**“MAPPING DESIGN\* STUDENTS AESTHETICS AND VISUAL PREFERENCES”**

*\* Design students from Architecture, Visual Communication, Fashion and Industrial Design*

**Introduction to Workshop – for students at Shih Chien University, Taipei**

March 15th – 20th 2015

**Dear students/**

You have been especially invited by your university to participate in this workshop, which is a part of our research project in “Mapping Design Students Aesthetic and Visual Preferences”.

We are very grateful that you will use your spare evenings to join and work with us and we do appreciate that you want to become a very important part of our research project, which will be explained in detail below.

**Introduction/**

We are Kirsten Marie Raahauge, Anthropologist, Associate Professor, Ph.D and Ann Merete Ohrt, Fashion Designer MA, Head of BA and MA Fashion Design, both from The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Schools of Design, Architecture and Conservation in Copenhagen, Denmark (see short bio’s below).

We are interested in exploring and mapping young designers and architects aesthetics and visual preferences in research; to observe and discuss with you how you collect and select visual research and inspiration within a given theme, how you organize or compose it within a given framework, and how you interpret, analyse and verbalize your visual research into your design practices, artistic research, theoretical research and general methods and processes.

As part of our design research ”Mapping Design Students’ Aesthetic and Visual Preferences” we are interested in comparing and mapping cultural differences, similarities and preferences in young designers design approach in order to understand how globalization and localization influence design. It is also the purpose to investigate how different teaching methods and “didactics” influence the way the young designers understand the practice and notion of design.

In this way we hope to broaden the importance of design and to gain knowledge and understanding of how design is conceived, practiced and taught.

You will be granted a certificate from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, as an appreciation and award for your participation and help.

**Before the workshop/**

Since the workshop takes place only a few hours over a very short period of evenings, we would like you to prepare for the workshop in advance. You should:

**Act and collect I:** Within the themes **body, home, urban space, identity and cultural codes** you prepare your own visual research material by collecting photos and other images, objects, “odds and ends” and short videos if necessary. You are **not** allowed to use the Internet, instead we expect you to explore and create your own research material from your local surroundings and environments – photos, drawings, smaller objects and things that you find in your local street life and places like the home, markets and other places in the city (cut-outs from local magazines is allowed). Your research material should address the following questions:

* How are people dressed?
* How do they live?
* How are shops and streets organized?
* What is normal and what is special?
* How do you spot the extraordinary, and how do you recognize the ordinary?

As our workshop will take place at night, it is important to take some photos and videos from daytime, especially from life in the streets, in order to have a picture of street life during daytime and in sunlight.

Please bring all material printed out + all objects etc. the first day (2015/3/16) we meet. We will send you a sketchbook, which we will ask you to use throughout the workshop as a log-book/reflective journal and documentation of your process. We would like to lend this book and bring it to Denmark for a more in depth analysis and as a tool to develop our future workshops. The book will of course be returned to you.

Think about your definition of the concept of design:

* What does it mean to you?
* How would you define it?
* How is it connected to your discipline (fashion, industrial design, architecture and visual communication)?
* To other contexts such as the market, the history, the society, the materiality of the world surrounding you?

**Workshop Schedule/**

* **3/16 Mon: Act and collect II**

Introduction to our research, the workshop and presentations of your findings. We will introduce you to the methods of collecting and introduce you to the idea of “Wunderkammer” as a framework of organizing and composing your findings/research material. During the first evening we would also like to discuss your definition of design.

* **3/17 Tue: Analyse, select and expand/include**

Discuss and arrange your findings – discard items that do not fit the theme and “scout” for images, interviews etc. which strengthen your research. Each group collects images, things, odds and ends, makes interviews in order to prepare a finale presentation of their visual design research.

* **3/18 Wed: Present**

Select a format for the presentation, 2D, 3D, video, animation, installation. Visual presentations. You are encouraged to make an exhibition, possibly framed as a Wunderkammer of objects, pictures and videos within a particular frame defining the perspective, created by your work with collecting, mapping, analysing, and selecting your findings.

* **3/19 Thu: Reflect**

A short oral design reflexion and statement, we will expand on this when we arrive. You should make a presentation about your work and your objects, and furthermore we would like to ask permission to take your findings with us to The Academy of Fine Arts in Denmark, in order to continue the workshop there. You will of course get your findings back. Discuss the interconnections of the concept of design as you see it and work with it and your findings.