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Objeto Brasil Association is a partner and participates as a guest member of ICSID (International Council of Societies of Industrial Design), IFI (International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers) and IDSA (Industrial Designers Society of America).

She implemented and directed, from 1980 to 2002, the Department of Technology and Industrial Design at FIESP (Federation of Industries of the State of São Paulo), at the invitation of businessperson José Mindlin. Joice has a career of over 40 years working in promoting Brazilian design in Brazil and throughout the world.

Design for all.

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The search for a design for everyone is a guiding concept in my professional history in several aspects. One important mission in this area is about helping as many people as possible acknowledge what exactly is design, or industrial design, and all the different ways that design affects our lives concretely.

A lot is said about how design is present everywhere in our lives. It is very important to make explicit what this totality is. Design is the discipline responsible to dedicating the the creation of objects that fulfill certain specific functions in our daily lives, or objects that solve specific problems.

From the moment we wake up, for instance. The clothes we are wearing, or the bedding we are lying on, they were thought of and designed before they came to existence. Most likely, these objects were manufactures using a machine, or a set of tools. This machine and these tools were also planned (and probably went through a series of trial and errors before arriving at their final versions). In the bathroom: our shower, the packages of our soap or toothpaste, the sink and the pipe system that fills it with water, all of this was thought and drawn out in advance. The layout of the furniture and the architecture of the rooms we live in are also forms under which design manifests itself in our everyday lives.

Design is, notoriously, the discipline of “making palpable” and “problem solving”, if we think in general terms. Thus we can realize that design is “in everything”. And what would be a design “for everyone”?

One of the aspects of “design for all”, or “universal design”, has to do with the notion of the usage of the objects in itself. This is associated with inclusion and with accessibility. This means that, when thinking a product, tool or object, it is important to have in mind that the user is a person that is *different* from us. Thinking specifically of the possible diversity between users, we can think of objects that are apt for usage by certain niches of people – for instance, school material for left-handed children. This was not seen as a necessity, and left-handed children in educational systems had to “adapt” to use tools or school furniture that was designed for right-handed students, who represent a majority. Or we can think of objects that have its use made easier, so they can be operated by people with reduced mobility or grip. Going one step beyond we can find products that, by their own excellence, creativity and ingenuity, can serve the largest possible number of people, catering to specific niches but also to the general public. In what refers to their usage, these objects can be thought of as “universal”.

Inclusion and accessibility are of the highest importance. But, to think of design that is truly for everyone, we have to go even further, and consider production processes. Using local materials and simpler materials, for instance, we can make a product cheaper. Costing less, this product will be more accessible and more universal.

An interesting case study is represented by Bauhaus, design school created 100 years ago in 2019. If we look at our current global context, in which many countries are involved in destructive conflicts, we can think of how design can help bring quality of life to help in the reconstruction and requalification of the industry and the economy in places who suffer these kinds of conflicts (not to

mention reconstruction itself, which is sometimes of crucial importance – which was the case on the onset of Bauhaus, which had a mission to develop a design that would serve all, in a moment of total economic and social need, in a country, Germany that had suffered great destruction after World War I.

What Bauhaus was searching was, in a way, a step towards the origin of “industrial design”, in its basic and inherent principles and concepts. I have always defended and somehow advocated in favor of product design. Because a three-dimensional product carries in itself, as a complement or as a prominent factor, a discourse on its universality (or not), be it by its form of usage or by the way it is manufactured, as well as the graphic design present in it (which could also be analyzed from a communication theory point of view through its semiotics), and a two-dimensional factor which is its packaging.

Regarding that, we have numerous examples. A brief parenthesis: there are countless ways of thinking how the exterior of a product can communicate what should be expected of it. The “packaging” of a newspaper, for instance, is its cover, where all the headlines and news that form its interior can be found. Packaging is very important and can be inclusive, user-friendly and of easier comprehension for manipulation and use.

Design, especially in Brazil, is considered sometimes a thing for a select and rich few. The Bauhaus experience was also aimed towards this aspect. In reality, the inherent innovation brought by them to “industrial design” (and to design in general, three-dimensional, two-dimensional or graphic design) is simplicity. However, design is sometimes put in a position that is so complicated, or so

“sophisticated”, that this can drive people away and consider that design is something for the privileged and those who have purchasing power. Design, in reality, is the opposite of that.

Concerning reconstruction and its importance in the Bauhaus project, these aspects were revalued, in search for a style of design in which its own simplicity was the factor that made it subject to use by everyone, in an accessible manner. In both post-war periods in the 20th century, we were able to measure the importance of “design for all”. It seems that after a period of devastating and deliberate destruction, humankind sought out to prove that there is a potential for creation and (re)construction that will always surpass any potential for destruction.

In this context, another important contribution that we should consider is that of Charles and Ray Eames, after World War II. They were asked by the creators of the Ulm School to develop basic home furniture that could be used by anyone and everyone. E furniture had to be, therefore, accessible, easy to manufacture, lightweight and not expensive. We have to imagine that, after a devastating war, there are no good means of transportation for the industry, and objects need to be carried by hand. All of this needs to be considered by the designers.

Among the creators of the Ulm School was Inge Scholl, whose family was earlier involved in a peaceful resistance movement against the Nazi regime in Germany (the “White Rose” movement). Therefore, in the core of School of Ulm we can find an antifascist element which can also be thought of as an aspect of “design for all”—the opposite of what is proposed by fascist or totalitarian governments, where what is different must be destroyed.

The many requisites are in fact varied and sophisticated when you think of a design that is truly for all. If we take into account a situation that is that of abnormality, when society's "normal" functioning has broken down or been destroyed, there is the necessity of not only catering to the basic needs (already implied in industrial design), but also to bring something more.

This something more can be: happiness, and, if we are talking about good design, it will also bring wellness and quality of life. Design can be something to inspire people to see that it is possible to rebuild, and to start over, even after traumatic events and of the aftermath of destruction.

Design can help create, via the ideas it transmits, a personal sacred space that can stimulate people once again in search of survival, reinvention, of finding new joys that can be important for restarting life and work. It can also create socially a means of uniting and bringing about hope in a context of reconstruction.

We all need to have our house and home, with some furniture, a table and a chair, where we can be by ourselves or with our families. We need beds to sleep and a place to be, and all of this is important for reinventing and innovating ourselves. And design is innovation.

In the case of Bauhaus, their mission had to do with bringing back values that were original to industrial design and were manifest even in the appearance of the products. In the case of Charles and Ray Eames, who had more technology available and were in a different stage of industrialization, the investigation went into the manufacturing processes and the economy of resources: the thought of plywood, which was a lighter material, and also easier to be manufactured. In a post-war context, there was also not enough

machinery available, so manufacturing had to be simple. The lightweight of the materials also helped them be easier to assemble once they were at the houses of the users.

In many ways, ideas can be cyclical. Today, there is no question about the importance of universal design. Design for all comes when you think of design as a basic good: to give access to good things, good objects, a good communication, for everyone. Today, people celebrate 100 years of Bauhaus, but its universalizing factor was lost throughout the years. The majority of people look at the great names of Bauhaus with a mix of reverence and also a feeling that it is something special, for the elites, the exceptions. But Bauhaus came about having in mind the common citizen, so that everyone could have good things, and essential things in their houses, to rebuild their lives.

We do not have wars in Brazil, but we are living extremely difficult situations. It is necessary to work hard to shed light on and to remedy the ever growing abyss that comes between "design for a few", inaccessible and expensive, and "design for all", a division that is increasingly stopping people from experimenting fundamental things that can bring joy, color, and good energy for the daily live of the majority of the people.