

Poonam Bir Kasturi

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Profession Education Programme, National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad
(1979 - 1984)
Specialised in Product Design

Experience

.....2004

Invited to be a juror for the IDSA/Business Week IDEA awards. This is the first time this award was opened up for international participation.

Awarded a fellowship from Sarai/CSDS Independent Fellowship 2004. The project was to work on a pilot solution for an eco-source for Bangalore.

Designed and conducted the second part of the continuing education workshop for potters.

.....2003

Designed a structure for the 3 year design curriculum along with Dr Mirjam Southwell who came in to consult and help work on making the Design Labs at Srishti oriented to Sustainable Issues and Creativity.

Designed and conducted a six day workshop with Renuke Savasere at Srishti as part of the "Avakash" project. This was a workshop called "Clay, Creativity & Commonsense" for potters from different parts in Bangalore. The material for this workshop will also soon be available on the Srishti website. The learning from this workshop has led us to design a continuing education programme through which we hope to really see if empowerment is achieved in the truest sense of the word.

Designed and conducted a one day seminar in Bangalore on Craft. This seminar took place in Srishti. Participants were mainly designers, NGO's, industry and government. We wanted to find a way forward for design intervention in the South of India which was flexible and directed by the interest of the different members of the group. It was an intensive and exploratory day. The group decided to call themselves "Avakash" which means "opportunity" and will have a presence with regular updates in the website www.srishtibl.org.

Designed and conducted a workshop for Stone Craftspeople in Bangalore, India. The 15 participants of this workshop were craftspeople from different parts of South India. Used a participatory process and engaged them in a critical investigation of the design process and the context of their market. The documentation of this project is available on the website www.srishtibl.org

2002

Organised and planned an international conference - "Development by Design 02" at Bangalore India. This conference was a collaboration between MIT, Media Labs Asia and Srishti. Presented a film that talked about Design and Change and the areas of research that Srishti as an organisation would engage with in the coming years. Write to me for a copy of this 12-minute presentation .

Visited "Doors of Perception" a design conference. Met with the Utrecht School of Design to sign a MOU with Srishti.

Invited to "Digital Dialogues" at Haystack Mountain College of Crafts in Maine USA. This workshop was a collaboration between MIT Media Labs and the College. Showed my work in the area of craft at this gathering. The film "15 Days" was well received and was also able to discuss the design issues raised in the film with students at the Rhode Island School of Design.

Invited to write a paper for the journal "Design Issues" published at MIT. The article called "Designing Freedoms" is to appear in a special issue edited by Martha Scotford. The article will be available on my website once it is published.

Designed and Conducted a Workshop called "Listening to Craft" and an exhibition "Beyond the Crafts Bazaar" to begin a process of looking at Government intervention afresh as part of the agenda at Srishti to work in the area of "Craft". A film called 15 Days was also made as part of this process. More details – www.srishtibl.org

Designed and Conducted a multidisciplinary and multi-institutional course called "Design that Matters" which was exploring the use of collaborative open source platforms to review the design process. This was part of the agenda at Srishti to work in the area of "Design for Development".

Designed and Conducted a Workshop for Wood Carvers of Sri Kalahasthi for the Regional Design Center – Bangalore. This workshop focused on making craftsmen empowered to design and also gave them an opportunity to make new products combining various materials.

Designed and Conducted a Workshop on Idea Generation for ITC Greeting card Division – Chennai

2001

Invited to the CMTI Bangalore to give a talk on Design during the "Design Makes a Difference" conference organised by the NTTF department of Design.

Invited to the IIM Bangalore to give a talk on "Product Design".

Invited to the MIT Media Lab to present a paper at the Development by Design Conference. The paper looked at the current state of design education in the country and its implications on Development. The paper was titled "The India Report – Revisited".

Designed and delivered a Workshop on "Creativity" for Texas Instruments

Designed a training manual for the masons in Kutch after the earthquake – was the official manual for rehabilitation training in the state and created grass root empowerment

2000

Set up a charitable trust called "Ashwini" to train economically backward girl children from a local school to become "self-regulated" learners.
Teaching them to use divergent thinking and reflective processes.

Founded a company called PlaynSpeak to explore new paradigm products. www.playnspeak.com

Designed a range of new lamps for the Tamil Nadu State Handicraft Development Corporation.

Designed & delivered a workshop for craftsmen at Nachiarkoil Town

Designed a bank of teaching materials for the Foundation Studies programme at Srishti School of Art, Design & Technology, Bangalore

Designed a computer, printer and scanner for the US teen market, for Hewlett-Packard (HP), in conjunction with a design firm – Icarus Design

Designed a children's room using an interactive process with children; worked on concepts of space and people behind things (the project had a structured 2-day workshop built into it)

Consultant Faculty with Srishti - teaching a range of subjects for the Foundation Studies class applying contemporary methods like self-assessment, reflective learning practices, collaborative learning and the portfolio approach

1999

Instituted the Bir Design Award for Foundation Studies for deserving and outstanding students at Srishti School of Art, Design & Technology, Bangalore

Co-ordinator Foundation Studies with Srishti - worked with assistant faculty to design and deliver a curriculum for freshers joining the design school

Founder Director of IndusTree Crafts Pvt Ltd - design & retail of craft based products for the Indian and Export market.

Developed Wood-Inlay products, Channapatna Products, Natural Fibre Products and New products using a combination of different materials and skills.

1994

Consultant with the Newspapers in Education (NIE) Programme of the Times of India, Bangalore
Taught design to school children (Standard VI to Standard X)

Faculty at ADITI School - taught Technical Drawing for STD 11 and 12 students

Freelance Projects done with Aditi School - designed & laid a mural floor using 1" tiles

Researched and documented a project on the arecanut sheath for Crafts Council of India

Facilitated workshops on art for Corporations like Verifone and Wipro Corporation - To put employee art on the walls

Documented a part of a project on Indian stone craft

1984.....

Illustrated & Designed a book (Mahesh VS, Thresholds of Motivation, Tata McGraw Hill, N Delhi, 1993)

Conducted summer workshops focused on Art and Creativity, for children between 6 and 12 yrs

Designed & prototyped a Public Telephone Booth for the Bangalore Telecom District.

Worked at Indian Design Centre & Sur Hennig Pvt Ltd as an Industrial Designer, Director, Manufacturing Co-ordinator and Administrator. Was exposed to all facets of General Management of a small-scale industry with special emphasis on manufacturing technology.

Designed & prototyped an Industrial Water Purifier range for Ion Exchange India Ltd

Designed & Prototyped a Centralised Lubrication System