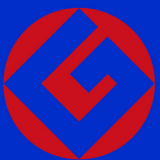


**FOCUSED
ISSUES 2023**

**PROPOSALS
FOR
FUTURE DESIGN**



Theme for 2023

Brave Attitude, Organic Design

The Focused Issues Team put into words the ground swell in design captured by a lateral look across the screening subjects for the 2023 GOOD DESIGN AWARDS and designated the phrase “Brave Attitude, Organic Design” as the theme symbolizing the year.

“Brave” players daringly make the first move.

The surrounding team members also have the bravery to back and support this challenge.

The “organic” connections of the team as a whole, and those reaching even beyond the team to the entire organization and region, become the driving force generating hitherto unseen outcomes.

To begin with, the overall theme when soliciting submissions for the 2023 GOOD DESIGN AWARD was “Design and its Outcome.”

Rather than a dualism between the design of objects and ideas, we hope to consider both these aspects as we explore “design and its outcome.”

As the result of exploring the conditions and contexts which engender such designs, we arrived at the keywords “brave and organic.”

This report presents the perspectives and proposals needed to generate this “Brave Attitude, Organic Design.”

The GOOD DESIGN AWARD is the only comprehensive design evaluation and endorsement activity in Japan.

During the more than 60 years since the launch of its predecessor, the Good Design Product Selection System, in 1957, we have continued to support the development of postwar Japan, taking on responsibility for the changing role of design in society.

Our Focused Issues activities consider and propose new possibilities for design through the screening for the GOOD DESIGN AWARD.

Representatives chosen from among the judges (Focused Issues Directors) conduct more detailed analysis of the ground swell behind the winning designs and suggest directions in which society should move.

Focused Issues has the function of being a “think tank” for design.

This report summarizes the results of lateral discussions looking across the range of screening subjects which took place among the directors / researchers responsible for the Focused Issues at the 2023 GOOD DESIGN AWARD.

We have compiled nine “perspectives” to serve as “proposals” for various stakeholders on what stances and moves are required at present in design, as well as in politics, government, and business.

We hope that the report is strong and robust enough that reading it can change the next actions of those who make things.

GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2023 Focused Issues Team

Focused Issues Directors



Seiichi Saito
Creative Director | Panoramatiks Principal

Born in Kanagawa in 1975, Saito began his career in New York in 2000 after graduating from Columbia University with a Master of Science degree in Advanced Architectural Design (MSAAD). He returned to Japan after being selected as an artist for Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial 2003. After working as a free-lance designer, he established Rhizomatiks Co., Ltd. (present Abstract Engine Co., Ltd.) in 2006. Leading the internal architecture department Panoramatiks, he is working as a planning and implementation advisor on a number of projects for governments and corporations. He was the Creative Advisor of Expo 2020 Dubai Japan Pavilion and the EXPO Co-creation Program Director for Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.



Jin Kuramoto
Product Designer | Representative Director, JIN KURAMOTO STUDIO Inc.

Born in 1976. After working at a home appliance manufacturer, he established JIN Kuramoto STUDIO in 2008. With the approach of communicating the project concept and story through a clear formative expression, he has been involved in the design development of various genres, like furniture, home appliances, eyewear, and automobiles. He is also a part-time lecturer at Kanazawa College of Art and Musashino Art University.



Yuko Nagayama
Architect | Executive Director, YUKO NAGAYAMA & ASSOCIATES

Born in 1975 in Tokyo. Completed studies at Showa Women's University in 1998. 1998–2002, worked at Jun Aoki & Associates. Established Yuko Nagayama & Associates in 2002. Representative works: "Teshima Yokoo House," "Central Garden – Goddess of The Forest," "JINS PARK," "Japan pavilion for Dubai Expo," "Tokyu Kabukicho Tower," est. Awards received include L'Oreal Encouragement Award, JCD Design Award (2005), AR Award (2006), ARCHITECTURAL RECORD Award, Design Vanguard (2012), JIA Young Architect Award (2014), Yamanashi Cultural Prize of Architecture, JCD Design Award (2017) Silver Award, Tokyo Architecture Award (2018) Excellent Award, WAF Division Excellence Award (2022), etc. Plans are currently underway for the TOKYO TORCH project in front of Tokyo Station, the Panasonic Pavilion and the Women's Pavilion at the Osaka-Kansai International EXPO.

Focused Issues Researchers



Yutaka Nakamura
Cultural anthropologist, design anthropologist | Representative of Atelier Anthropology LLC., professor at Tama Art University's Liberal Arts Center

Nakamura works on themes such as violence, social suffering, cultural expressions of anti-violence, and social design for non-violence in "peripheral" areas, as well as social implementation with various companies and designers. He authored "Walking on the Edge of America – Anthropology of Travel" (Heibonsha, 2021) and "Echoes of Harlem – Voices of Muslims Living on the Streets" (Kokuminsha, 2015) and edited "Art Class – Behind Creativity" (Koubundou, 2016). He also translated "Uptown Kids – Public Housing and Street Culture in New York Harlem" (written by Terry Williams and William Cornblum; Ootsuki Shoten, 2010).



Sakura Nomiya
Design historian, design researcher | Curator of Igarashi Takenobu Archive at Kanazawa Institute of Technology

Nomiya completed her master's degree in History of Design and Curatorial Studies at Parsons School of Design. After working at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, she has worked on planning design-related exhibitions, and writing and translating books and articles. Lately, she authored "Takenobu Igarashi A to Z" (Thames & Hudson, 2020) and worked on the exhibition "DESIGN MUSEUM JAPAN Collecting and Connecting Japanese design" (National Art Center, Tokyo, 2022).



Aki Hayashi
Editor, writer, director | President of Brand Journalism, Inc.

In 2022, Hayashi founded and became the president of Brand Journalism, Inc., a company that promotes journalistic public communication of companies and brands. At the same time, she works as a director of NewsPicks for Business, Inc. (content production) and as an executive officer and the senior chief editor at Alphadrive Co.,Ltd. She is a former chief editor of Forbes JAPAN Web and a former reporter of the Asahi Shimbun. A member of the Scheem-D Steering Committee of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Graduated from the Faculty of Law, the University of Tokyo.

Perspective 1

Innovation for “Rules” and “Norms”



SEIICHI SAITO

Chairperson,
GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2023

The domain of design continues to expand and change together with the times. In the midst of this unstoppable change, various companies, organizations, local communities, and individuals will surely implement designs with strong convictions and bravery, on the basis of organic activities.

That power should become a large ground swell, but I feel that it often dissipates due to an absence of rules or norms.

In order to strengthen the act of “creating and implementing good things for society,” which is called design, and to improve society through various designs, do we not need to create “rules” and “norms” once again? As large-scale mechanisms, “rules”, such as laws, can sometimes direct implementation by force. As small, unenforceable mechanisms for making sure that everyone shares the same awareness, “norms” should cause those who make things and those who use them to head in the same direction of their own volition, creating a ground swell that is not bound by rules.

By creating rules and norms for many aspects of design—how to select the materials for things such as buildings and products, how to share intellectual property, how to interact with local communities, how to secure financial resources, how to set up systems for continued action — the accumulation of small actions will surely lead to large-scale societal implementations, such as the resolution of social problems, consideration for the environment, and the revitalization of local communities. I would like us to think about the rules that we should create and the norms that we can change through a shared awareness in order to ensure that government, industry, designers, producers, and consumers can move towards the same outcomes.

Pick Up GOOD DESIGN

Citizen science project

NHK Citizen Lab



A platform was established to connect researchers with the viewers, the general public, and to put into practice citizen science, which aims to make new discoveries through collective intelligence. Many citizens participate in research topics that cannot be elucidated by researchers alone, also playing a role in scientific research through TV programs, digital communications, and events. The knowledge obtained in this way is returned to society.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/20377>

Proposer's Comment

Instead of conducting research within a closed field, we can come up with a lot of useful opinions and information through co-creation using the Internet, TV, other media, and events. By connecting researchers and citizens and using the knowledge gathered as norms (and rules), we will have the power to directly implement the design of a better society. By thinking together with all those involved with production and the industry as a whole about new ways of using different media, and creating actions that transcend the boundaries of the company or the domain in normative ways, I believe that we will realize a co-creative relationship rather than a competitive one.

AI diagnostic camera for infectious disease

nodoca



nodoca®, which can take images of the throat and use AI to determine any infectious disease present, will bring about a society in which the whole of humanity can co-create the future of medicine. Because the signs of various disorders are visible in the throat, examinations of the throat are carried out worldwide on a daily basis, just like taking temperatures.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/14653>

Proposer's Comment

We believe that medical devices using AI should continue to evolve going forward. Moreover, in order to further enhance the accuracy of AI, it is essential to gather the necessary profiles, all while considering personal information protection, security, and ethics. In addition to data collection within academia, the co-creative collection of data by various industries involved in healthcare should accelerate the use of AI in healthcare. It will be necessary to establish rules and norms for industry cooperation in order to do so. A specific example is the norms and rules encouraging the sharing of source code that enhances the accuracy of AI in the medical field; by promoting these further, I believe that the new tools needed in an even broader range of fields will be developed and implemented in society.

Proposal

1 Develop laws and ordinances to bring together and display the power of design



Laws and ordinances are among the most influential rules in modern Japan. It is necessary to put in place an infrastructure to bring together the power of individual

designs and maximize this, like the laws and ordinances to promote and implement a circular economy, for example.

2 Promote collaboration among industrybodies, heading towards the ideal future



It is also necessary for designers themselves and the design industry to create rules and norms from the bottom up. For example, creating rules to promote the proactive

use of local and domestic materials and the recycling of materials through partnerships between industry groups will surely be called for.

3 Create norms and rules for common outcomes



It is also necessary for individual designers, companies, and regions to spread norms and rules aiming at common outcomes for societal implementation. For example, the speed of implementation will accelerate by releasing

intellectual property as common property rather than locking it up within a single company. It will also be useful to promote the use of AI in product development and the opening up of smart city implementation process systems.

Perspective 2

Continuing to think about the ideal nature of materials

How should we understand the various material resources used to create the things that enrich our lives so that we can achieve more efficient and circular operations? I think that we need to think together about this once again, and promulgate guidelines that can be shared. A wide variety of materials are implicated: paper, metal, wood, earth, stone, glass, plastic, other petroleum-based materials, and more. In addition, in the contemporary era, where care of the earth and the natural environment are seen to be of paramount importance, as exemplified by the circular use of materials, there are various approaches towards ideas about materials, and interpretations and justice are mixed together according to the method or perspective. There are various recommendations for cyclical and efficient resource use in society: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refuse, continuing to use things without throwing them away, decreasing the rate of use of petroleum-based resources such as plastics (e.g. by incorporating other materials), and so forth.

This proposal for the future, which encompasses these ideas, does not pass judgment on their merits or demerits. While acknowledging the diverse possibilities of these initiatives, I would like to suggest a mechanism or system for evaluating the use of materials in terms of their “attitude of integrity”, “novelty”, “resolution”, “depth”, “efficiency”, and “capacity for societal implementation”.



JIN KURAMOTO
Vice Chairperson,
GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2023

Pick Up GOOD DESIGN

Fire lighter

ANIMAL LIGHTER / poop igniter



Original fire lighters from MAAGZ, using the feces of the herbivore shown on each package as the main ingredient. This item is used for bonfires. Under the theme of “a cycle with nature”, a portion of revenues will go towards wildlife conservation activities.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/17770>

Proposer's Comment

The main ingredient is herbivore feces, and the ignition agent is made of thinned wood from the management of mountainside forests and paraffin. Not only is it novel in focusing on animal droppings in zoos, which have been difficult to effectively utilize until now, this materials-usage project combines the awareness-raising element of “encouraging perspectives on the various creatures living on the same earth” with the dissemination of the materials.

Office building

GOOD CYCLE BUILDING 001 Asanuma Corporation Nagoya Branch Office Renovation



Asanuma Corporation, a general construction company, renovated the company's office, built 30 years ago, to become an environmentally-friendly building as the flagship of their “GOOD CYCLE BUILDING.” Making use of the existing building frame, modifications were made to enhance accessibility to natural light and wind, and natural materials, such as soil and wood, were utilized to the greatest possible extent. It is an attempt to reposition architecture in a cycle that is good for people and the earth.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/10983>

Proposer's Comment

Asanuma Corporation, a general construction company, renovated the company's office, built 30 years ago, to become an environmentally-friendly building as the flagship of their “GOOD CYCLE BUILDING.” Making use of the existing building frame, modifications were made to enhance accessibility to natural light and wind, and natural materials, such as soil and wood, were utilized to the greatest possible extent. It is an attempt to reposition architecture in a cycle that is good for people and the earth. Understanding buildings as waypoints in material flows, or storehouses for materials, it is designed to permit the separation of newly added natural materials, such as wood and soil, from the existing artificial materials, reflecting the thought that each can be recovered as a material after the end of its life.

Proposal

1 Create an inclusive social vision with materials as its starting point

governments

As we search for ways to make social and economic systems sustainable, the perspective of “materials” is becoming ever more important. In painting a macro vision of future society, it is necessary to create and

communicate a social vision which makes a better state of being for materials into a reality, taking the perspective of materials as its starting point.

2 Share information and proposals related to new materials generated from everyday research and development, turning these into assets

designers

companies

governments

The debate over the ideal nature of materials and how to implement this in society is still developing. We need to continue to explore and suggest new materials, not just the ideal materials which we already have. In addition, we would like to recognize the value not only of the uniform

or top-down developments disseminated by governments and corporations, but also of the propagation of bottom-up material ideas generated by solving local issues arising in the environment of regions within Japan and overseas.

Perspective 3

Thinking in terms of an “inverse vector” from the future

Setting in motion an inverse vector from “the future we hope to see,” we try out the things we ought to now. As this generates repercussions beyond our own field, and as more and more actual examples follow, we draw closer to “the future we hope to see.” This way of thinking led me to choose the term “inverse vector”. Through this screening, I felt that new vectors were being created by changing the starting point for thinking – by shifting not only the time vector running from the past to the future, but also the mutual vector between local and global, and the vectors upstream and downstream of the design within companies.

The discussion about hair removal equipment during the screening process left an impression on me. While talking about how there are children who worry about being hairy, the following argument was made: “I hope that the society of the future will be one that is not conscious of how hairy people are. We may have to adopt the method of hair removal now, but isn’t changing the mindset of society as a whole the essential thing?” This way of thinking can surely be seen as one which is not based on current problems, but rather on setting in motion an inverse vector from an ideal future. The senior daycare center “Long house with an engawa” is another example. Although daycare facilities such as this tend to be rational structures from the management’s point of view, when the designers employed an inverse vector, a transformation took place. By returning to the fundamental question of what true happiness was for the users, and prioritizing living as a human being, this kind of open building appeared, supported by new ideas from the management.

In order to get closer to the future we hope to see, it is essential to review systems and to transform public consciousness. To this end, I believe it is essential to take this opportunity to review our starting points and vectors and to conduct trials without fear of failure.



YUKO NAGAYAMA
Vice Chairperson,
GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2023

Pick Up GOOD DESIGN

Senior daycare center

Long house with an engawa



A day service for the elderly which is like a verandah where local people can readily drop by. It is a place for everyone – the elderly, children, and local residents – and it is a community welfare hub where people can help each other in times of trouble.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/20423>

Proposer's Comment

Ordinary daycare facilities place the emphasis on management, strictly separating the outside from the inside to prevent accidents, such as residents going outside. However, this daycare center offers a more open environment than any predecessor, and various measures are being taken by increasing the number of employees, such as following after residents who leave to keep an eye on them. This concept of “people-based” management cannot be realized using conventional ideas and can be considered a good example that will spread not only to daycare but also to schools and in other fields that are hedged in by our management society.

Wooden public housing

Awa Holzbau Project



The Awa Holzbau Project was the first wooden public housing to become a reality in Japan under the revision of the Building Standards Act in 2019. This building was constructed with post and beam construction method, consisting of 330 mm square large cross-section laminated timber for internal and external columns and beams. It is a new model of architecture that combines a universality that can be applied and developed in the future for medium- and high-rise wooden buildings, with a locality rooted in the site.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/20464>

Proposer's Comment

This is the first example of a four-story apartment building with visible wooden frames, and the creation of such an example will encourage the active use of wood in the future. Every detail has been thoroughly considered, from its rational design to the material selection and procurement methods. The pipe spaces are vaulted, allowing them to become wind-escape routes, with buffer zones next to them; ingenuity is visible everywhere within limited planes.

Proposal

1 Seek a rich society without taking what is convenient for those in charge as the starting point



Existing social systems tend to be managed from the top down, in ways aligned to the convenience of “those in charge.” However, in order to realize “the future we hope to see,” which places importance on the well-being of each individual, we need to rethink the existing way of being right from its foundations. Reforms are especially needed in areas such as education and welfare, which play

large roles in people’s growth, ways of life, and dignity. In order to achieve these, we believe that it is necessary to establish a process in which something closer to the future which we hope to see takes root in the interaction between promoting reform from the design side and bringing about changes in surrounding design through the transformation of institutions and awareness.

2 Think about the nature of education from “the future”



In current educational settings, children are bound by many rules and are educated to fit into the existing social system. However, children are fundamentally the very people who will be responsible for “the future.” It would

be desirable to design a way of teaching which keeps the “inverse vector from the future” in mind, thinking together about “the future we hope to see” and walking the path towards it.

3 Thinking about and exploring the “essential way” to reuse items



Discussions about reuse are often vague and out of step when it comes to solving the essential problems, are they not? It is necessary to focus on each field and to discuss the feasibility and outcomes of each suggestion. For example, in the field of architecture, it is difficult to reuse existing buildings, or structural materials as structural materials, because of systemic obstacles which make it

hard to proceed. It is also necessary to examine whether the use of reused materials is leading to substantive energy and CO2 reductions, rather than blindly using them. The GOOD DESIGN AWARD shows many initiatives related to reuse, and examining such examples will surely lead to the establishment of specific laws and systems and the development of criteria to evaluate their effectiveness.

Perspective 4

Re-listening to “the vernacular”

One of the things that is lost in today’s globalization, which compels almost all of humanity to participate in a competition which they have no choice other than to enter, under standards already set by someone beyond the reach of any country, is the vernacular.

“The vernacular” refers here to the unique geology, ecology, language, life, history, culture, and geopolitical position of an area. In a society that demands rapid responses and results, it is all the more necessary to pause and reexamine the framework of the market and the standards of the competition into which we are thrust in a “slower, deeper, softer” way, and to re-listen to the power that was originally latent in us, the vitality of the “other” and the “non-human” that keeps us alive, and the channels of history and culture inherent in a particular place (Note 1).

At that time, humanity will no longer be the sole agent of design. Non-human beings, mountains, rivers, plants, trees, fungi, viruses, rocks, minerals ... all things, and the changes in them, should be agents of design. Asa Ito, an aesthetician who participated in the “External Critique” of the GOOD DESIGN AWARD with me in 2021, once posed a fundamental question in the screening room: what exactly are we screening, who is being screened? It may be time for non-humans to be taken into consideration as winners of all design awards, not just the GOOD DESIGN AWARD. In that case, the category of the agents of co-design would extend to cover non-humans, and the implications of homo faber (the human as maker) would change significantly.

All of the award-winning items listed here show signs of the above. And there were similar signs among the winning entries not listed here, as well as among the entries that narrowly missed out.

Note 1: The “slower, deeper, softer” attitude towards things comes from Alexander Langer, who was involved in peace and environmental activities, and was later taken up by sociologists Alberto Merler and Michinobu Niihara. Reference: “Field Work in Planetary Societies—Memoirs Arising from Fundamental Questions” (Michinobu Niihara) | Sociology Course, Graduate School of Letters, Chuo University (<https://sociology.r.chuo-u.ac.jp/blog/detail/270>)



YUTAKA NAKAMURA
Focused Issues Researcher,
GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2023

Pick Up GOOD DESIGN

Art Triennial

One Thousand Names of Zeng-wen River, 2022 Mattauw Earth Triennial



The project aims to increase the flexibility of the “Advocative Eco-Art Festival”, a new type of art festival encompassing communities spread out along a river basin stretching for 138 km. In their three years of fieldwork, the 14 curators connect the upper and lower reaches of the river through nine sub-projects and 60 artworks and activities to raise issues of water resources, educational projects, eco-food, and agriculture in extreme climate situations and the Anthropocene era.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/19930>

Proposer's Comment

Fourteen curators, beginning with curator Gong Jow-jiun, conducted fieldwork in a 138-kilometer river basin over a period of three years, listening carefully to and connecting with the voices of multiple peoples, multiple professionals, and multiple lives and objects that have lived alongside the river. They went on to embody these in the form of a new eco-art festival. This form of art encompassing action, at the same time perhaps nostalgic and new, started with the realization that the watersheds which once underpinned all life were suffering from excessive activity by humanity.

Organic fertilizer

Compost system local production for local consumption



Soil Yakuzen is a safe, high-efficiency bio-fertilizer derived from discarded organic materials based on research conducted at Kyushu University. Using this manufacturing method, local waste is blended and converted into high-efficiency organic fertilizer to improve the soil in a “local production, local consumption” system. The local soil is regenerated (local production) from raw materials consumed locally (local consumption). It has obtained organic JAS certification.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/14695>

Proposer's Comment

Humanity will regenerate what humanity has broken with the help of non-humans. A lot of the things termed regenerative in recent years are positioned as attempts to do this. We can also see how years of steady and innovative research (listening) have led to the creation of organic fertilizers that combine with design to create social impact.

Proposal

1 Redesign cultural policy



We will be required to re-listen to “the vernacular” in cultural policies, which tend to be top-down. We will need research skills, such as field work which takes place right on the ground, as though crawling; meticulous observation and sensitivity in the field; and the epistemological reflection allowing us to doubt and reconsider what we see. It is also necessary to take on the challenge of combining these with policymaking. It would be good to have more forums in which to redefine the ability to innovate inherent in each local community, group,

and individual, and reflect this in policy, while continuing to fundamentally rethink the nature of art and design. Such forums could lead to opportunities to redesign art festivals, for example. In addition, we need to actively support attempts to reframe the nature of art and design and the innovative ability behind them, and to go on to reframe the relationships between art, design, the environment, and local communities. There is a call to review the nature of grants that support various innovative abilities based on such premises.

2 Create a mechanism to protect the unique “ground”



It is necessary to cultivate the “ground” which guards the “vernacular” of each region, whether in terms of culture, of agriculture, or of forests. This does not mean a refusal to change, but rather a project of repair, recovery, and regeneration. We should support projects which take a fresh look at the links between culture and agriculture, between

communities and the soil. In order to do that, we need to rethink our policies, including the nature of trade. We need to protect the diverse “ground” of society by protecting the multiplicity of small lives, small voices, and small communities that are often swallowed up or drowned out by powerful nations and corporations.

3 Take an approach towards global issues based on “the vernacular”



There are a great number of global issues that need to be addressed urgently. For example, the issue of the environment and climate change is one of the most important of these. We need to create the greatest social impact on these issues with the least amount of energy. It is essential for any community or association that possesses bonds of solidarity and impact, such as nations, corporations, NGOs, NPOs, or religious communities, to work together collectively in loose collaborations. When doing so, a global perspective

is, of course, required, but so is a set-up which allows individual regions to contribute to the resolution of global issues in appropriate ways. We need a qualitative approach that not only competes to see which choice is more sustainable based on a uniform set of standards created by someone somewhere, but also uncovers indigenous circular mechanisms, renewing and regenerating them. A culture that recognizes these kinds of qualitative perspective on pressing issues will also be necessary.

Perspective 5

Repairing rather than producing



YUTAKA NAKAMURA
Focused Issues Researcher,
GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2023

The essential function of law is violence – this is a thesis that runs through the discourses of Walter Benjamin, Jacques Derrida, and others. To be sure, the law does not merely give norms written form, but can bind, restrain, and in some cases even kill individual bodies within the scope to which it applies. There is no doubt at least that the law is not just a collection of writings, but a social force that drives certain actions and has consequences.

Those who realized this began to look at the consequences generated by the law as acts. They discovered that these consequences were not always happy ones. Although the law should redeem and heal people, instead it causes more hurt and alienation, deepens divisions, and worsens relationships. This is the case for the victims, their families, their communities, and their societies. This is also

the case for the perpetrators, their families, their communities, and their societies. This has therefore given rise to restorative justice (seeking to resolve the harm caused by an incident by having the parties involved, such as the victim, the perpetrator, and the people around them affected by the crime, come together proactively and discuss it), therapeutic jurisprudence (the idea that the criminal justice system should not be viewed as a process of inflicting punishment on people who commit crimes, but rather as a process leading to the resolution of the problems faced by them and consequently preventing recidivism), and the therapeutic community that encompasses these.

Can we not take this idea of law as a social force and its essential function as violence, and apply this to design, too? In other words, can we consider the idea that the essential

function of all design is violence? Even if this goes too far, all designs are not just colors, objects, and forms, nor just services, but social forces. They intervene in reality and, as a consequence, prescribe or direct future actions. On the one hand, there are designs that start with good intentions but have disastrous consequences, while on the other hand, there are designs that improve the situation and produce happy outcomes.

With this in mind, design, like law, is called not only to solve immediate problems in the short term, but also to exercise imaginative power to the extent of its ability and to gain a new understanding of problems, leading to their treatment and recovery. It may not be design that creates something new, but instead design that takes what we have and reviews it to make it a little bit better, to repair or regenerate it, and to heal.

Pick Up GOOD DESIGN

Therapeutic community to help self-actualize

The Oneness Foundation



The Oneness Foundation is a specialist agency which has as its motto "the elimination of loneliness and self-actualization," and is dedicated to helping people with low wellbeing and mental health challenges to recover mentally and physically and subsequently grow.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/15603>

Proposer's Comment

The fact that a therapeutic community applied for the GOOD DESIGN AWARD is both groundbreaking in itself and a reflection of the times. I believe that this will prompt more attention to similar restorative justice efforts (for example, mediators and facilitators) and provide an inspiration for the people facing up to, and starting new mechanisms and initiatives to address, the mistakes, crimes, and hurts which are hard to deal with.

Welfare care and shared transportation service

Goissho



The labor shortage in the nursing care industry and the continuing crisis in nursing care services are getting worse due to the declining birthrate and aging population. In order to solve these problems, transportation services, which account for 30% of the work of nursing homes, have been outsourced to local communities, thereby reducing the burden on nursing homes.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/15734>

Proposer's Comment

An automobile manufacturer has reconsidered the nature of communities and ways of life in an aging society, using its strengths to devise better systems. Instead of the traditional role of producing and selling automobiles, the company is thinking how to reduce the transportation tasks of welfare care providers and provide transportation services tailored to local communities by creating a system to avoid the duplication of vehicles already in operation.

Proposal

1 Redesign society starting with criminal law



politicians

In order to promote “healing” or “cure”, it is necessary to revise criminal law and the socially accepted ideas resulting from it, and to increase opportunities for changing these to a better design. In particular, it would be a good idea to explore restorative justice and therapeutic

jurisprudence in addition to punitive or retributive justice. In addition, this should become an opportunity to reexamine how to make amends for mistakes and to arbitrate and reconcile opposition and conflicts in all aspects of society, not only in matters of criminal law.

2 Emphasize and promote circular design



companies

designers

The idea of “healing” leads us to reuse existing things when they develop problems instead of throwing them away. Instead of creating something anew, we connect with or disconnect from or run the things we have now differently, and reallocate the resources we have. The

appearance of more designs with such “healing” concepts will contribute to the formation of circular societies and cultures. “Healing”, “repairing”, or “fixing” (“curing” / “mending”) activities will become central concepts / methods of future circular design.

3 Create an environment that also evaluates the “surroundings” of architecture



govern-
ments

companies

designers

The social environment, which evaluates not only architecture in itself but also its “surroundings”, will stop the tendency to value only “producing”. For example, when it comes to architecture, what is the nature of community-based architectural and environmental design, and how can this be implemented? How can co-design enable

those who gather in the place which has been created to think together and sometimes change their mindsets and behavior? We need policies and support to make inclusion of such perspectives when evaluating architectural and environmental design and objects the standard.

Perspective 6

Reexamining the “design evaluation axis”



SAKURA NOMIYAMA
Focused Issues Researcher,
GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2023

While the word “design” has become normalized, it is also undeniable that it is believed to be an elusive and obscure entity. One of the main reasons for this is the ever-expanding scope of the word design. In the history of the GOOD DESIGN AWARD, the change is remarkable, even if we only look at the GOOD DESIGN GRAND AWARDS of the last 10 years. In some years, robots have been recognized, while in others, initiatives have been recognized. Adding a new object to the design framework means inserting vectors which are different from the evaluation axis of existing design. By clarifying what

those vectors are, I think that what we value in design now will become apparent. What was considered “good” 10 years ago has been excluded this year. What was good this year may no longer be so in 10 years. Is it acceptable to make evaluations on such shaky grounds? Some people may be of this opinion, but I would like them to think about it. There is nothing more dubious than saying definitively at this point that something will be “good” far into the future. This is because it means saying that design is built on the assumption that society does not change, in other words, that our values do not change.

There is something called “long life design.” Being loved for many years in an ever-changing society means that something possesses a universal value that is not affected by the times. Designs which can attain this status are only a handful of the many designs created every day. The value of a design is essentially fluid. The important thing is to clearly state why you do or do not evaluate something highly now. This is what the GOOD DESIGN AWARD, which evaluates design using an annual “fixed point,” can do. It is also a way of showing responsibility as an initiative that has an impact on society.

Pick Up GOOD DESIGN

Higher education program

Akita International University



A public university opened in Akita in 2004 with an “international liberal arts education” as its educational philosophy. With the mission of developing leaders in a global society, the university has built an educational framework and a learning environment which are clear departures from those of previous Japanese universities.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/15935>

Proposer's Comment

This project applied for and won an award by setting its teaching method as “design”. A demonstrable track record is essential in determining whether a method is good or bad, and this requires a certain amount of time. Nineteen years passed after this project’s inception until it won an award. On the other hand, even in the same field, education, “Kamiyama Marugoto College of Design, Engineering and Entrepreneurship” applied for and received an award for its “design” process of building a school, despite the fact that it was established last year. The fact that it was a candidate for the GOOD DESIGN GRAND AWARD makes it clear that it had a great impact. It was interesting to hear the opinion that it was best to share know-how and knowledge with a sense of speed and that it should be evaluated now as an initiative in progress. It can be said that this evaluation encompasses the expectation of design actions which will emerge from the project in the near future.

Winners of GOOD DESIGN

LONG LIFE DESIGN AWARD (6 projects)



- Edible salt (the Salt Industry Center of Japan)
- tampons (Unicharm)
- semi professional sewing machines (JUKI Corporation)
- infusion containers (Terumo Corporation)
- personal computers (Lenovo (Japan) Ltd.)
- N-Series (Honda Motor Co., Ltd.)

Proposer's Comment

As symbolized by the term “long life design,” “time” is clearly indicated on the evaluation axis for these items. The GOOD DESIGN AWARD states that “Products, architecture, services, or contents that have been sold or offered for at least 10 years, have strong user support which is expected to continue, and are designed to a high standard are eligible for the screening.” While 10 years may sound long to some people, it may seem unexpectedly short to others. Depending on the product or service sector, the time spent on development and the speed at which market trends change will vary.

Proposal

1 Design based on the assumption of change

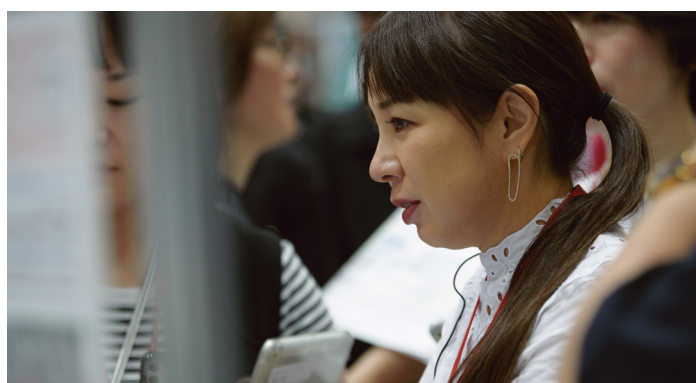
governments

companies

designers

Society is continually changing. Being sensitive to this and reflecting it in design is the key to creating “good”. But there is no point in confronting only the now, which changes at a phenomenal rate. We need a future-oriented way of thinking which considers what values will emerge in the near future, or a proactive attitude towards the kind

of society we want to create. For example, setting the starting point for product development one step back may help you see the essence of the design you are about to work on and what you ought to do. Rethinking the values and significance which might underlie existing products can lead to breakthroughs.



Perspective 7

Inheriting and sharing legacy



SAKURA NOMIYAMA
Focused Issues Researcher,
GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2023

The number of times the word “legacy” came to mind while present at the screening left a strong impression. These situations can be broadly broken down into two. There were occasions when “legacy” was visible in the object or project for which the application was made. Then there were situations in which I thought about the legacy of the GOOD DESIGN AWARD itself.

Looking first at the former, there were cases in which an object designed in the past, and altered in some way, applied this year and was subject to the screening. When it was first introduced to the world, it was a new design, but over time it became a signature entity, creating a “legacy,” and this is what led us to recognize it. Some of the winners provided good examples of what to protect

and pass on to the next generation and of methods to do this.

As for the latter, I have encountered such cases many times while witnessing the screening for the GOOD DESIGN AWARD, so it is difficult to narrow them down to just a few specific examples. Instead, I want to put into words a little of what I think is the legacy of the GOOD DESIGN AWARD is. If we focus exclusively on the word “award,” we are liable to understand the GOOD DESIGN AWARD as an effort to evaluate or certify; but if we read its philosophy, we can see that it is “legacy” a social movement to make people’s lives, industries, and society more well-off through design” and that screening is a means to this end. From this, we can understand that it is not a temporary

activity but a continuous one.

According to the statistics, more than 5,000 applications have been submitted annually in recent years, which means that this many new design forms and ideas have been brought together. This reflects the accumulation of the know-how, wisdom, and data of the applicants. And the various discussions that arise during the screening process can give us a lot of hints about how to improve our lives and society. The AWARD does not merely praise good ideas, but also gives suggestions for improvement, or raises issues. We believe it is important to include these in the legacy of the GOOD DESIGN AWARD, to pass on this legacy, and to share it widely.

Pick Up GOOD DESIGN

Watch

G-SHOCK G-SQUAD DW-H5600



The G-SHOCK 5600 series is evolving as it should and has the latest functions. An extremely wearable size, it is equipped with a heart rate monitor function to support active daily life. Functions such as call notification and training support USB charging, while the watch display is powered by solar charging, making a G-SHOCK that will remain an enduring favorite as a new-generation standard.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/15006>

Proposer's Comment

While inheriting the iconic form of the G-SHOCK 5600 series, which has been on the market for 40 years, it has been developed into a watch that can be used now by adding the features and equipment required today. This is a good example of what to protect and pass on to the next generation and of a way to do this.

Resort Hotel

Fujiya Hotel



The Fujiya Hotel is made up of unique buildings from the Meiji, Taisho, and Showa periods, including buildings that are registered tangible cultural properties. Taking the opportunity provided by the revision of the Act on Promotion of Seismic Retrofitting of Buildings, seismic and disaster prevention renovations were carried out on the historic buildings with the aim of preserving their value as cultural properties while also ensuring safety. In order to provide hospitality services at the highest level, the Cascade Wing, which includes a kitchen with the latest features, was newly constructed and connected to the historic buildings.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/15091>

Proposer's Comment

The renovations not only preserve the current status quo and restore the historic interior design, but also add new functions to enhance the hotel’s hospitality offering. This is another good example of how to carry on a legacy.

Proposal

1 Share techniques and know-how for passing on design as a “cultural resource”



Design that is directly connected to people’s lives is a representation of culture and a resource for creating the future. We need to develop and share more know-how

on how to link the objects or ideas designed with the next generation, such as ways of preserving historic buildings or passing on innovative technologies.

2 Expand the AWARD’s function as a think tank



Although the GOOD DESIGN AWARD is the body responsible for screening, screening is merely a means of carrying out the GOOD DESIGN AWARD’s mission. In order to further promote “a social movement to make people’s lives, industries, and society more well-off through design”, we need to open up to the wider world more of the

arguments that remain internal and the hints that emerge from them. We believe that expanding the functionality of the GOOD DESIGN AWARD as a think tank using these accumulated discussions is also an effective means of ensuring new developments for the AWARD.

Perspective 8

Finding value in the slow economy



AKI HAYASHI

Focused Issues Researcher,
GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2023

My attention was caught by the fact that while the designs that trumpeted cost performance or time performance all failed to win an award, many designs which proactively found value in “slowness,” were among the BEST 100 and the GOLD AWARD winners.

The term “slow economy” is translated in dictionary terms as an “economic downturn,” and it has often been used until now in a negative way to signify a state of slowing economic activity and growth. However, there are moves to rethink the nature of society and the economy, based as they are on the premise that global growth will continue. Having experienced a global pandemic against the backdrop of growing challenges, such as the issues of the global environment and climate change, as well as the declining population, low birthrate, and fiscal crisis within Japan, people’s values are changing. Debates on “degrowth,” which question the principle of growth, are also gaining momentum globally.

In addition to the examples listed in the CASES, the GOOD DESIGN GRAND AWARD winner “Long house with an engawa” is not simply a daycare service for the elderly. It designs a world that affirms the ways in which people live and even die—in natural relationships with the children and adults of the community, even if they face problems such as dementia or disability—just as they are. It can also be called an example of the slow economy in practice.

It takes courage to create a design that presupposes or promotes local economies, circular economies, and “slow economies” that emphasize the quality of growth, with a focus on environmental considerations, social rightness, and the happiness of humanity, based on the premise of the sustainability crisis. I believe that this is precisely why we need to celebrate this commitment to the earth, society, and the next generation.

Pick Up GOOD DESIGN

E-commerce

Social Good Market “Kuradashi”



As a social good market where everyone gets a bargain while enjoying shopping, the aim is to reduce food loss and sell foods which may be thrown away even though they are still edible. In addition, a portion of revenues is donated to various organizations making contributions to society by working on issues, such as environmental protection or disaster assistance, while another portion is put to use as the Kuradashi Fund, providing support spanning the 17 goals of the SDGs. Fun and bargain-filled shopping is good for society. This kind of completely new social good market is being created.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/20461>

Proposer's Comment

This is a system by which products that are about to expire and may be disposed of are provided at bargain prices, and a portion of revenues is donated to organizations which are contributing to society. Embodying the concept of a social good market, where fun purchases at bargain prices contribute to society, it is driving forward the trend of the “slow economy.” Products that are about to be disposed of have generated new value. As of the end of September 2023, the total amount of support given exceeded 110 million yen, and the total reduction in food loss was 18,855 tons. It has also been listed on the TSE Growth Market, and its future is attracting attention as a service that simultaneously pursues social, environmental, and economic benefits.

E-commerce

Yahoo! Shopping “Otokushitei-bin”



This is a design which aimed to solve the multifaceted social issues of logistics while enhancing user convenience. “Yahoo! Shopping” provides a function that gives points for choosing a delivery date with more time to spare, realizing a positive solution for all three parties involved: it allows users to save money, stores to spread out their shipping tasks around special days, and delivery companies to reduce their workload.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/15525>

Proposer's Comment

If the user designates a delivery date with time to spare for products that are not needed in a hurry, PayPay points are awarded at a later date, and the workloads of shipping and delivery are spread out. This is a service that is truly a picture of the “slow economy.” Users, stores, and delivery companies all benefit in this design which provides a win for all three parties. It also contributes to the environment by enabling smooth shipping operations, lessening the workload of delivery companies, and reducing redelivery.

Proposal

1 Recognize the value of “slow”

Action is needed to raise the value of the slow economy, which is hard to evaluate positively within the existing economic system. We need to put in place mechanisms and systems to better evaluate goods and services which may be slow, uneven, imperfect, expensive, and

inconvenient, but are environmentally-, socially-, and people-friendly, and sustainable, as well as to foster such a culture. This will require a strong will, which is not swayed by short-term circumstances.



2 Create opportunities and momentum for “slow” practices

When updating an existing social system, it is useful to start from some readily understandable movement or action. We each need to create opportunities and momentum to put “slow” into practice to the extent that

we can, such as the introduction of a four-day work week, the review of 24-hour opening, the reduction of working hours, and the introduction of localization, fair trade, and the sharing economy.



3 Create a mechanism to identify “genuine activities”

On the other hand, we need to be careful not to limit ourselves to superficial efforts. It would be meaningless if we merely saw an increase in “-washing activities,” such as “SDG-washing” (pretending to be tackling the SDGs when the reality does not match). We need to distinguish between such activities and “genuine actions”. We need not only to value numbers or PR messages showing short-term growth, but also to correctly evaluate the medium- to long-term impact of actions that are costly in the short term and of moves which slow down growth for a while. First, companies and organizations will report their commitment

to and initiatives tackling the SDGs and social contributions in a more transparent, verifiable, concrete, and fact-based manner. Politicians and governments will work with external experts and third-party organizations to continuously monitor, verify, and evaluate the progress of the company’s efforts. The media will continue to report and disseminate information on the basis of fact, without being swayed by appeals to “-washing.” We call for objective mechanisms and initiatives that will enable diverse players, including investors and stakeholders, to recognize the value of a better future for the planet, society, and people.



Perspective 9

Rethinking the relationship between individuals and organizations



AKI HAYASHI

Focused Issues Researcher,
GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2023

As symbolized by the term “the age of the individual,” the relationship between individuals and companies or organizations is changing.

With the collapse of lifetime employment and the seniority system, employment is moving from a membership model, in which new graduates who match the company are hired en masse and employed for a long period of time, to a job-based model, in which people who match the job descriptions are hired. Competition for talent is intensifying, and quite a few people change jobs every few years. While various ways of working are being promoted, such as remote working, second jobs or multiple jobs, and entrepreneurship, companies are concerned about the decline in employee engagement.

Organizations need more collaborative relationships with employees and a culture that emphasizes open communication.

The relationship between individuals and organizations is moving from a hierarchical, employer-employee relationship to a more equal one with organic collaboration and co-creation. The decision-making process is moving from top down to bottom up. An increasing number of companies are enhancing talent management to maximize the skills and abilities of their employees.

Against this background, we saw designs that spoke to new trends in the relationship between individuals and organizations. “In order to change the image of traditional masculinity that persists in the world of shavers, and the idea that more features

are better, the design department made a proposal to the operational side”. These are the words of designer Ushio Bessho in his presentation on the Panasonic Lamdash PALM IN, which was selected as one of the five finalists (candidates for the GOOD DESIGN GRAND AWARD). The designer was sensitive to changes in the world’s values and approached the organization. A major company trusted the designer’s sensibilities and, through the development process, brought innovation to the shaver, a mature product. I am hopeful that courageous outputs which positively leverage the organically changing relationship between individuals and organizations will break through this country’s sense of stagnation and lead the way to an innovative future.

Pick Up GOOD DESIGN

Electric Shaver

Panasonic Lamdash PALM IN ES-PV6A



The full-scale functions of a five-blade linear motor shaver have been condensed to palm size. Highly portable and with a shape that lets you place it anywhere, it makes possible a new shaving sensation, allowing you to stay close and maintain a dialog with your skin as you freely control the angle with your fingertips. This shaver uses naturally derived materials with a soft touch for the main body, whose materials and parts have been significantly reduced, aiming to become the new model for shavers and remain a favorite for a long time.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/18596>

Proposer's Comment

This is a great example of how individual ideas and powers of innovation led an organization. This new design, which was born from the designer’s desire to reconsider the value of the shaving experience and develop a product which was fitting in terms not only of efficiency but also of design, future values, and lifestyle, moved the organization and was welcomed by the market, even though its innovative shape was completely different from those of previous shavers. It suggests that organizations can respond to new markets and customer needs and drive change by respecting individual ideas and thoughts, embracing them flexibly and positively.

Double Clip

Smart Double Clip



Double clips allow you to easily secure a large number of sheets of paper, which is very convenient for holding together documents. However, they interfere with the page-turning motion when browsing. The Smart Double Clip functions as a guide, rather than getting in the way, by aligning the triangles that are created in the corners when you turn the pages. This product is designed not only for the person who fastens the documents together but also for the one who receives and looks over them.

<https://www.g-mark.org/en/gallery/winners/17478>

Proposer's Comment

Focusing on the double binder clip, an invention that is more than 110 years old, designers looked for a structure different from existing double binder clips. They proposed a new design at the Kokuyo Design Award, taking into consideration not only holding sheets of paper but also the user who goes on to view these sheets of paper. Through the efforts of Kokuyo employees, the company overcame issues, such as mass production and quality assurance, and managed to commercialize it. An individual attempt to take on a challenge was recognized by the organization, and in collaboration with the organization, a new product was born.

Proposal

1 Enhance the creative confidence of people in the company or organization



As a basic premise for further enhancing the power of individuals in an organization, it is important that individual members have confidence in their own innovative abilities and ideas, as well as a willingness to express them. Companies and organizations should express their trust in the creativity of their employees or members, encourage

training and self-improvement that will enhance their creative confidence (= confidence in their own powers of innovation), and create an environment with a high degree of psychological safety in which new expressions and suggestions can emerge spontaneously.

2 Encourage individuals to disseminate their opinions



While there are many people and influencers who get big breaks through freely sharing their opinions and expressing themselves, with the Internet and social media as their starting points, some companies and organizations still restrict such sharing and expression by the individuals affiliated with them. Organizations of the future, in which “individuals” will play an active role, ought to allow the free dissemination of opinions and suggestions

originating from individuals. Dissemination of ideas by individuals active in a company or organization can also serve as inspiration for individuals in other companies or organizations, or as the energy for them to proactively disseminate their own ideas. Instead of limiting individual communications, seeing these as a risk to the company or organization, they should be more freely acknowledged and encouraged.

3 Emphasize ideas born out of individual narratives



In general, most corporate communications speak on behalf of the company name or the management. However, believing that the tendency for each product or service to be created with the individual as its starting point will increase, narratives and ideas spoken by an

individual should also be emphasized. In the process of service and product development, we should place greater emphasis on individual subjectivity and thoughts and on stories in which “I” is the subject (= narratives).

Focused Issues Researcher's Eye

Focused Issues researchers looked over all the screening subjects and explored the “ground swell” from the perspective of outside experts who were not judges. We asked three of them to each write based on their own expertise and from their own angles about what they noticed and saw as they accompanied the screening process.



The GOOD DESIGN AWARD, a fixed point observation

Sakura Nomiya

The period in the history of design in Japan that I find most interesting is the 1950s. The 1950s are often overshadowed by the glamorous image of the 1960s, when the design industry displayed increased momentum, the World Design Assembly (1960) was first held in Japan, and designers played an active role in the Tokyo Olympics (1964). However, during the rapid post-war recovery, the word “design” gradually penetrated society, and it was in the 1950s that professional design organizations, such as the Japan Advertising Artists Club and the Japan Industrial Design Association, were established, and a design movement was rolled out by the Japan Design Committee. If you read the magazines and literature of the time, you can tell that it was chaotic but very lively.

The GOOD DESIGN AWARD was established around this time, in 1957. Japanese manufacturers imitated the design of foreign products at that time, which became a problem, and the story of how the AWARD was set up with the purpose of encouraging the “good design” of domestic products is well-known in the industry. Japan has come to be called an advanced country in terms of design, so people are amazed that examples of good design once had to be provided.

Many of the phenomena of the 1950s are now part of design history, and their stories have been handed down, over time becoming milestones in the revitalization of design. Nevertheless, the GOOD DESIGN AWARD has a point worthy of special mention. This is the fact that it is not a passing event but an activity which is still continuing today. It

is thus a rare entity which is part of history but also connected to the present day. There is no other site of “fixed point observation” for design that has functioned for as long as the GOOD DESIGN AWARD. By enumerating the good designs that were newly selected each year, you can follow the ways in which “design” changed from era to era. In response, the activities of the GOOD DESIGN AWARD have changed from instruction about “good design” to awareness-raising.

The significance of a fixed point observation

When I joined this project as a researcher, I was pondering what kind of examination someone who studies the past of design history could carry out by attending the

GOOD DESIGN AWARD, an activity to evaluate present-day design. What I envisaged was to analyze, as an expert, situations in which knowledge of design history would be useful in some way as a background to the screening. For example, the form of a product may refer to a style that was popular at a particular time, or it may be influenced by a certain movement. Of course, I occasionally saw such conversations between the judges, but I do not think there was any aspect that greatly affected the screening. What I found more interesting was that the past discussed by the judges was five or 10 years ago, not so far removed from the present. In other words, the accumulation of the past which had not yet become “history,” or the “fixed point observation,” often acted as an important reference point in the screening.

One particularly memorable example of making use of consideration from the standpoint of “fixed point observation” during the screening was Toyota Motor Corporation’s Prius. It was selected as a candidate for this year’s GOOD DESIGN GRAND AWARD, but in fact, it first won an award at the GOOD DESIGN AWARD in 1998. At that time, it was awarded a prize in the ECOLOGY DESIGN PRIZE category. It then won the GRAND AWARD for the first time in 2003. It was recognized not only from an ecological perspective but also for its high design quality. It went on to win a GOOD DESIGN AWARD in 2009, 2011, and 2016. If you read the comments from the screenings, you can see which points received recognition at the time of each award, and if you look at them in chronological order, the meaning of this year’s award to the Prius stands out

more. There was talk in the screening about what was unchanged from the previous winning models, or what was overwhelmingly different. Of course, there was also discussion about the fact that it had won the GRAND AWARD in the past. In this year’s award, its design quality was evaluated highly. Given that people are moving away from objects lately, the enthusiasm with which the judges said, “Revamping the Prius’s former image, it is so overwhelmingly cool that it makes you want it” left a deep impression.

Design changes along with our lives and values, which change from day to day. However, these changes are sometimes subtle and difficult to capture at the time. Through fixed point observation, by continuing to look at something while being aware of changes, we can notice things that cannot be understood just at a particular time.

For whom should the GOOD DESIGN AWARD be a fixed point observation?

The amount of valuable data that the GOOD DESIGN AWARD has obtained so far is vast. At present, the official website provides a database of information on past screenings (see “Learn : About Award”) and provides an overview of the activities to date.

On the other hand, what bothered me was that this content was mainly directed at the makers. Certainly, designers and manufacturers can contribute to making people’s lives, industries, and society more well-off, as the GOOD DESIGN AWARD aims to do, by creating better designs. However, it feels a little odd that the parameters of

those discussing “good design” are limited to people in the design and manufacturing industries even today, when design culture has reached maturity. This is because I believe that the main agent of design has shifted from being makers to users in recent years. In this day and age, the act of choosing and using goods and services from the perspective of the SDGs requires a proactive stance, and a great responsibility is placed on the users. It goes without saying that the awareness and actions of the users who generate the demand for design have a great influence on society and life. Given the growing interest in design research and the importance of user-based design, it is clear that design is becoming more user-driven.

We were particularly conscious of this during this screening when school satchels and hair removal machines were being discussed.

The reason for the existence of these products is preconceived notions and values, such as “school bags in elementary school are satchels” and “it is better not to have body hair.” There were many judges, including myself, who felt that there was something wrong with this. However, if we think about it, design changes in response as users break free from these chains and develop a new consciousness. Of course, the opposite can also be true. Breakthroughs occur when the minds of the maker and the user resonate, and both are unafraid to change or have the courage to try new things. This is true not only in product development but also in all areas of design, including that of policy or social institutions.

One of the proposals we are putting forward this year is the need to expand the functionality of the GOOD DESIGN AWARD as a think tank, and from now on, we will be called to provide helpful analysis and research to users as well as makers. In order to create a richer cycle of design activity, I believe it is important to proactively engage users in discussions about “good design,” rather than simply positioning them as people who refer to “good design.” To this end, rethinking the way in which the GOOD DESIGN AWARD carries out fixed point observation will surely make it possible to shed new light on the direction in which design should aim.



We SHOULD NOT solve those social issues

Yutaka Nakamura

Therapeutic design

“Repairing rather than producing,” several philosophers have held that the essential function of law is violence.¹ Therefore, the law can bind, restrain, and in some cases even kill bodies within the scope to which it applies. Even if the word “violence” goes too far, we can at least say that the law is not just a collection of writings, but a social force that drives certain actions and has consequences.² But the consequences, the proof of the pudding, are not always happy ones. Instead of being redeemed and healed by the law, there are people who are hurt further. The reality is that no one is happy, including victims, perpetrators, families on both sides, and their communities and societies. Restorative justice, therapeutic jurisprudence, and the therapeutic community, among others, are attempts to remedy that situation.³

The Oneness Foundation’s efforts for people to “start new lives” are not “solutions” to social issues, such as crime or problematic behavior, in the simplest sense of that term. Rather, they are a process of “healing co-design” in which issues are considered and redefined together. Those who accompany the process discern suffering and a feeling that living is hard, things which are difficult even for the person in question to grasp, behind statements such as “This is so boring!” or “Die!” or actions such as breaking things or immediately striking out at the other person, trying to hurt them. And it is important to have someone by their side who can deeply and gently take on the pain and sometimes violent words and actions of others precisely because they themselves have found living hard and, in some cases, have experienced starting new lives with a

prior criminal record.⁴

The fact that therapeutic communities, such as the Oneness Foundation, have exhibited at the GOOD DESIGN AWARD this year reflects the current of the times. Hopefully, this award will encourage more interest in therapeutic communities, therapeutic jurisprudence, and restorative justice. The modern way of “solving problems,” retaliation for crimes according to the law, was itself designed, but the time has come to reconsider it.⁵

Design, which intervenes in reality, is also, like law, called not only to solve immediate problems in the short term, but also to exercise imaginative power to the extent of its ability and to gain a new understanding of problems, leading to their treatment and recovery. Rather than creating something new, this design looks again at what we have and restores, regenerates, and circulates this. Goisho, a welfare and nursing care shared transportation service provided by automobile manufacturer Daihatsu, started when the person in charge, Jinya Okamoto, set foot in the field of welfare and nursing care. At first, he thought he could turn the prospects which would emerge from marketing activities into a model, but after three months of visiting 500 or 600 nursing homes, he realized that the response was not great. Maybe selling cars was not what they should be doing. After all, after achieving the immediate sales goals, what would come next? First of all, you surely need to become someone to whom people want to listen.⁶

He made a fresh start based on these questions, listening intently to the stories of nursing care providers and the elderly, studying more deeply about the hitherto unknown domain of nursing care, and obtaining a certification as a Class 2 Care-

Fitter. Over time, he traveled with team members from around the country to more than 30,000 nursing homes nationwide. As they did so, their counterparts changed their attitude, and a rapport formed.

Automobile manufacturers will reconsider daily life in aging communities and, rather than their traditional role of producing and selling automobiles, will avoid duplicating use of the nursing care vehicles owned by each company, and reduce the burden on frontline staff by cutting down their transportation work. Instead of creating something new, they will think how to modify and recombine what already exists in each region to create a more suitable transportation service framework. This is a proposal for a new mobility service that takes into consideration present and future societies, and it can be termed a therapeutic design for the successful circulation of individual resources.

Re-listening to the vernacular

Listening is an important keyword when thinking about therapeutic design.⁷ Under the globalization of today, nearly all of humanity is encouraged to compete under standards set by those who are superior in terms of political and economic power. In such a society, it is more necessary than ever to pause and reexamine the framework of the field in which we enter in a “slower, deeper, softer” way, exploring the potential of “the other/non-human beings” which essentially enable us and our survival, and to re-listen to the currents of history and culture inherent in each individual.⁸ At that time, humanity will no longer be the sole agent of design. Non-human beings, mountains, rivers, plants, trees, fungi, viruses, rocks, minerals ... all things, and the changes in them, will surely become agents of design. Tainan City’s “One Thousand Names of Zengwen River, 2022 Mattauw Earth Triennial” is highly suggestive in this regard. In 2019,

1 : Walter Benjamin (trans. by Edmund Jephcott), 1996 (1921), “Critique of Violence,” in *Selected Writings*, vol. 1, pp. 236-252. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press; Jacques Derrida (translated by Mary Quaintance), “Force of Law: The ‘Mystical Foundation of Authority,’” in David Gray Carlson, Drucilla Cornell, and Michel Rosenfeld eds., *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*, Routledge: New York, 1992. 2 : David B. Wexler, “Therapeutic Jurisprudence and Its Application to Criminal Justice Research and Development,” *Arizona Legal Studies (Discussion Paper)*, vol. No.10-20, Nov. 2010, <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1628804>. 3 : Restorative justice and therapeutic jurisprudence are defined as having different origins, despite sharing commonalities. For restorative justice, see, for example, the following: Howard Zehr, *Changing Lenses: Restorative Justice for Our Times*. MennoMedia, Inc., 2015; Howard Zehr, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice: Revised and Updated*, Simon and Schuster, 2015; John Braithwaite, “Principles of Restorative Justice.” *Restorative Justice and Criminal Justice: Competing or Reconcilable Paradigms?*, Andrew von Hirsch, Julian Roberts, Anthony E. Bottoms, Kent Roach and Mara Schiff eds, Hart Publishing: Oxford., 2003, pp. 1-20. For therapeutic jurisprudence, see the following: John Braithwaite, “Restorative Justice and Therapeutic Jurisprudence.” *CRIMINAL LAW BULLETIN-BOSTON*, 2002, https://heinonline.org/hol-cgi-bin/get_pdf.cgi?handle=hein.journals/cmlwbl38§ion=20; Michael L. Perlin, “What Is Therapeutic Jurisprudence,” *NYL Sch. J. Hum. Rts.*, vol. 10, 1992, p. 623; David Wexler, “Therapeutic Jurisprudence: An Overview.” *TM Cooley L. Rev.*, vol. 17, 2000, p. 125; David Wexler and Bruce J. Winick, *Law in a Therapeutic Key: Developments in Therapeutic Jurisprudence*, Carolina Academic Press, 1996. For the therapeutic community, see the following: Kaori Sakagami, *Prison Circles*, Iwanami Shoten, 2022 [in Japanese]; Kaori Sakagami, *Lifers*, Misuzu Shobo, 2012 [in Japanese]. 4 : From an interview with Hiroki Ito, Takayuki Miyake, and Daiki Miyazawa of the Oneness Foundation (December

Gong Jow-jiun, who was approached by the Tainan City organizer for advice about holding an art festival, began fieldwork with two graduate students, practically without pay. They focused on the river flowing through the city. Although everyone knows the existence of this native river, most people do not know much about it. Gong himself said that he did not even know where this river, which he had seen since his childhood, originated. After discussions, they begin fieldwork in the river basin, which spanned 138 km.

When they climbed to the river's origin and discovered that the Tsou indigenous people living in the upper reaches belonged to a hunting culture, they asked hunters to guide them, climbing mountains and streams, searching for paths, seeking the indigenous "names." They then turned these into a map. After three summer vacations, he enlisted the help of 10 elementary schools in the river basin and set out on fieldwork with the elementary school students. He wrote articles about their questions, had these edited and designed, and compiled them into the Little Things Newspaper. In addition to recognizing the right to life / agency of all humans and non-humans (eels that had disappeared, stones and river sand, dams and floods, plants and river fish, etc.) that existed in the river basin, "parliaments of things," in which advocates were chosen and participants listened to each other's voices, were also held at several locations. In addition, the research, workshops, events, and the ever-changing environment of the river basin were all recorded with the help of photographers, and those who saw them also began to participate. This Eco Art Festival is the fruition of many layers of points discovered through multiple projects folded one on top of the other, like meshwork.⁹

Partly because Gong's academic background is French philosophy and thought, many of the concepts themselves, such as "meshwork" and "the parliament of things,"

are European in origin.¹⁰ However, Gong is not planning the festival based on concepts, but rather revolving the concepts within the local context. In the first place, the background behind those concepts is far from being original Western thinking. Even before the so-called "ontological turn" was discussed, the idea of autonomous associations of non-teleological people and non-humans already existed, and the idea of allowing agency to non-humans also already existed.

Those who have listened carefully to the existence of more than humans, who do not necessarily enter the visual sphere immediately, may be researchers who have confronted multi-species life activities. The organic fertilizer "Soil Yakuzen" and the "compost system local production for local consumption" from the Kanazawa Bio laboratory are a biofertilizer and a mechanism for soil improvement that have been established based on the accumulation of research requiring an enormous amount of time and energy.

Shinjiro Kanazawa, a researcher specializing in soil microorganisms and soil biochemistry, ventures out into the field and travels here and there through forests, fields, and meadows to collect, examine, and accumulate knowledge about soil. This research, which calls for

"making soil healthy" after it has been polluted and made unhealthy by human hands, is also highly clinical. It was his daughter, Satoko Kanazawa, who wanted to put his knowledge to wider use. Through their collaboration, the pair created a compost that can be put on the dining table and is safe for small children to touch with their bare hands by blending natural ingredients using their own recipe.¹¹

Although it apparently depends on the place, it takes between 100 and 1,000 years to make 1 cm of soil. Humanity will regenerate what humanity has broken with the help of non-humans. A lot of the things termed regenerative design in recent years will be positioned as attempts to do this. At their core is the accumulation of years of steady and innovative research (listening). None of the examples we have looked at above started with solving problems quickly and diligently. Not only does solving superficial problems not bring about fundamental solutions, but it can also lead to more serious situations. Instead, these examples began by taking a closer look at the events behind the problems, listening carefully, and accepting them anew on a deep level. What is in question is the courage to pause before the solution and reconsider the "problem."



15, 2023).⁵ Law can be considered a kind of design in the first place. Tasuku Mizuno "Legal design" Film Art Inc., 2017. ⁶ From an interview with Jinya Okamoto of Daihatsu Motor Co., Ltd. You can also read about the background to Goissho's development on the following websites : <https://caresul-kaigo.jp/column/articles/31314/> (last viewed January 6, 2024) <https://www.minnanokaigo.com/news/visionary/no69/> (last viewed January 6, 2024) <https://project.nikkeibp.co.jp/behealth/atcl/feature/00003/011100262/> (last viewed January 6, 2024) ⁷ : There are many books on listening and dialog practices, including a variety of listening programs, open dialogs, and encounter groups. However, we refer here to the following literature as a theoretical basis : Alberto Melucci, *The Playing Self : Person and Meaning in the Planetary Society*, Cambridge University Press, 1996 ; Michinobu Niihara, *Journey to the Boundary Domain : A Sociological Quest from the Capez Otsuki Shoten*, 2007 [in Japanese] ; Kiyokazu Washida, *The Power of Listening : A Clinical Philosophy*, Hankyu Communications, 1999 [in Japanese]. ⁸ : The "slower, deeper, softer" attitude towards things comes from Alexander Langer, who was involved in peace and environmental activities, and was later taken up by sociologists Alberto Merler and Michinobu Niihara. For example, see the following discussion : <https://sociology.r.chuo-u.ac.jp/blog/detail/270> ⁹ : From an interview with Gong Jow-jiun (December 7, 2023). See also the following website : <https://www.g-mark.org/gallery/winners/19930> (last viewed January 6, 2024) ¹⁰ : Meshwork is a concept introduced by Tim Ingold as a contrast to networks. The parliament of things comes from Bruno Latour. Tim Ingold, *Lines : A Brief History*, Routledge, 2007 ; Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, Harvard University Press, 2012. ¹¹ : From an interview with Shinjiro Kanazawa and Satoko Kanazawa (December 22, 2023).

Why every new business should aim for the GOOD DESIGN AWARD

Aki Hayashi

How businesses can flee from the lost 30 years

Japanese companies were once globally competitive in various industries and dominated market capitalization rankings. However, around the collapse of the bubble economy, the Japanese economy started to shrink and continued to stagnate. Then, a long slumber called the lost 30 years began. There has been a lack of cultivation of new competitive industries, and delays in digitalization and low efficiency have been pointed out.

According to the 2023 World Competitiveness Ranking by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD), Japan marked a new low of 35th among 64 countries and regions. Japan's nominal GDP in 2023 is expected to slip to fourth in the world, to be overtaken by Germany, after the U.S. and China, ranking first and second, respectively.

Many observers have pointed out that Japanese corporate giants, which lead the country's economy, lack in innovation. Their risk-averse mindset and inflexible organizational culture and personnel systems hinder cultivation of innovative endeavor, causing Japan's economic stagnation. This phenomenon is called "big company disease." I myself am a member of an organization and have many occasions to interview corporate executives. Through my work, I have become

aware of several themes that have a decisive influence on Japan's future: how to produce seeds of innovation, make the seeds sprout without dying, and grow the sprouts and make them bloom, as well as how to reform organizations to make these happen.

Will Japan or the Japanese economy keep on losing?

No. I believe I saw a ray of hope while reviewing a series of screening processes and having a talk with judges and award winners in 2023.

Innovative shavers created by historic giant

Daring design with no handle. A smooth, round, earbuds-case-size shaver. Electric shaver Panasonic Lamdash PALM IN was awarded the GOOD DESIGN GOLD AWARD in 2023 for its sophisticated stone-like texture that reduces the gadget feel, great portability, interior friendliness, and the compact design with high functionality. In late December 2023, it became a big hit as a Christmas gift, reshaping people's understanding of shavers. How did Panasonic, a long-established shaver manufacturer, produce this innovative product? I interviewed Ushio Bessho of Design Center, Living Products Innovation Division, Living Appliances and Solutions Company, Panasonic Corporation.

The project to commercialize the product commenced in the beginning of 2021. The

advanced design review (ADR), a workshop conducted by the design department of Panasonic to discuss designs and concepts of future home appliances, made a presentation to the management team and initiated the launch of the project.

Bessho looked back on the three key points that allowed them to bring innovation to a mature product category of shaver.

1. Skeptical attitude toward the status quo

In the matured market for shavers where companies compete only for shaving performance, creating a vision for the future was difficult. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic began, and people spent more time at home. This changed public awareness about health and beauty. We set our base concept of "creating new experiences starting from scratch" focusing on the change of values.

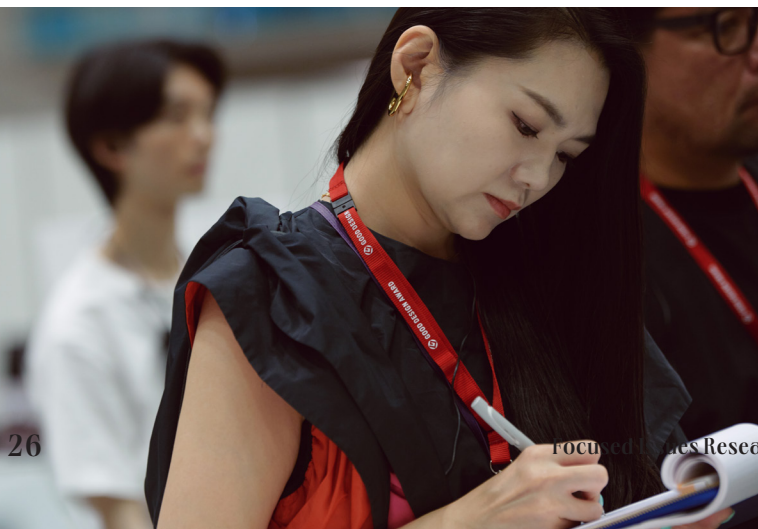
2. Subtraction mindset

The daring idea of eliminating even a grip was derived by thoroughly subtracting all frills other than the reliable five-blade spec and small, powerful linear motor. By reviewing the number of parts and materials, we successfully reduced the environmental impact and kept all functions in a palm-sized form without losing shaving performance. We also produced a new experience value of intuitive shaving as if communicating with the skin. It is difficult for historic giants to work on innovation, which sometimes means denying their past glories. "Why did we choose this design?" "Can it really sell?" I imagine they have faced many questions and concerns.

3. Will to question the public

Bessho recalled that they could break through the internal and external barriers before commercialization because all the designers, including Bessho, held firm in their decision to promote this product to the public.

For example, the design department planned and conducted user surveys to interview lifestyle-conscious users directly. The designers became convinced of success when they saw users holding the shaver in their hands as they pleased and commented,



“This can be used in this way” or “I want to keep this shaver in a place like this” without being asked.

The success of this item is backed by Panasonic Group’s design management practice project. Under a design philosophy “Future Craft”, designers are looking to explore design for the future. I can sense their strong will and intention, “We want to break barriers and make a stir.”

Organizational change happens when two different movements of top-down and bottom-up meet. This product demonstrates that corporate giant Panasonic is undergoing organizational innovation at this moment.

KOEL Design Studio by NTT Communications

There was another case that showed a sign of the transformation of big companies.

NTT Communications received the 2023 GOOD DESIGN AWARD for the work of KOEL Design Studio, which was established in 2020. They work on promoting design throughout the company and introducing design processes into their services.

Furthermore, two projects involving KOEL were also recognized: an individual training support “hitoe®” that connects a wearable device and a smartphone app to record exercise history, and a booking service “droppin®,” which allows users to search and reserve workspaces.

The work by KOEL was valued from two different angles. First is the impact of the launch of a design organization in the “public x design” domain by a highly public company like NTT Group. Second is the impact of incubating and spreading a design mind-set from inside throughout the giant company.

This may indicate that Japanese corporate giants have finally started to engage in drastic organizational reforms and innovation through design. It would be a waste if this ground swell was limited to design departments and designers.

Business people should aspire to the GOOD DESIGN AWARD

Now, I will explain the title of this article, “Why every new business should aim for the GOOD

DESIGN AWARD” from several perspectives.

• As can be seen from the proposal for the Start-up Agency, interest in innovation creation is growing nationwide. On the other hand, it is still a work in progress for companies, including big corporations. Facilitating new businesses, both in quality and quantity, is a top priority for the revival of the Japanese economy and Japanese companies.

• Organizations often generate psychological effects, such as “status quo bias,” and repression, such as “hitting the nail that sticks out.” As a result, it may become hard to promote endeavors for new businesses and domains and evaluate the future value and impact of such endeavors. In such a situation, by receiving awards or being recognized by other bodies, companies may be able to change the direction of their businesses, make bold investments, or make other decisions more easily.

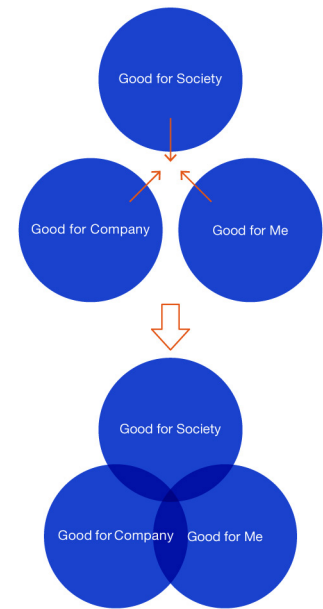
• Judges from diverse backgrounds in design work through the GOOD DESIGN AWARD screening process to determine the good for customers, society, and the future. If an award is granted, the business or product itself can be taken to a higher level.

• People in charge of new projects and drafters tend to feel isolated. Internal assessment on their work may fluctuate, and there also is a risk of resignation. In order to motivate and encourage innovation talent, which will become increasingly important in the future, applying for and winning awards will keep them taking on challenges and support them.

There is no need to hesitate just because you know little about design. I would like everyone to start from reviewing past award-winning products from the perspective of business development and find some tips or breakthroughs. Business people, why don’t you consider applying for the GOOD DESIGN AWARD?

Good design for unaddressed issues

I also believe that society as a whole will be improved if all business people, not just



designers, pursue “good,” or the GOOD DESIGN AWARD.

“Good” for each society, company (organization,) and person used to belong to different domains and directions. However, they have become closer to each other just like a Venn diagram through changes in social conditions and values. I also feel that the overlapping areas have become larger.

This trend was clearly shown in Social Good Market “Kuradashi,” the 2023 GOOD DESIGN GOLD AWARD winner. Kuradashi is a service that helps consumers to purchase short-dated food products at reasonable prices to reduce food loss. Users can purchase discounted products and contribute to society as their own business.

By advancing such all-round good designs that benefit society, companies, and individuals, we may be able to change society for the better. I also sensed such signs.

Looking at the overall 2023 entries and winners, many candidates focused on diverse issues, such as global environment, sustainability, disaster prevention, and health care. But I also realized that there are many more unaddressed challenges. Being behind in addressing issues, such as gender gap, suicide rate, poverty, discrimination, bullying, mental health, declining voter turnout, and fake news, Japan is said to be an advanced country filled with issues. I am hopeful that there is potential for good design in the future, especially regarding yet-to-be-addressed issues.

Outlook By Directors

Seiichi Saito × Jin Kuramoto × Yuko Nagayama

A wish for a design “credo”
that anyone can start



Beyond the dualism of objects and ideas

— “Design with Outcomes” was set as the theme of the 2023 GOOD DESIGN AWARD. What signs of the future did you notice as the three of you looked at the winning designs as Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, and Focused Issues Director?

Saito Objects are surrounded by ideas, and ideas are surrounded by objects. The word “outcome” was intended not to describe the dualism between the design of objects and ideas, but rather with the intent of evaluating a design idea right through from its inception to its output, as far as possible. Now that the screening is over, I am confident that we were able to move ahead with it by considering not just a single object or idea in isolation, but rather together with the ideas or objects generated around it.

And for those who applied, I believe that it was an opportunity to broaden the definitions and ranges of “design” which they held. For example, if you made an application for an item of furniture, we asked that you explain not only the design of the furniture itself but also the background to the materials and the story of the craft. I have a feeling that both the applicants and the judges have deepened their understanding of its appeal and of the background.

Kuramoto I think that choosing the word

“outcome” for the theme was a good idea. In recent years, the design industry has been talking about “vision” and “purpose,” but the term “outcome” is still unfamiliar. I think this term, which tugs at your attention somehow, has given the judges and applicants a chance to stop and think. As a result, I think we have expanded our perspective beyond the conventional dualism of objects versus ideas.

Nagayama The number of award-winning designs that do not focus on either objects or ideas, but rather include both, seems to be increasing. I feel that the designs of objects and ideas are mixing well.

Even in my field of architecture, the recognition that it is not enough to judge whether a design is good or bad by the tangible aspect, the building, has recently become common sense. We understand that the intangible aspect of the slightly earlier stages and the backstory which does not take on a tangible form are also very important, and both aspects are inseparable halves of the issue.

I felt that signs were appearing of the growing awareness of society as a whole that the beauty and attractiveness of the visible object is not all that matters. We have got into the habit of understanding the visible object alongside the story behind it, and society is now able to accept things that combine the best of both worlds.

Kuramoto I also think that this way of looking at things from multiple angles to set out a

good direction is a point that has started to be recognized as the value of design and designers in recent years. This is precisely why the 2023 GOOD DESIGN AWARD shines a spotlight on award-winning works created as a result of the “organic” movement of “brave” people in large organizations, and it has come to fruition in the theme of “Brave Attitude, Organic Design” set for the 2023 Focused Issues.

A more widely shared, more multifaceted perspective

— As you look at this year’s entries and winners, are there any issues that emerge for the future?

Saito I think it became apparent that there might be a slight discrepancy between the ideas of “outcome” as understood by different people. For example, when it comes to materials, different designers and domains focus on different ones. While these may be the correct answers for each of them, this raises the question of whether the format should be made somewhat uniform when we look at the overall picture. There are often differences in the range of outcomes as understood in different domains, which is exactly why I included the perspective of “Innovation for ‘Rules’ and ‘Norms’” in our proposal in order to bring us onto the same page.

Nagayama I agree with that point; however, on the other hand, it bothered me that there were cases in which people conformed without thinking, believing that “If we do this, it’ll give us the correct answer.” For example, they call things “environmentally friendly” just because they have to, and there is no substantive discussion about the impact of climate change on the global environment. If we devote a strange amount of energy to non-essential areas as a result, I think that this is putting the cart before the horse.

So, I think we need to look at things from a more multifaceted perspective. When looking at the totality of the situation, is it really desirable to use or reuse materials that are considered “environmentally friendly”? There have been plenty of cases in which I felt we needed to listen to and discuss opinions from a wider variety of people when designing, on the assumption that there were many parts that we could not see solely from our own perspective.

Kuramoto In the sense of a multifaceted approach, I felt that we could bring together more colorful opinions and viewpoints if there were more submissions from various countries for the GOOD DESIGN AWARD. For example, when I think about materials and investigate various aspects, I strongly feel that the perspective of regionality is very important and that we need to think about how to utilize materials that can be made in each region from a global perspective. If we understand the GOOD DESIGN AWARD to be a place where a kind of collective wisdom and intelligence can come together, it is necessary to attract applications from a wider range of countries, I think.

A wish for a design “credo” that anyone can start

— Bearing the 2023 screening in mind, what is your message for or your outlook on the design industry and society as a whole in 2024?

Saito I believe that we are all already able to confront the big issues that the design industry and Japanese society need to face with a shared consciousness. However, I also feel that we will need to face smaller issues going forward and to increase the resolution

of our gaze. Issues that tend to be lumped together as “social issues” differ depending on the region, the parties involved, and the situation. I believe that various industries, organizations, and designers must face each of these issues one by one.

I would like the GOOD DESIGN AWARD, too, to further support those who are confronting this type of small issue with a “Brave Attitude, Organic Design” and generating “outcomes” which transcend the dualism between objects and ideas.

Nagayama In the 2023 GOOD DESIGN AWARD, there were already cases in which each of those involved shared ideas about the scope of what they could do to tackle detailed issues, or in which people were taking forward small initiatives locally. The judges also looked very closely at these initiatives, which I thought was a very good thing.

I hope that more and more initiatives with such a high degree of resolution and attention to detail will appear in the future. The GOOD DESIGN AWARD should also be sure to pick these up.

Kuramoto Looking at this year’s winners, I felt that more and more initiatives to improve the design of systems and programs themselves were appearing. As more and more such

initiatives emerge, society as a whole should become more creative. We at the GOOD DESIGN AWARD also intend to pay attention to these.

— It would be great if this report, which summarizes the results obtained through the Focused Issues into a single proposal, became the first step towards realizing this vision.

Saito I am confident that in addition to examining and contextualizing the trends and signs that emerged during the screening, we were able to put together a concrete action plan. It would make me happy if you kept it in your head like a kind of “credo” (values and code of conduct on which corporate activities are based) for design.

Nagayama Rather than taking up detailed issues one by one, this proposal instead lays out a fundamental approach to design. I think that the result is something which will be easily understood not only by people working in the design field but also by those around them.

Kuramoto It would be good if it served as one opportunity to make it easier for many people to understand design. I hope that implementing this action plan itself will be a design initiative that anyone can start.



