
Symbol Design

With Students of Semester 7 in
Communication Design

Basics

September 10, 2018, NID-Vijayawada

► **Symbol Design attempts to consider *good form* and meaning in context**

Why

We will consider Symbol Design (the course) an opportunity to evolve and adapt basic concepts discussed in other communication design courses.

Understanding the inner workings of meaning-making and form-giving¹ can be thought of as a refresher course in fundamentals of communication with potential immediate real-world applications?

What

Over the first week of Symbol Design, we explore how materials, processes, scale, context and intent² can be useful tools in giving meaning to form. We will attempt form-giving exercises, approaching the task from a pre-set-brief perspective and then a post-rationalising³ one. We may also investigate other dimensions (literally and otherwise) to static symbols on paper with inputs from the students on the media they (you⁴) prefer working with.

During the second week, we develop our own design-briefs and execute a 'typical' symbol design project from start to finish. Ideally (and not necessarily), the exercise contributes to one of our studio projects or a special interest project.

What For

Rediscover how to use symbols to communicate meaning, and—as communication designers with intent—try to learn how to manipulate their (symbols') formal qualities to attempt controlling the way they are interpreted.

Appreciate good form and find-and-improve-upon ways to achieve what may be considered good form. (Balanced, rhythmic, harmonious, etc.)

To Write and Reflect

Use writing as a form of reflection and critically look at the work we do.

How

Demonstration and discussion of basic concepts using existing work

Room for experimentation and improvisation beyond the exercises' scope

In-studio discussion of work made during the course

Reading, interpreting, reviewing⁵ and documentation

Be Mindful Of

Concept comprehension and the ability to communicate what is learned

Contribution to studio discussions and the ability and inclination to learn from peers

Openness to exploration and the diversity of materials, methods and concepts explored

1. References *vormgever* (Dutch), meaning *designer*. Also see the *vormgevers* poster by Wim Crowel.

2. Which is saying you *may* end up with a short identity design project to show would-be dip-project-givers

3. In other words, we start with a symbol⁶ and *derive* meaning and context

4. This document switches between *us, you and students* often and refers to the same people

5. If time and interest (of the students) permit

6. Not a new thing

Thank you! / kr@kl11.in
