

Foreword

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Foreword

This special issue of The Design Journal brings together selected papers from the 10th European Academy of Design (EAD) Conference, held in Gothenburg, Sweden, in April 2013. Held every two years at venues across Europe since 1995, the EAD Conference has grown from an initial innovative idea shared between a few close colleagues to become a respected and internationally recognized forum for design research and a well-established event attracting an ever-broader range and mix of delegates from around the world, while retaining the spirit of a close-knit community.

The EAD was founded in 1994 by a pioneering group of academics, led by Professor Rachel Cooper OBE, with the aim of improving research collaborations across Europe and the subsequent dissemination of design research to a wide audience. The biennial conference was one step towards achieving this aim; another was the founding of The Design Journal in 1997, edited since its inception by Rachel. In a similar way to the conference series, the journal has since developed into an internationally respected depository of design knowledge and debate.

As with any established body, the EAD is currently going through an inevitable period of change. Many of the younger generation of researchers the academy always sought to support are now well-established academics in their own right, and a new, and larger, generation of early-career researchers are looking to the EAD for similar inclusive support. With respect to the journal, its publisher, Berg, has been taken over by Bloomsbury, which should help to further expand its reach, and with the help of new management there, has introduced an online submission system, which will streamline the processing of papers through to publication.

The 10th EAD Conference was a pivotal moment in this transition, as Rachel Cooper announced her decision to step down as Chair of the academy and as Editor of the journal. Louise Valentine has taken over my previous role as Associate Editor, and we have made some changes to the Editorial and Advisory Boards. We hope that taken together these changes will enable the journal to continue to be an important part of international design research activity.

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Rachel for the generous and inspirational work she has done in leading the academy and the journal over the past two decades. It is a significant legacy, and one which owes a lot to a dedicated group of researchers committing their time and effort; but there is absolutely no doubt that without her, the academy and the journal would not be what they are today.