

KIOSK.

A MAGAZINE OF ART, DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE



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THE TEAM

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the fourth issue of KIOSK, the annual of art, design and architecture.

You have read the first three excellent issues. We've had, in order: politics; internationalism; activism. The first thought for what next was, simply, 'catastrophism – the end of the world!' Then we knew:

Constraint.

We all feel constrained: by disciplinarity; by cultural convention and expectation; by technology; by media; by time. By institution.

Art, design and architecture regard themselves as constrained by this or that, and create stuff that looks quite the reverse.

The economic strictures we are all now experiencing are offset not by borrowing or budgeting, but by a version of life not measurable by a balance sheet. This is constraint's delightful other side: restriction as fun. The wise know that culture advances in a recession, and develops in spite of it. So welcome the new constraint, but ignore those who preach it as party policy, market principle or academic necessity. Let it all out!

Read these accounts of constraints accepted, overcome, embraced and rejected. Constraint can be good for you.

This is KIOSK. It will change your life.

**Paul Micklethwaite
& Chris Horrocks
KIOSK 04 / Editors**

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FOREWORD

The theme of KIOSK 04 is 'constraint'.

How to design a publication with constraint as a starting point? How to design a publication with constraint as a constraint? Constraints are limitations or restrictions. We looked to design a publication that lifted the constraints of printed matter.

It was once believed that digital media would constrain print and that the book would somehow cease to exist. This hasn't happened. In fact the opposite is now true. Digital media has created further opportunities for printed publications and deeper experiences for the reader / viewer.

Originally developed by Toyota in 1994 to track parts in vehicle manufacturing, QR (Quick Response) codes store addresses and URLs and have emerged as the real world hyperlinks for *mobile tagging*, allowing the accessing of online data. Readers with camera phones, and a reader application installed, can discover more content, simply by pointing their device at the codes within KIOSK 04.

Imposing constraints can create opposing outcomes.

Lawrence Zeegen,
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KIOSK 04 / Concept and Design

_ 06

THE LIMITATION OF INFORMATION
LAWRENCE ZEEGEN

_ 12

TRACY EMIN'S FRONT DOOR
FRED VERMOREL

_ 22

SUSPICIOUS ACTS IN SENSITIVE PLACES
HARRIET RICHES

_ 32

**EMOTIONS CONSTRAINED -
VOICING THE SOUNDS OF SIGHS**
FRANK MILLWARD

_ 42

THE DESIGNER'S SKETCH IN THE DIGITAL TOOLBOX
JAMES SELF

_ 52

PLAGIARISM, PIRACY, AUTHORSHIP
GAVIN EVERALL

_ 58

**PRESS 'ESCAPE': THE SAD CASE OF THE DEATH
AND VIRTUAL LIFE OF THE KOREAN IT WORKER**
CHRIS HORROCKS

_ 64 **7.9 CUBIC METRES: A GALLERY WITHIN A GALLERY**
JAMES CARRIGAN

_ 74 **RAVEN'S AIT - A COMMON GROUND FOR THE**
21ST CENTURY?
WILL SANDY

_ 84 **LAMINARIUM**
JULIA LOHMANN

_ 94 **MIND IN THE GUTTER - RUMINATIONS ON**
COMIC BOOK PANELS
SARAH ZAIDAN

_ 100 **MO' BETTER MUSEUM?**
DUNCAN GREWCOCK

_ 104 **2010 GRAPHIC DESIGN STUDENT AWARDS**
REBECCA WRIGHT

THE DESIGNER'S SKETCH IN THE DIGITAL TOOLBOX

**JAMES SELF REFLECTS ON
THE IMPORTANCE OF SKETCHING
IN DESIGN EDUCATION**

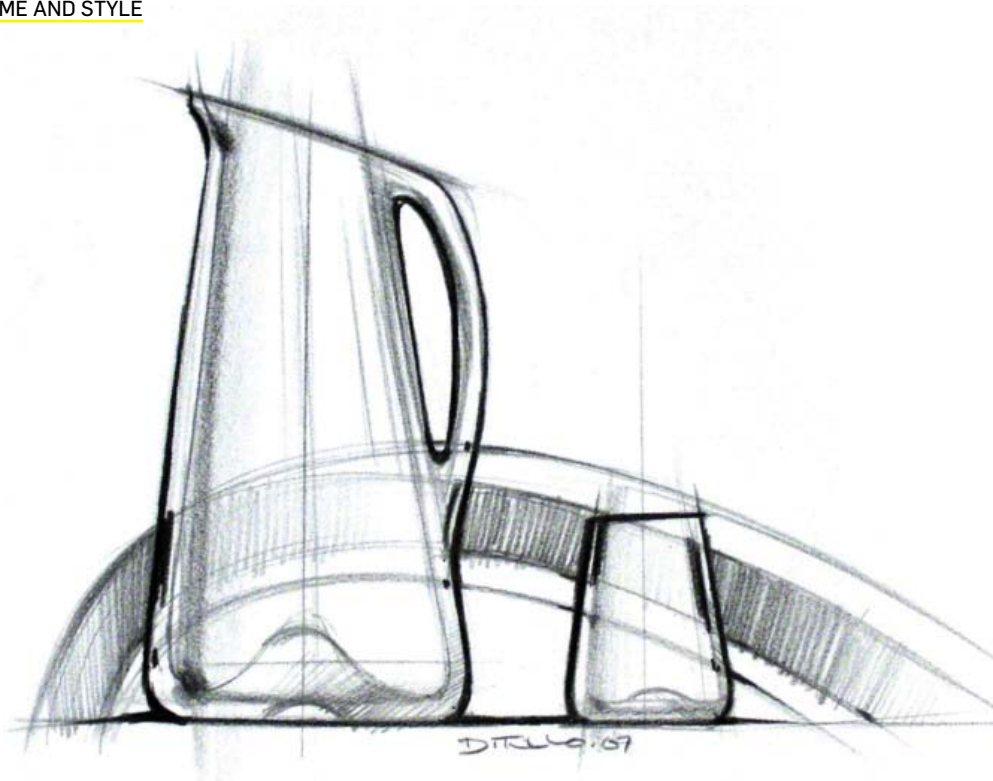
James Self is a
Design PhD student



When a designer is designing, he evolves design ideas using a variety of tools, processes and working methods. He *embodies* his design intentions. For a three-dimensional designer, these embodiments are of yet to be realised products and artifacts, as he attempts to communicate his intentions in the form of prospective design solutions. From the hand sketch, to 3D CAD (computer-aided design) modellers, to the latest rapid prototyping technologies and digital graphics software; designers have access to an increasing variety of design tools and processes to support their studio practice. Since the industrial revolution and the separation of design for manufacture from craft production, design specifications have been communicated in the form of drawings and illustrations of design intentions. Design tools are critical for the communication of these intentions to others. They are also integral to the designer's own evolution of ideas towards a final solution prior to manufacture.

The ever-increasing variety of digital design tools, all with their own unique characteristics, makes understanding their effectiveness in support of a particular stage in practice, in support of a certain kind of embodiment, vitally important. Among these established and emergent digital tools, which constitute such a boon to contemporary design practice, stands one which is relatively unchanged, and which no designer could do without; the hand sketch.

THEMED SKETCH:
SKETCH COMMUNICATING INTENDED
DESIGN THEME AND STYLE



Despite the increasing impact of digital technology on design practice, the conventional sketch remains a critically important tool for any practitioner. Not only at the front, conceptual end of practice, but throughout - helping the designer to understand detail, work through a problem area, or explain design intent to clients and engineers. What is it about hand sketching that makes it so valuable to design practice? A search for an answer on the shelves of design faculty libraries will uncover an extensive range of beautifully illustrated coffee-table hardbacks, describing in some detail the use of sketching in design projects for this or that client. Case study and anecdotal examples abound. These are often juxtaposed with superbly illustrated step-by-step, do-it-yourself instructions for improved sketching technique. These tips and anecdotes are of course useful in their own way. But what is it that makes sketching more fundamentally remarkable in its effectiveness across such a broad spectrum of requirements: communication and evaluation; exploration and evolution; clarification of specific detail; or the embodiment of a conceptual idea?

Ask a design practitioner, and they will describe the sketch's ability to move quickly, to explore; unconstrained and fluid. Speed and versatility are crucial, as is dynamic adaptation to the task-in-hand. Experienced designers have a tacit understanding of the effectiveness of sketching. This understanding comes from their knowledge of the complexities of tool-use, born out of design experience in the context of professional practice.

The designer's use of design tools such as sketching is informed by a complex mix of external influences. These influences form the constraints within which the design tool is employed.

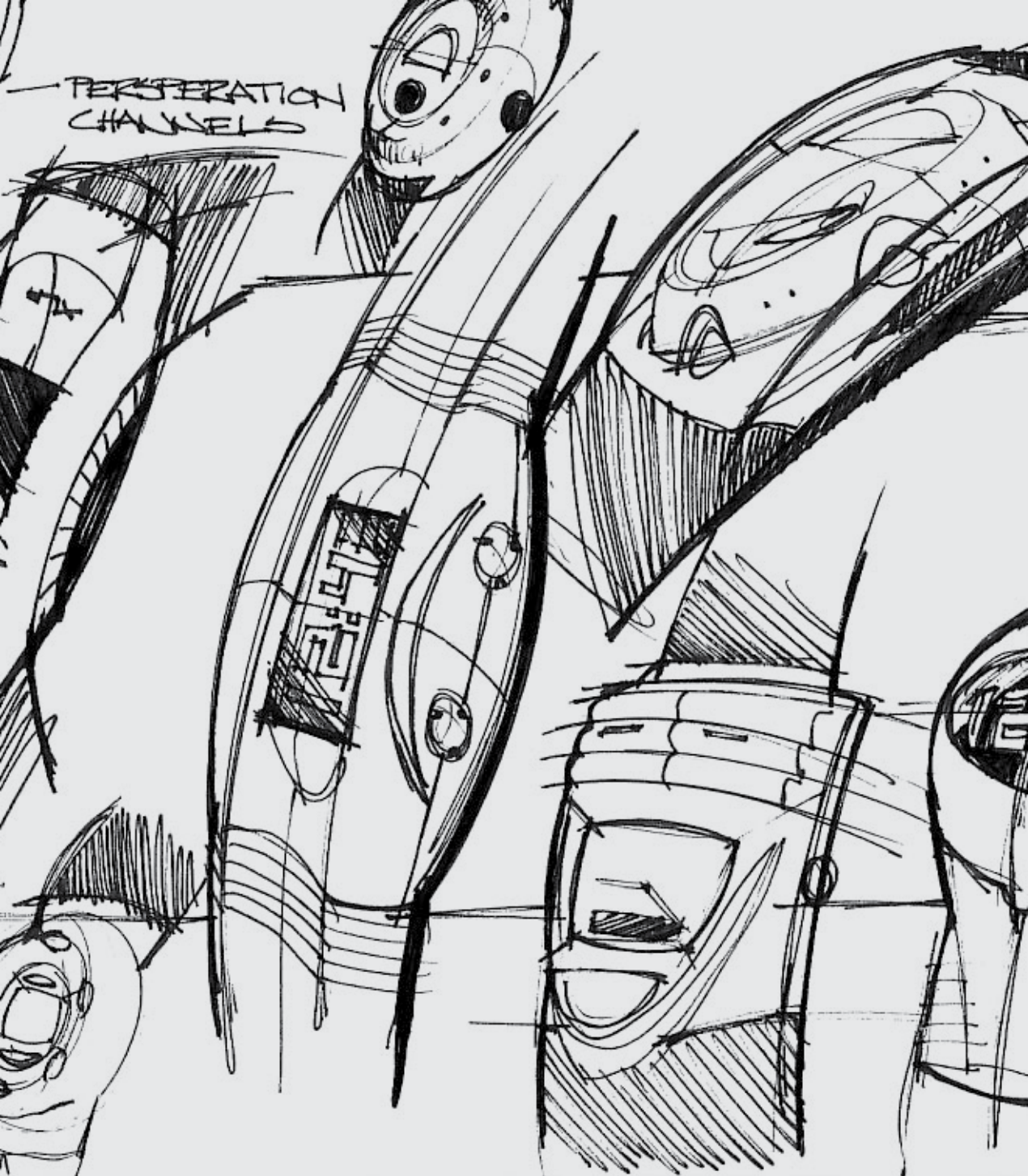
First is the tool's purpose of use, the 'why?' of embodiment. Is the tool to be used to conceptualise design ideas at the front end of practice? Is it to support the communication of design intent during design development? Is it to help with the resolution of a particular design detail prior to manufacture?

Second, the tool's own characteristics, its *affordance* in its ability to meet the designer's purpose. Do the tool's characteristics support the requirements or purpose of a given stage in practice? If I use a re-worked sketch instead of a 3D CAD model to represent these ideas, how will that influence the communication of my intentions?

Third, the critical influence of the designer's own experience on tool use. How does the designer's own idiosyncratic use of a tool, born out of experience, influence its use and effectiveness in support of a particular purpose?

DETAIL DEVELOPMENT SKETCH: USED IN THE COMMUNICATION
AND EVOLUTION OF MORE SPECIFIC DETAILS





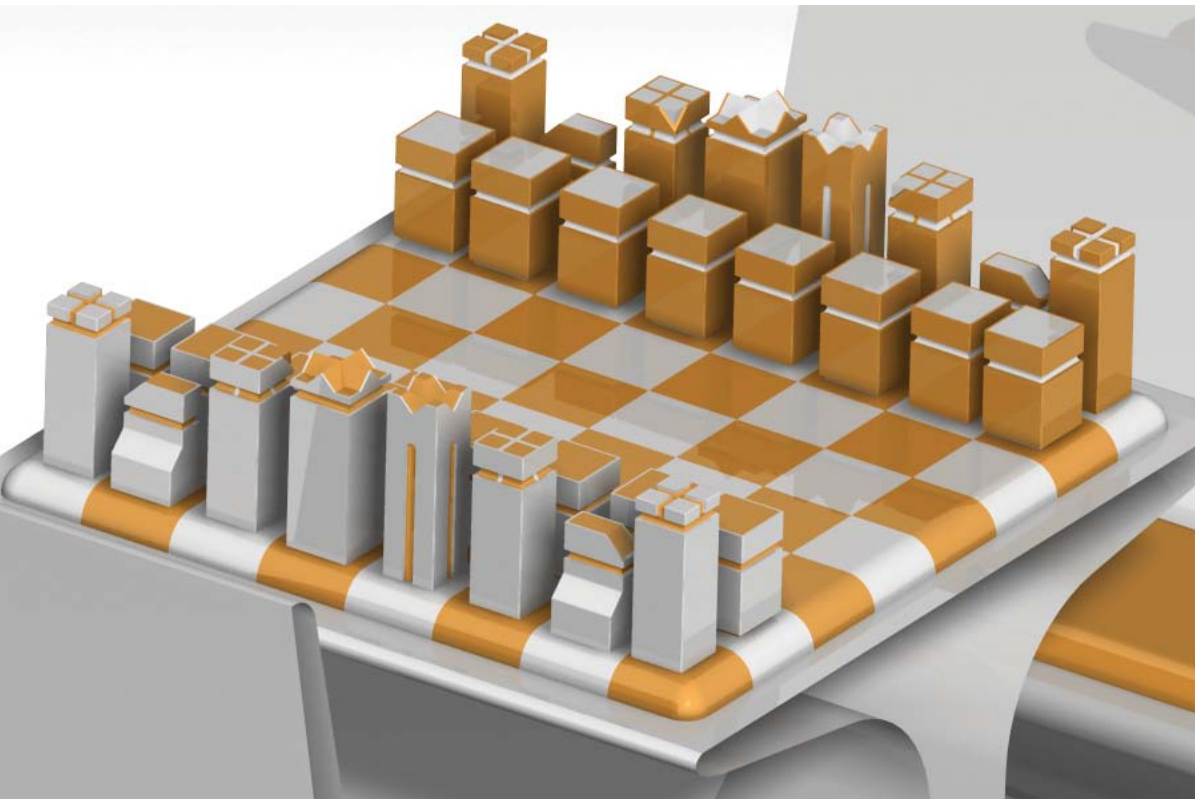
CONCEPTUAL SKETCH: USED IN THE EARLY STAGES OF DESIGN PRACTICE
IN A MORE PERSONAL PROCESS TO REFLECT UPON AND EVOLVE IDEAS;
A 'CONVERSATION' BETWEEN DESIGNER AND DESIGN SKETCH

Experienced designers are able to understand the constraints of a given tool, and to work with them. This understanding allows a critical engagement with the tools used in support of practice. Experienced designers know, for example, of the sketch's ability to support self-reflection; to allow the practitioner to engage in a 'conversation' between designer and sketch in a situated, personal process of development. Experience tells them of the tool's effectiveness in support of a variety of purposes throughout practice. Yet even seasoned designers can become fixed in their ways; less open to different working methods and new possibilities.

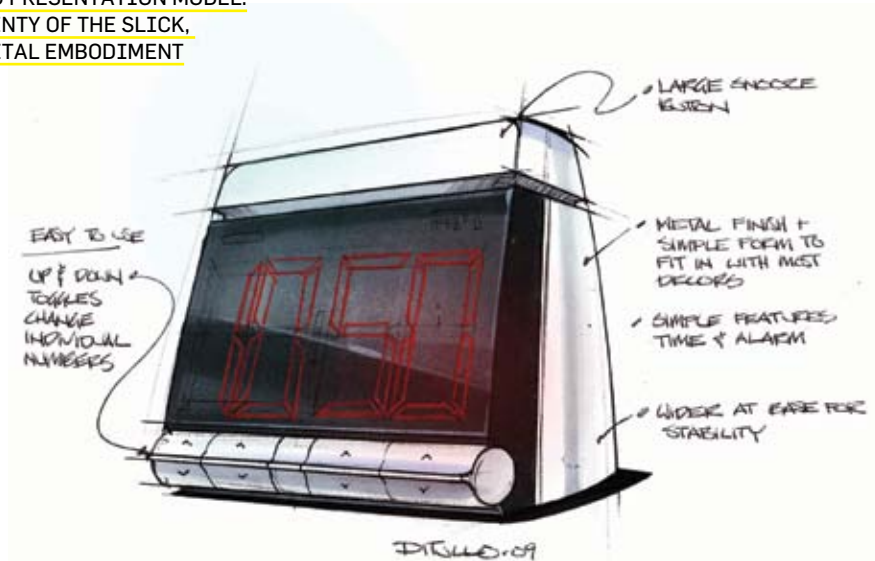
This is all well and good for the experienced practitioner, but what of the novice, the design student with little experience of design practice? Without experience, it might be a challenge to see through a tool to the purpose of its use; to consider the influence of the tool's character on its effectiveness in support of the different requirements of the design process. Without a better understanding of the complexity of tool-use, is it any wonder that students might become self-conscious of their sketching ability? Lacking confidence, the temptation is to rush for the relative certainty of 3D CAD modelers. This, too, is all well and good; as long as they understand the implications of their choice in terms of the CAD tool's character, and its ability to support a certain *kind* of embodiment. Without that understanding, their ideas may become constrained and crystallised too soon. The affordance and effectiveness, the versatility of sketching is lost. In contrast, with the confidence that comes from experience, the practitioner is able to focus unhindered on the task in hand. Worry less about making the sketch look 'good', and more about moving the design forward.



THUMBNAIL SKETCH:
DONE 'ON THE FLY' TO QUICKLY
COMMUNICATE DESIGN THINKING



FULLY RENDERED CAD PRESENTATION MODEL:
THE GENERIC CERTAINTY OF THE SLICK,
WELL FINISHED DIGITAL EMBODIMENT



RENDERED SKETCH: INCLUDING ANNOTATION TO
COMMUNICATE INTENTION TOWARDS MORE SPECIFIC DETAIL

Let's consider this lack of confidence in terms of an analogy. Take the mundane task of hammering a nail into a wall. As the hammer is swung at the head of the nail, the focus of attention moves away from the hammer and onto the purpose of the task in hand: to hit the nail into the wall with sufficient force, and at the right angle, to allow it to penetrate. It is only when something goes wrong that attention shifts back to the tool: the handle slips in the hand; the weight of the head seems insufficient for the task. When the hammer is not performing as we would wish, attention moves away from the purpose of the task at hand, and refocuses on the tool itself. We only have to look at a toddler, learning to hit pegs into a wooden toy for the first time, to realise that this is not an innate ability but learnt through experience, just as an experienced sketcher works through the tool to achieve his aims. A lack of experience results in too much attention on the tool. This is *not* about being an outstanding sketch artist, but the lack of confidence that comes from a misunderstanding of the purpose of *design* sketching. The designer gets too bogged-down in making the sketch look 'good', look 'right'. This interrupts *designing*, the creative flow of reflective practice. The relationship between designer and sketch becomes halted, constrained; sketching fails to flow.

Given the temptation to favour the relative generic certainty of CAD, how can those lacking in confidence as sketchers, as designers, be dissuaded from bypassing the sketch altogether? By taking opportunities to sketch in the context of their design practice, is the simple answer. With experience of a tool's use, the designer starts to build a better understanding of its character, employing it to greater effect and, ultimately, with greater confidence. The current system of project-based studio work in design education is useful in giving novice designers a context within which to develop their sketching abilities. However, alongside the tried-and-tested studio pedagogy of course work and crits, there must also be room for considering the design tool's role in relation to practice, for critical engagement with design tools themselves. When sketching, the designer better understands the medium in the context of its use, and the ways in which the character of the sketch may help achieve this purpose from conceptual design, through development, and into the working-through and communication of detail. This builds confidence, and allows the novice designer to engage more critically with their sketching in terms of how it moves a design forward.



CONCEPT SKETCHES:
THE USE OF COLOUR AND SHADE TO COMMUNICATE
ALTERNATIVES AND HELP EVOLVE FORM

A large body of research exists on the designer's sketch. Design educators should use this growing body of work alongside the tried-and-tested studio-based approach of 'teaching through doing'. This might include, for example, critical analysis of the tool in terms of its implicit characteristics, and how these characteristics are tied to fundamental questions relating too design: 'Why am I doing this?'; 'How will the character of the tool support my purpose?'; 'How can I use this tool to support my purpose most effectively?' This could provide a more grounded knowledge to support tool-use. The practice-based educator may even learn a new thing or two.

Knowledge of tool-use in practice - communicated in the right way, with clear links back to pragmatic applications - can provide novice designers with a vocabulary to understand and more critically engage with their design sketching. Moreover, it will give them the confidence to harness the unconstrained character of the tool, its rich affordance and versatility in a variety of practical contexts. This can reduce their anxiety and lack of confidence, making novice designers more effective designers, more able to harness the versatility and dynamic affordance of the oldest and arguably most effective tool in the box.

In the headlong rush towards the great affordances that digital technologies have brought design practice, we should continue to reflect on the value of the designer's sketch.



IMAGES

ALL SKETCHES COURTESY OF MICHAEL DITULLO: www.michaelditullo.com

CAD PRESENTATION MODEL COURTESY OF MICHAEL DITULLO

WITH AARON SZYMANSKI OF EVO DESIGN.

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