Head of Interior Design at the University of Tasmania, Kirsty Máté recently explored what our ‘shopping scapes’ might be like in a sustainable future where the interaction and engagement of people, and reduced consumption, plays a focal role.

As part of her PhD research at UTAS, Ms Máté and a group of volunteers set up a pop-up shop under the Reactivate Launceston initiative.

“I created ByeBuy! Rethinking The Way We Shop to test ideas on reducing our consumption, engaging more with people in a retail environment and leading a more sustainable lifestyle,” Ms Máté said.

Nothing was bought or sold at ByeBuy! and four major activities were developed to provide ‘customers’ with information: Swap Shop, Story Exchange, Repair Deli and Slow Market.

The Swap Shop looked at how we value the items we possess and our need for new ones. The swapping of old items for others reduces our consumption of new goods but also questions our value for the things we currently own and the ones we want or need. All the products in the ByeBuy! shop came with a complete history of the former owner. It’s about shopping thoughtfully. Many people commented on the emotional exchange the stories provided and others looked at the stories before looking at the product.

The Story Exchange questioned the need for a product to give us the often short lived emotional charge and replaces the product with a story or a joke and something we can continue to exchange with others prolonging the initial emotional connection. If you think about retail therapy – it’s really about getting a quick fix and after the initial pleasure, we are left with an item that no longer engages us with that pleasure. Contrast this with what happened in The Story Exchange where, after the initial excitement there is still the potential for further enjoyment through future connection – without the waste.

The Repair Deli was a series of open and organised workshops to provide people with some of the tools and skills needed to repair a number of different items, revaluing them and preventing them going to waste. Despite increasing built-in obsolescence in many commercial products, we often purchase new products because an old one is broken or needs repair. The Repair Deli provided an opportunity to renew these items and foster greater community engagement by teaching new skills.

The Slow Market was essentially a wake up call. We tend to forget how easy it is to purchase practically any item by walking into a shop, exchanging money and walking out with it. The whole transaction can take just minutes and little thought is given to the materials or the time and effort used to make the product. The Slow Market endeavoured to slow down this whole process and asked customers to either order the making of their product for a later pick up or to make their own in a workshop both interactions using found and recycled materials.

In keeping with sustainable practices, the ByeBuy! Shop design incorporated materials sourced from the waste of the local retail sector. Other items were borrowed or reused. Only connecting pieces such as bulldog clips and tape have been bought new.

An entire 2.5 m high wall of shelving was created using packing boxes and bulldog clips; light coverings and sculptural elements were created from 1600 post consumer plastic cups; island display shelves from milk crates and packing card and a wall screen from gold post industrial printing foil.

Ms Máté said the experiment provided valuable information for her research thesis. “There’s clear evidence from the high community interest in the shop for new kinds of retail experiences coupled with the need for more sustainable shopping environments,” she said.

As a result ByeBuy! 2 is currently being organised for a possible opening in Kingsmeadows in February 2015 – to keep in touch follow us through the Facebook Page or the website.

ByeBuy! Website: www.byebuyprogram.jimdo.com
Facebook: Reactivate Launceston
Email: kirsty.mate@utas.edu.au
The Center for Public Interest Design (CPID), a research group in Portland State University’s Faculty of Architecture, hosted an ideas competition in order to explore new models of intergenerational living. STEALTH reGENERATION proposes a new, subtle form of suburban regeneration for Greater Hobart. Instead of relocating new housing within the CBD, it is inserted into established yet underserviced suburban areas in a manner that facilitates the growth of amenity. Through this reversed approach, renewal emphasis switches from exploiting existing generic built and economic infrastructure to leveraging unique social and cultural capital, creating a resilient platform for desirable and equitable housing. The Granny Work/Shop, a new housing model, is based on existing suburban infill typologies and character traits to address housing and amenity shortages in line with the cultural traditions and aspirations of suburban communities. For more information please visit http://www.pdx.edu/public-interest-design/cpid-competition-results

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New Robot in the School

The workshop has recently welcomed its latest addition to the family, a KUKA KR-120 6-axis industrial robot. Having been a national leader in architectural digital fabrication for the past decade, the robot will provide the school with a valuable tool for experimentation in advanced construction and making processes across the three streams. 2015 will see undergraduate electives and masters research streams begin to incorporate the robot into coursework, in addition to the development of an intensive workshop series based around invited guest facilitators.

2014 Study Tour — Italy

The food, architecture, landscape and the everyday way of life in Italy was a truly incredible experience, and for that reason I wouldn’t hesitate for a second to suggest the study tour to everyone on campus. — Joe Crothers, student

The tour for me, in terms of both personal and professional development, is the single most important thing I have ever done and it has influenced my thoughts on architecture and design theory more than any other component of my degree. — James Ross, student

The Study Tour is a refinement of values and critical thinking in relation to design & theory; it is the single most important piece of professional development you will do in your career. — Tom Chandler, student

The 2014 UTAS Italy study tour, being my first trip overseas (at the age of 40) has inspired many things in me, the least being that the world is a magnificent marvel of history and the most being this realisation that even though my part in that world might be small that it is the small things that make the most difference. — Kylie Stokes, student

I really loved exploring the maze of streets and canals in Venice, and climbing the Dome of Florence to see a spectacular view of the city. — Yasmin Quelch, student

I started leading study tours in 2010 as a time-efficient, and therefore cost effective way for students to build the confidence they need to succeed as designers. It is just easier to win the confidence of well travelled and culturally literate clients if you are those things yourself. Students use field sketching to cement new knowledge and come back speaking with confidence about architectural history. This was the first group I have taken away who benefited from changes to the government’s OS-Help scheme that mean any student can now undertake this elective regardless of present financial circumstances. — Steven Fleming, lecturer

More info on the tour can be found at: http://renaissancetours.com.au/study/italy-from-hadrian-to-hadid/

Upcoming events

- DESIGN X10 LAUNCH CASTON: 18 – 26 SEPTEMBER, MORE DETAILS ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE EVENTS.
- STUDENT ARCHIBALL: 20 SEPTEMBER, THEME ‘IF I WASN’T DOING DESIGN’
- INVEResk DESIGN FORUM: 15 SEPTEMBER, ERIN LACEY

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH UPCOMING EVENTS ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE: HTTP://WWW.UTAS.EDU.AU/ARCHITECTURE-DESIGN/ OR OUR FACEBOOK PAGE: HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/UTAS.ARCHITECTURE

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Open Day at the School of Architecture & Design was a huge success. The weather was gloomy and cold but that didn’t deter people from visiting the School and checking out the great facilities. We had over 200 people through the building with many people expressing interest in studying next year.

We had demonstrations in the Architecture and Furniture workshops; exhibitions of work from Interior; Architecture and Furniture; the Castle on display outside; student interview videos playing; and on-going tours. There was the opportunity to talk to staff and current students. We also had Wanderlust and Taco’s de Pancho food vans and the Stand coffee serving up delicious food and drinks. The tram museum was also running the Tram all day, stopping outside the School door to drop off and collect passengers.

The biggest hit was the School tours led by our wonderful student mentors and being able to chat to them about their experiences here. We saw a lot of happy faces coming and going throughout the day and everyone left feeling inspired and amazed by our wonderful building.

I would like to say a big thank you to all those involved in making the day such a successful event.

Our School survey winner is: Samantha Milne. She won a $50 Fishpond voucher for attending and filling in a survey. Congratulations!

If you missed Open Day and would like to have a tour through the building or find out more about our courses and study options please don’t hesitate to drop in or call us on 03 6324 4488.

You can see more photos at: https://www.facebook.com/utas.architecture.design?ref=hl