

Greetings from the 10 of us, industrial design students from the University of Montreal (Canada). In October 2023, we had the privilege of attending the 33rd edition of the World Design Assembly in Tokyo. This exceptional experience marked the pinnacle of our internship in Japan, where we traveled in search of inspiration to enrich our learnings and design thinking. The first day of the conference, themed 'Design Beyond,' left a lasting impression as we were captivated by the incredible event and insights shared by professionals. In this newsletter, we aim to briefly share our forum experience, express our deep appreciation for this impactful event, and delve into the reflections that accompanied our journey.

The theme "Design Beyond" underscores that design is evolving beyond traditional boundaries, emphasizing sustainability, user experience, and artificial intelligence. The integration of AI in design not only makes it smarter but also plays a role in managing the entire life cycle, reducing waste, and promoting sustainable solutions. This trend fosters innovative thinking, bringing design closer to user needs and creating resonant products, services and strategies.

As we prepared for the WDO's Research and Education Forum, we were looking forward to connecting with international designers and exploring their perspectives across three themes: design for humanity, human-centered technology, and behavioral design for the planet. Our exposure to major projects and expert-led conferences has motivated us for ambitious projects, revealing new paths by emphasizing on major humanitarian and environmental issues. The event encouraged the possibility of joining a professional association, fostering a sense of community among professionals with similar interests. The Forum is therefore a good opportunity to connect with professionals and educators in our domain and adjacent fields of work. Since we were introduced to the World of design during the pandemic, we weren't fully connected to the community and being amongst professional peers knitted this sense of belonging.

The conferences allowed us to leave with new knowledge, reflections, and inspiration on topics that should be taken more into matter by young professionals like us. One standout aspect was the personalized and confident presentation of projects, reflecting the personality of the designers. This conveyed a willingness to share, curiosity, and generosity that resonated with us. The way the projects were presented was imbued with the personality of the designers. The presenters seemed confident, human, and above all, themselves. It was inspiring to see that we could relate to certain individuals, and the event in general conveyed a willingness to share, curiosity, and generosity.

The forum aims to create an environment for the exchange of ideas and sharing experiences, especially through conferences. However, the format of these conferences, though interesting, was at times too fast for us to fully grasp the issues, processes, and solutions presented. For a more in-depth understanding of the shared studies, we would have benefited from access to the articles presented during these sessions. We believe that facilitating access to shared knowledge could strengthen the common goal of going Beyond Design as a worldwide community of designers.

Reflecting on our participation in the WDO Research and Education Forum in Tokyo prompts us to explore our expectations within a professional community, both as current design students and in our envisioned roles as emerging and established designers. Our expectations revolve around a professional environment conducive to continuous education, intellectually enriching exchanges, and the exploration of innovative perspectives. As aspiring emerging designers, we hope to join a collective that nurtures our initial forays into the professional realm, providing opportunities for collaboration and personal growth. Belonging to a professional community

assumes significance, encompassing a sense of shared identity, camaraderie, and mutual support. We envision our contribution as active and enriching, with the intent to share experiences and bring innovative perspectives to emerging challenges.

In conclusion, the impactful experience at the WDO Forum has shaped our expectations for a professional community. We aspire to an inclusive, intellectually stimulating, and collaborative community where our passion for design can flourish, contributing to the growth of this dynamic community.

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