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DesignTO Symposium: Unlocking the Future of Work

Saturday, January 26, 2019 George Brown College, Toronto



DesignTO's fourth annual symposium brings 10 multidisciplinary experts into one room for an inspiring discussion on the Future of Work. The event features five thematic sessions on topics like meaningful work, inclusion and diversity, work space, economic systems, and ethics.

Them

Whether we imagine a utopian or dystopian future, whether we envision a future of work where humans and machines co-exist and work together, or one where workers are replaced by machines and algorithms, we know that many features of that future are already here. But in many cases, other aspects are unpredictable.

This year the DesignTO Symposium raises the question: What about humans in the future of work? In 10 presentations, speakers will invite us to stretch our imaginations, creating space for possibilities and inclusion, while keeping grounded in our humanity. They will tackle complex questions around meaningful work, inclusion and diversity, work space, economic systems, and ethics.

Presenters and Sessions

Registration 12:30pm

Opening Remarks 1:00pm

Meaningful Work (1) 1:25pm

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Reclaiming Meaningful Work

Tom Morin, co-founder, Work Innovation Partners, and author and speaker, Work Feels Good

A new generation of workers are coming-they are software, robots, and machine intelligence. We're already seeing this shift as software permeates our built environment, our cars, and even our clothing. Over time, the line between what's human and computer will be blurred. How can we embrace this progress in our workplaces in order to augment our own work? How can we work with machines to leverage the best of human capability and the best of computer capability? Human-computer collaboration is here to stay and has the potential to create a better and fairer society for everyone. It's up to all of us to shape how.

More people working on stuff that matters: A blueprint for the organization of the future?

Chloe Waretini, designer and cultural innovator, The Future of Work is Human

Enspiral is a radical "boss-less" collective founded in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Their mission, held since 2010, is to create a system of work where people can focus their energies on what is most meaningful to them, flourishing as humans in the process. What does that look like? Distributed leadership, agility, experimentation, rich ongoing learning and development, and a strong sense of community - all traits that the Future of Work scene is chasing. Chloe will speak about her years at Enspiral and how these practices are now helping Canadian organizations become future-ready.

Inclusion & Diversity (2) 1:50pm

Open Visions: Creating alternative futures narratives through diversity and inclusion

Angelika Seeschaaf Veres, Daniel Daam-Rossi, Koby Barhad, co-founders, Radical Norms

Shifting the focus from WHAT the future of work might be to WHO has the power and tools to envision it, 'Open Visions' is a digital design tool for collaborative visioning of futures in Canada based on five core principles created by The Truth and Reconciliation Commission. 'Open Visions' seeks to decolonize design as a practice in the context of Toronto's diversity, and a rapidly growing industry of innovation and emerging technologies.

Design Activism: Exploring the aesthetics of collaboration and inclusion in the context LGBTQ people.

Juan Saavedra, design researcher, M.Des candidate at Carleton University

This presentation explores the perspective overlap between practice and research as a queer-identified designer. As current Master of Design student,

Juan's research investigates the criteria of Design Activism and its relationship to LGBTQ concerns on subjects such as disability, inclusion, and community engagement. Highlighted in this presentation will be the methods and limitation of design research in the context of LGBTQ people living with episodic disabilities, as well as community engagement projects.

Panel Q&A 2:15pm

Break 2:45pm

Work Space (3) 3:00pm

Affordances: What we should expect from our workplaces

Yoel Berznoger, Director, Client Engagement Studio, Haworth

Affordances are the characteristics of a space that encourage certain behaviors. As we look to the Future of Work, it is critical for spaces to not only encourage a variety of task-oriented behaviors, but also support us physically, emotionally, and cognitively while doing so. Based on 15+ years of research, this session will provide thought-provoking insights and considerations designed to align all of these needs together.

Architecture After Work: Office Landscapes

Mason White, Associate Professor, University of Toronto, and Partner, Lateral Office

This talk will provide an overview of the changing impact of forms of work on forms of architecture. From the factory to co-working, work activities and the social spheres of collaboration and organizational hierarchies reveal direct connections with architecture and the burolandschaft. This visual survey will focus on the changing presence of technology and social spaces, including precedent analysis of shifts in forms of work. It will conclude with a specific case study by Lateral Office.

Economic Systems (4) 3:25pm

Future of the Shared Housing Economy

Wendy W Fok, Assistant Professor, Parsons School of Design, and Creative Director, WE-DESIGNS

Innovations in, and the rapid development of, the Internet since 1989 have allowed architecture to overcome the traditional limitations of physical space and professional hierarchy. Today the discipline is practiced increasingly in digital space. Online collaboration across industries has led to innumerable advances in both global manufacturing and architecture by facilitating the distribution of electronic files, and the exchange of information across borders. However, online collaboration has also increased the vulnerability of creators and innovators, who can do little to protect themselves from the dangers of duplication, illicit file-sharing, and high-speed transfers.

Fishing Nets in the Fashion Industry, Transforming Forgotten Traditions

Mauricio Navarro, Industrial Designer, Co-director, D.A.R. Projects

Jenny Boucher, Fashion Designer, Co-director D.A.R. Projects

A fisherman, husband of one of our weavers, came to D.A.R. Projects for help because his boat motor was broken. They realized that his net-making skills were a perfect fit for a new creative adventure. This adventure has led to a team of 20 fishermen who couldn't have imagined that their weaving skills could generate an alternative income, and recognition from the fashion industry. The application of design process around a framework of social impact has redefined the perception of handwork value within the local economy.

Ethics (5) 3:50pm

Designing Privacy, Terms and Conditions for the Future of Work

Daniel Daam-Rossi, visual maker, co-founder, Radical Norms

Christopher Pandolfi, founder and Managing Partner, Department of Unusual Certainties Sam McGarva, designer and researcher, Department of Unusual Certainties

'Designing Privacy' is an ongoing research project between studios Department of Unusual Certainties and Radical Norms, with the aim of furthering public discourse that surrounds "privacy" in this

digital age. Using a developed framework of "privacy considerations" as the backdrop for our talk, the aim is to explore the role and responsibility of the "digital citizen" within the context of work, and through the lens of digital privacy.

Personal Carbon Economy

Shihan Zhang, Design Futurist, Gray Area Art & Technology Foundation

Every human activity creates carbon emissions, which contribute to global warming. What if individuals have to pay for every gram of carbon dioxide they emit? What if there is a new currency created upon dollars for carbon emissions in the future? What new carbon policies, businesses, and jobs would emerge? 'Personal Carbon Economy' proposes a possible economic model and design interventions into a not-so-far-fetched near future of personal carbon cap and trade to promote a carbon responsible future.

Panel Q&A 4:15pm

Closing remarks 4:45pm

Event End Time 5:00pm