
  - Nemes: We're looking at rich media as another way to self-publish content more like Lynda.com as a "blended" form.
    - Teachers can benefit by looking at the different student perspectives.
- That LISTENING skill is so important. What are they saying? What's the feedback?

BRANCHING OUTWARDS AND DEEPLY

Carly: I saw a rift between all the different parts of the faculty / administration / student communities here at RISD, so I started blogging.

- How to pull them together? Look across tne adjunct faculty and alumni that are heavily engaged in outside activities.
- So I started a blog. As a way to cut across everything.
- With the NSF-funded STEM to STEAM conference we brought in scientists, designers, artists globally and internationally.
  - STEM legislation ("Science Technology Engineering Math") we're trying to change education funding by adding A the Arts
  - We need brilliant design and art education within the context of STEM learning.
  - Jessica: We want to change how funding is working in America about education and design/art education that is so missed.
- We've all taken these very different tools we have at RISD and shaped or own education.
- Working on the blog and looking outwards has let me see how everything connects and you get feedback with new inspirations.
  - jessicca: "Who else can I get involved with" has become a tangible thought since I started taking a class at Brown
    - There's so many people in so many disciplines and I want to go pick their brains and collaborate.
- Branching out of your day to day school living is hard with current events.
- Deep dive into a project is invigorating. You see a lot of students in that space.
- Personal projects involve looking at how to improve. Even in our own learning.

BE PATIENTLY IMPATIENT

Jake Zien: I developed a product over the Internet as a member of the crowdsourcing site Quirky.com.

- Crowdsourcing a solution = many folks working together.
- It's an interesting position being a designer going through this process ... because it's 700 people helping to make your idea come true.
- Generally the product is better than your own. It's similar to your idea. LOTS of people have touched it.
- I'm acknowledging it's my idea, BUT IT'S NOT MY DESIGN ...
- Collaborating with 700 people over the Internet is something I couldn't have done at RISD alone.
- Computer Science has a parallel to what I see in design -- there's a gap to bridge: What I've learned in art school is that the method is how to solve a problem in a way that is UNIVERSALLY applicable.
- The desire and inability to sit and be unconscious. An itch that makes you want to make something work right.
- In order to be a great designer you need infinite patience.
  - Paradox to be a designer as a person you have to be the most impatient person you know.
  - Why can't we take classes that we want and right now?
  - i.e. "Why does it take 5 minutes to make toast." Design is about solving those problems (subtle hint around the speed of change in education).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

- **Peter Simon: Be completely curious and iterate further. Look a step ahead. Bring design back to people.**
- **Jessica Herron: Find what digital tools do well and don't. Watching [Khan Academy] videos is so great because you can stop and rewind them -- that's not possible in class.**
- **Carly Ayres: Being a designer you can see what is lacking. And we feel a need to act upon it and bring it back into our own education. We live in a global community now. In this day and age you can't just teach and learn in one way. There has to be many, many ways.**
- **Karen Kavett: Be incredibly self-motivated. Create your own problems, and spend your nights working on them and don't just waste time and goof off. Don't be intimidated and just take those opportunities because ... why not?**
- **Greg Nemes: Understand the network and climate and problems and opportunities. Design your education trying to think critically about what you're learning in/outside the classroom. Always look ahead into the future to consider the role you want to have in the professional world.**
- **Ian Storm Taylor: The open source community is an area where education can learn a lot from and do better. The tendency of both teachers and students is to close yourself off from the world with every good idea. It's not helpful. If everyone shared their great ideas, and solutions, then we'd all move the baseline of the world upwards.**
- **Mackenzie Younger: Inspire don't persuade. Consider simple designs like a plant. If you want to learn from something that has a great design -- just look to your environment.**
- **Jake Zien: See different connections that run through how you learn and work. Look at your bad habits ("and good ones) and by considering them critically, you will discover how to ignite your passions and make them into reality.**

COMMUNITIES CAN FILL IN THE GAPS

Nemes: I'm building a community organization thinking critically about their education and gaps to improve.

- Quickies: peer-to-peer crowdsourced learning.
- Digital platform allows for emergene of classes (not just online) as physical gatherings.
- We produce "connectories" of problem solvers together.
- Mackenzie: I've found Quickies as a way to advance my green interests.
- Art education is universal and is enabling creative collaborations (and bringing together diverse audiences)
- Big picture problems can be tackled with this kind of thinking (creative problem solving)
- Valuable thing about design is not that you can see the way things are, but you can see not how a room is arranged but how it is not.
- You can see the flaws and "gaps" that forces you to solve problems. Listening to other's ideas is key.

CONNECTING WITH THE WORLD

Karen Kavett: I've been making videos for a few years and it's grown well past a hobby.

- I've grown a network of 5,000 people that are curious about typography and design.
- Putting myself out there, I'm connected with the world.
- I've made a few videos about art school and how it's not an otherworldly experience. I've gotten so many emails asking if I'd recommend it or look at my art work.
- This happened because I put myself out there.

DESIGN AND DIPLOMACY

Peter Simon: I'm getting involved in places where a student might not usually get involved.

- How does the world work? And how can I use ID as part of that.
- Going beyond form and function and looking at policy change.
- Developed skill to taking a complex thought and dissecting the words into diagrams that can be understood (like the NSF funding process).
- I can look at the process and take my "better world" approach on it.
- In Prof Charlie Cannon's Innovation Studio I saw how going across disciplines enabled BIG problems to be solved.
- Alabama project referenced (with Prof. Cannon)
- Communities = inspiration is what we do.
- Design and diplomacy -- you can manage being a designer and a patient designer, but you can't bring that to everything.
- We were tasked in strategic planning to figure out the direction of RISD -- and iterating upon that, and there is such passion that you need a 2nd diplomacy filter.
- Diplomacy is so critical - finding out how people tick and inspiring them.
- Diplomacy that can get through the bullsh^t and get to somewhere better.
  - Zien: Designers have a lower threshold, but diplomacy is indeed key.
    - Find a rigorous logical way. If I can't do it.
- Having a toolbox (a broadening one) that can help you tackle problems.

LEARNING FROM "OPEN SOURCE"

Ian Storm Taylor: It's important to note that our approaches don't remove teachers from the equation -- we're designing ways that can augment the learning experience for all.

- Zien: I agree. There are certain things you can't learn by yourself.
  - For example, I was attempting to take a CS course at Brown as couldn't do it over the Internet no matter how I tried.
- You can only get so much by being a student. But by being a teacher you get a whole new perspective.
- Best thing we get at RISD is a community to build around and engage each other in learning.
- I build web apps and see what happens and get feedback from Twitter from people I just never knew.
- I'm informed of the outside world even before I graduate. It's great that I can get it sooner than only until after I graduate.