

Dutch bikes and design thinking

An interview with designer Leonne Cuppen, curator and one of the initiators of YKSI design and Dutch Design Week and designer Daria Biryukova.

■ By DutchCham

Please tell us a little bit about yourself and what it is you do with YKSI Connect?

Lonne: About 25 years ago, I started a design studio together with two colleagues which focussed on furniture and interior design called YKSI Design. A few years ago, I started YKSI Connect, which is more about curation, collaboration and concept thinking. Nowadays, I'm responsible for YKSI Connect and YKSI Expo. For YKSI Expo we collaborate with young designers to create exhibitions, lectures and workshops. Daria is also part of YKSI Expo team. She is a young designer from Russia and lives in the Netherlands where she did a Master's Degree at the Design Academy.

Daria: I graduated from the University of Applied Arts in Vienna and the Design Academy in Eindhoven. Afterwards, I did an internship at YKSI Design and that's how I met Leonne. In 2015, I started my own design studio based in the YKSI Expo area. I have worked on several research projects, and together with Leonne, I'm involved in the exhibition organisation.

Now you are here in Hong Kong; why specifically here?

Lonne: In 2011, we had a Liberation of Light exhibition in Beijing and Guangzhou. This year, for a conference on infrastructure, I created an exhibition of Dutch bikes for Velocity. Every year it is in a different country, and last June, it was in Arnhem, the Netherlands. After we created the bike exhibition for Velocity, we got in touch with the Dutch Consulate in Guangzhou again. They asked us to give a lecture and workshop on Dutch bike design. We were asked to do this in Hong Kong as well.

Why are Dutch bikes a good example of Dutch design?

Lonne: A bike is quintessentially Dutch, which makes it interesting for foreign countries. It is also an object that is very design-minded. It's about health, lifestyle, social design; so, there are several key topics combined in a bike. A bike is an object that allows us to introduce all the topics that are really innovative at the moment. An exhibition using bikes is a good way to show how we work in the Netherlands.



From what you've seen so far, how does Dutch design differ from design in Asia, and in particular, in China?

Lonne: I think the Netherlands has a unique way of looking at creative processes. Twenty years ago, a designer was a person who only created the shapes at the final stage of the entire process. It was all about form and function, and not about creativity or process thinking. In the early 1990s, this changed. Nowadays, people recognise how important design is. I think this is typically something from the Netherlands. Other countries can learn from us, just like we can learn from the cultural ideas from other countries.

Because of that mindset, do you think there are a lot of opportunities for Dutch design in Asia? Do you already see that happening?

Lonne: Dutch designers are doing really well in foreign countries. Look at Phillips, for example. The company made the transformative change from lighting to healthcare - that's a commercial, economic example. But it is also an example of innovation and a technological way of thinking. There are also a lot of young designers that are doing well in the region.

During your stay in Hong Kong you will give a lecture and workshop on Design Thinking. Can you tell a bit more about this?

Lonne: During the lecture we will talk about what Dutch design means and I'll give an introduction about my work. After that, we will talk specifically about Dutch bikes. We will explain why the Netherlands is so strong in design thinking and how this can be implemented in bike-related projects.

Daria: During the workshop we will introduce different tools of design thinking and how to implement this in bikes. We would like to discuss the problems when it comes to biking and infrastructure in China and Hong Kong. We want to see what solutions the students come up with, and give them the chance to build prototypes. •



Leonne Cuppen

How technology can help improve communications – What's in the near future in the industry

For people who remember a time before cell phones and tablets, it can be impressive to consider how communication has changed. In less than twenty years, the development of technology like wireless Internet, text messaging and smartphones have significantly transformed the way people communicate with each other.

■ By Christiaan Stavorinus, Account Director Asia-Pacific, Global Accounts at PGI, www.PGI.com

Whether or not you embrace the multitude of new communication devices on the market, there is no getting around the fact that the technology revolutionised the communication process. From the moment we wake up, hop on the MTR and move through a whole succession of work spaces, we keep interacting with people, media and digital resources. Being my own example, technology tremendously helps me to interact with colleagues, partners, customers and suppliers.

Globally, large enterprises are now making the link between collaboration technologies and specific business benefits. According to Dimension Data's global 2016 analysis, the three most vital objectives for collaboration technology are to improve personal productivity, boost sales and accelerate decision making. It doesn't matter what size company you are. Collaboration promises faster reactions, increased efficiency and greater competitiveness.

In particular, cloud-based tools are one of the ways in which new technology is helping to level the field in both SMB and large enterprise segments. By relying on a cloud provider, companies are able to spend their time on business critical and strategic initiatives to further opportunities for business growth. According to Frost and Sullivan, "The Asia-Pacific cloud computing services market is expected to register a CAGR of 26.9 percent during 2014–2021 to reach \$32.02 billion at the end of 2021."

Behind that growth lays the fact that collaboration is becoming progressively more important to businesses, and that technology increasingly matters for collaboration. We ask ourselves, how can we stay competitive, are we connecting our mobile knowledge workers with the right tools? How do we strike a balance of flexible working hours? Are we working smarter?

Although email remains a standard method of both internal and external communication, it is not necessarily suited for the volume of today's workload and overflowing email inboxes that lead to stress and missed communications are a common problem. Though more urgent and immediate, phone communications can be interruptive, and people will rarely phone unless something is very important or an instant answer is required. Fortunately, there are a

number of other technological tools at our disposal which can help making collaboration more intuitive and efficient.

Here are three technologies that are helping businesses drive collaboration right now. 

- Video Conferencing  Once limited to boardrooms and large meeting venues, its reach and accessibility have been greatly expanded by the cloud, and is now enabling any-to-any conferencing between traditional room-based systems, desktop video and mobile devices.
- Interactive white boards | Interactive white boards technology has been adopted by enterprises as a critical collaboration and productivity tool. It can help improve workflows by increasing the engagement in group meetings.
- Social Platforms for business | Collaboration apps and platforms allow businesses to share information, locate experts, coordinate projects, discuss best practises and build communication within and across an organisation. Many of these solutions now incorporate Facebook-like social media aspects, which makes them more attractive to employees.

Work has evolved and the tools we use for work should too. The methods that worked best ten or twenty years ago don't meet the needs of today with the speed that change happens, geographically diverse teams and shifting teams and roles. Collaboration technologies help to shape how work is performed and enable teamwork that leads to better results. •



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