

Craig Dykers discusses the profession of architecture

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TECHNEWS WRITER

Born in Frankfurt, Germany, but educated at The University of Texas Austin, Craig Dykers is a very humble individual. Dykers is one of the founding partners of Snohetta, a firm based in Oslo with factions in New York, San Francisco and Singapore. His interest in architecture mostly revolves around the human experience and how conflict causes people to disconnect. While trying to analyze architecture's role as a landscape and as a communicator for predicting and fostering the way we live.

"The environment humans create becomes their medium for defining their role in it"

He starts his presentation with those words, reminding the community of the larger context in which we practice, then goes on to discuss how important it is we as architects not view humans as abstractions. To create curiosity and confusion and to then use

those emotions to break down the blasé effect the world has pressed into us. This theme of human experience was definitely the message he was trying to get across through his curating of work.

The first project he discusses is the proposal for the New Alexandria Library in Egypt, finished just before the Arab spring, he then talks about how much of a triumph it was to win his first competition and how (like Joshua Prince-Ramus-Seattle Public Library) it kick-started his career allowing for respect and clients to flow in. When discussing his work on the library, he emphasizes the point to create something so strong people are forced to love it. Then proceeds to show images of protesters forming a human shield around the newly created library to protect it from destruction. Ending with talk about how, in the 1980s, he was conscious of sustainability before it was the buzzword. Imploring young designers to always be hungry for the next big traditions, to always have fresh eyes.

During the middle of his lecture, he begins explaining his work on the World Trade Center site and how much pressure it was to be tasked with forming the only building on the flattened site. Comparing the holes where towers once stood as the past or the history while the new skyscrapers in the surrounding area (New World Trade Center Tower) as the gleaming future. So he worked around with a few ideas before finally settling designing a building purely meant for the present, so that he could, in theory, bridge the gap between the iconic past and the resilient future.

For those who have not seen the building, it uses multilayered program to play with 'observed verses observing' and what can be made when those roles are being constantly switched.

The final structure he talks about is a recent library construction in North Carolina. He talks a lot about how it's okay to have intense levels of complexity and how a building, as an experience, should reveal itself as you

progress through it. Making a point to discuss how each floor has its own motif completely separate from the building envelope. He then remarks that it's okay to be fuzzy, and to play with defined edges. He does this by putting a lot of heavy use on light, using it for direction and shadows for creating boundaries. What's interesting is his understanding that a well-done library should not be centered on containing and holding. Instead, it should manifest discussion and learning. He did a lot of work with anthropomorphism to derive his spaces and he uses screens as ways to connect people by distance.

He finishes by pressing a specific idea phrased as a question, "Are we really designing buildings anymore, or should we be working towards an "operational performance landscape" as a way to create connection and hopefully love?"

I encourage everyone to check out his work with more depth at his website. <http://snohetta.com>

Student org feature: get to know WIIT

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Most people on campus, including myself, believed WIIT was just simply a radio station that hosted talk shows by students, faculty, and alumni. When enquired about further, the station manager of WIIT said, "WIIT is a campus radio with the limitations of a student organization, but the expectations to hold up to very high standards." The radio station began operation in the year 1956 as an educational radio station and now is one of the oldest still operating radio stations. When it was first set up, the radius was licensed as a tool to help learning. With the development of FM radio, the scope of the station was expanded and currently has a range of 20 to

30 blocks in any direction. Other than over the FM range, people can tune into WIIT through online apps and websites.

Their aim is to put on good shows on a daily basis, shows that inspire and motivate students, as well as to conduct concerts and to give tickets to students for different concerts. According to the station manager, once a show is conducted, it never repeats itself. So all the Bill Nye fans, "I am sorry about your crushed hopes and dreams. And to all those who never had the chance to meet him, I hope your future paths cross roads with him." In the recent years, WIIT has started an executive board that is rewriting the constitution with all the proper documentation in order to allow smooth transition between managers. As there is a great deal of money invested in WIIT not only

by the college, but even private investors, it has to meet the next to impossible standards set by its investors and as of now is doing a great job at it.

The next question that most students have is whether WIIT is restricted to the students with musical talents. Bluntly, the answer is no. It is open to all students with limitations that have been set forth: any student with an interest in starting a show, must present themselves to the executive board who then decides the fate of the show. The only restrictions are the timing and whether it is good enough/appropriate for a college station.

According to the station manager, WIIT has become better known after change in its location from the red building to the MTCC glass studio, which has attracted much

more attention. The radio station currently staffs the executive board, 35 DJs, a handful of committee members and a graduate advisor. 75% affiliation with the college students and 25% with communities in and around the city. Recently, an alumnus, Jeremy Nixon had started a show called "Nixon for President."

WIIT is a great opportunity for all students to host their own show and voice their opinions. As the station manager said, "While we are a student organization, we are a radio station first and foremost." So don't hesitate or be shy, just walk up and start a show of your own and sooner or later the show will start to change lives of people around you, including yourself.



Photos by Kevin Zheng (left), Abhinaya Iyer (right)

TEDxIIT introduces plan, theme for 2016 event

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TEDxIIT is a student organization with the purpose to host a world class TED event on IIT campus with a wide audience: from students, to guests, to viewers from around the world. It is designed for a global IIT community, which includes all students, alumni, faculty, staff, trustees and the greater IIT community.

TEDxIIT was founded by IIT alumna Amy Lee Segami in 2009 shortly after she was invited to TEDxPeachtree in Atlanta as a speaker. Since the first day of TEDxIIT, her vision has always been to demonstrate the talents and ideas of our community, as she once stated "The project brings individuals out of their silos to work toward a common

goal, and share ideas and resources along the way." Acting as an instructor and co-organizer, Segami works with a diverse group of student leaders every year to prepare for the main event. This year, Yinman Zhong, a graduate student studying public administration, leads the group as president. The executive board also includes Amarsinh Deshmukh, the vice president and a graduate student from India majoring in ITM, vice president in operations Xiao Qin, a graduate student in finance from China, Niharika Karia, who is our secretary and graduate student studying data science from India; and Burbuque Muhadri, treasurer and graduate student studying finance. The team also welcomes many student volunteers are involved in various committee productions, communications, speakers, marketing and hospitality and fundraising. Each one of them

serve one ultimate purpose of making sure that the audience will spend enjoyable time and will have the best experience at the grand event.

Solving consecutive challenges, the team turns problems into opportunity to learn valuable lessons beyond the context of the classroom. "The students involved learn creative problem solving and experience the potential for innovation through collaboration. TEDxIIT offers tremendous learning and sharing experience for the students as much as for the speakers and audience," Segami reflects.

As a result, TEDxIIT 2015 : X-Fusion, like many previous TEDxIIT event, was a successful event. All seats were filled with audience enthusiastically enjoying talks from speakers from diverse background and industry. The event also attracted 30,000

viewers globally through its live-streaming channel. They also had the honor to be featured in Huffington Post's article where the author, Mr. Gershbein who was also TEDxIIT 2015 faculty advisor, described his time here to be "game-changing experience," that he had "plenty of light bulb moments," and that it provided him "a unique vantage point of the sizzling-hot TED culture and broadened my horizons as an educator." This year, TEDxIIT 2016: Unexpected will be on April 10th 2016, featuring speakers whose stories ranges from personal to professional. They will provide the audience with a closer look on how unexpected ideas improved and brought significantly positive changes to their lives.

Stay tuned for more information coming soon!