

Editorial

Our Journal passed a further milestone in March this year when the first annual *Studies in Design Education Craft and Technology* conference was held. The subject was New Developments at Brunel and Loughborough, the discussion was led by Professor Bernard Myers and Professor Ken Brittan, a major exhibition was mounted and the participants numbered over 150 of whom a great majority were readers.

The conference was characterised not only by the quality of the speakers and the display but also by the intensive discussion both during the conference sessions in the tea and coffee breaks and at the bar. The unanimous verdict was that the event was a huge success and a firm commitment exists for a repeat next year.

Fortunately there is no shortage of subjects of similarly keen interest to readers. Pride of place goes to an important exchange of letters, printed in this issue, between Mal Evans, a member of the editorial board of *Studies in Design Education Craft and Technology*, and the Prime Minister on the recognition of 'A' levels in Design and Technology. The full and informed response of the Prime Minister will not only encourage all concerned with the status for our subject but should have considerable influence on those who evaluate it in universities, polytechnics and industry.

Closely following this in importance is the decision, after some years of industrious labour within the Department of Education and Science, by the Assessment of Performance Unit to make the first move to include Design and Technology within its scheme of testing. This will commence with a survey of the feasibility of monitoring performance in the subject area; the study will be based upon a document drawn up by a specialist working party within the Assessment of Performance Unit.

Readers will at once see the implications behind this apparently technical statement; the inclusion of Design and Technology into the core areas of school performance currently being monitored by the Assessment of Performance Unit has fundamental consequences for the status and study of our subject. Not only can the Assessment of Performance Unit monitoring unambiguously demonstrate what is happening in the schools; perhaps of equal importance it can also demonstrate what is not happening. Not only will schools be left in no doubt that what is happening in Design and Technology is of national importance; they will also be able to see very clearly if their pupils' performance in this area is limited or lacking.

But such consequences are still in the future. Readers of *Studies in Design Education Craft and Technology* can be reassured that they will be kept in touch with news of progress; it may well be possible to devote next year's conference to a full discussion of the changing patterns of assessment and examinations in our subject.

Meanwhile the present issue presents a characteristically lively set of contributions. Of particular importance is the exchange of views

between Sir Roy Shaw, Secretary-General of the Arts Council, and Professor G.H. Bantock on the Arts in Contemporary Society. Defining Arts in their fullest sense (which unquestionably includes the professional activities of readers of *Studies in Design Education Craft and Technology*) they explore crucial issues of patronage, distribution, finance and evaluation. In particular they explore the issues of personal expression, appreciation and enjoyment – the qualities of response that provide not only the underlying purpose but also the unifying experiences that characterise all forms of artistic endeavour. The exchange of ideas which will command the attention of all readers has central relevance to our present activities and our future prospects.

The remainder of the issue is devoted almost wholly to discussions of a range of exciting projects taking place in the schools. Mal Evans reports on a 6th form design project to aid the teaching of language and number to primary school children. The article is remarkable not only for the range of ideas that developed in the sixth formers but also the impressive links these adolescents were able to establish with their primary school counterparts. It is almost without surprise that we read at the end of the ways in which the ideas of the students are being developed through commercial television, book publishers, industry and universities.

Not surprisingly the School Design Prize has once again generated a similarly wide range of imaginative project activities. Although readers will have had an opportunity to hear and see some of the successful entries on television and in the press earlier in the year there is no doubt that the accounts by the teachers concerned with some of these entries will still be of very considerable interest. This section of the issue is introduced by Richard Kimbell who outlines the overall strategy of the competition this year. He is followed by articles by Christopher Thomas of Sevenoaks School, C.S. Yorke of Swaffham Hammond's School, Aerwyn Watson of Rossall School, A.J. Wardle of Blessed Edward Oldcorne School and Tim Lewis of Horsforth School. In each of these articles teachers are talking to teachers in precisely the manner *Studies in Design Education and Craft and Technology* was established to facilitate.

John Cave whose article on Alternative Approaches to Technology in the School attracted so many readers in the last issue presents his second article in which he again offers a range of unusual but effective and well tested strategies in the fields of electroplating, electroforming, electro-chemical machining, photofabrication and a range of other techniques that will send readers off to their workshops with enthusiasm. He goes on to provide a helpful list of suppliers of some of the more unusual lists of equipment that are needed for the activities he describes.

Finally, Kuldip Reehal, a student at the sixth form of Colton Hills School, offers an essay on the

Designer and His Society which shows a depth of perception and understanding that readers will find impressive as a student analysis and informative as a contribution to their own thinking.

The issue concludes as always with a selection of Review and Notes. Once again we have cast our net more widely than most journals to bring readers information on publications and events in a world wide context.

This editorial concludes with its annual business item. Readers will notice that we have once again held our annual price increase down, this time to a modest 50p a year, far less than the inflation in our paper, printing and postage costs. The reason again has been our growth in circulation and advertising revenue. Our readers are largely to thank for this; it is right and proper that they should thereby benefit.

John Eggleston

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