

# OPPORTUNITIES

The e-Newsletter of the Design Communication Association Summer 2018

## DCA at Cornell 2018

By Michael Chisamore, Opportunities Editor

The Design Communication Association Conference scheduled for October 7-10 at Cornell University is fast approaching. The biennial conference brings together a passionate group of educators and professionals who value the teaching of design communication, and is a great venue to meet, reconnect and enhance your teaching abilities through paper presentation attendance.

An impressive set of papers, drawn from nearly one hundred abstracts that explore the conference theme **“Virtual+Actual: Product and Process of Design”** will be presented over the three day conference. The event will also include practitioner workshops, Keynote speakers and a Conference Social Dinner.

### Keynote Speakers:

**James Wines**, winner of the Smithsonian Institution’s 2013 National Design Award for Lifetime Achievement, is an architectural designer, visual artist, and writer. He is a professor of architecture at Penn State University, with a teaching emphasis on Integrative arts and the founder in 1970, of SITE – a multidisciplinary practice that includes buildings, public spaces, master plans, landscapes, environmental art works, interiors, exhibition designs, video productions, graphics, and product designs.

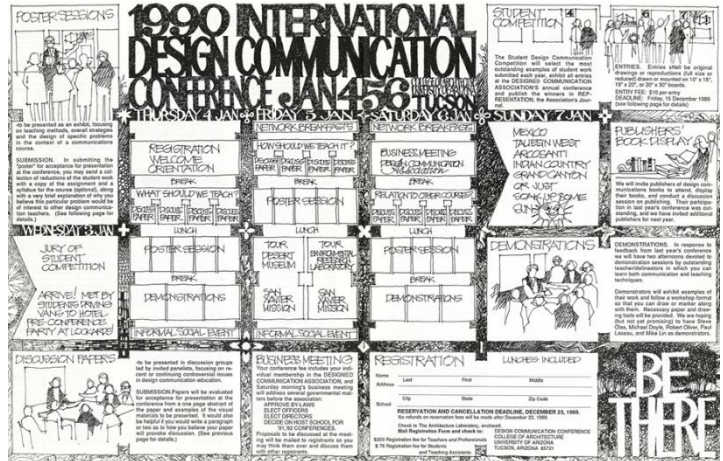
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Cornell University and Cayuga Lake

## Then and Now and a Call to Service

By Henry Sorenson, Montana State University



1990 DCA Conference Advertisement – University of Arizona

I was born on exactly the same day as Sylvester Stallone and George W. Bush—July 6, 1946. The three of us may be the same age but we have our differences. As you might imagine, astrology has not won me over, at least not yet. Twenty years later, I changed my college major from pre-dentistry to architecture after completing an Associates of Arts Degree at St. Petersburg Junior College—and spending a day shadowing my dentist. To my surprise, I discovered I didn’t want to be sticking my hands in other people’s mouths for the rest of my life. In 1970, I graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Florida. I was pretty sure I was on my way to Vietnam but the Defense Department held its first draft lottery that year and I was not chosen. I worked part time in architectural offices for the last three years of college and full-time for five years after graduation. I gradually came to the realization that I wanted to teach and went back to college to receive my Post-Professional Masters Degree in 1978. My focus was architectural graphic communication. I put myself through graduate school doing freelance architectural illustration. I have been teaching architectural graphics now for 36 years. I am 72 years old (or will be when the 2018 DCA Conference convenes).

Why am I telling you all this? Because even though I was working hard at creating and implementing a new curriculum in architectural graphics at Montana State University (graphics had been a side dish in the design studio up to that time), as I approached my three-year tenure track review, I was in trouble. At the time, there were no relevant venues for peer review in my field of expertise. There were the ACSA and JEA journals. Those venues seemed geared towards urban planning, theory, and architectural history. Then there were the professional architectural magazines, like *Progressive Architecture*, *Architectural Record*, and *Metropolis*, for design practitioners. There was not much else—leaving faculty in my area of specialization nowhere to compete or be recognized. Fortunately for me, that very year a distinguished editorial board was formed to publish the professional journal, *Representation: the Journal of Graphic Education*. A paper I submitted on my newly developed graphics curriculum strategies was selected for that inaugural issue and I was able to demonstrate promise as a developing faculty member. And so I managed to pass my review.

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## Then and Now and a Call to Service

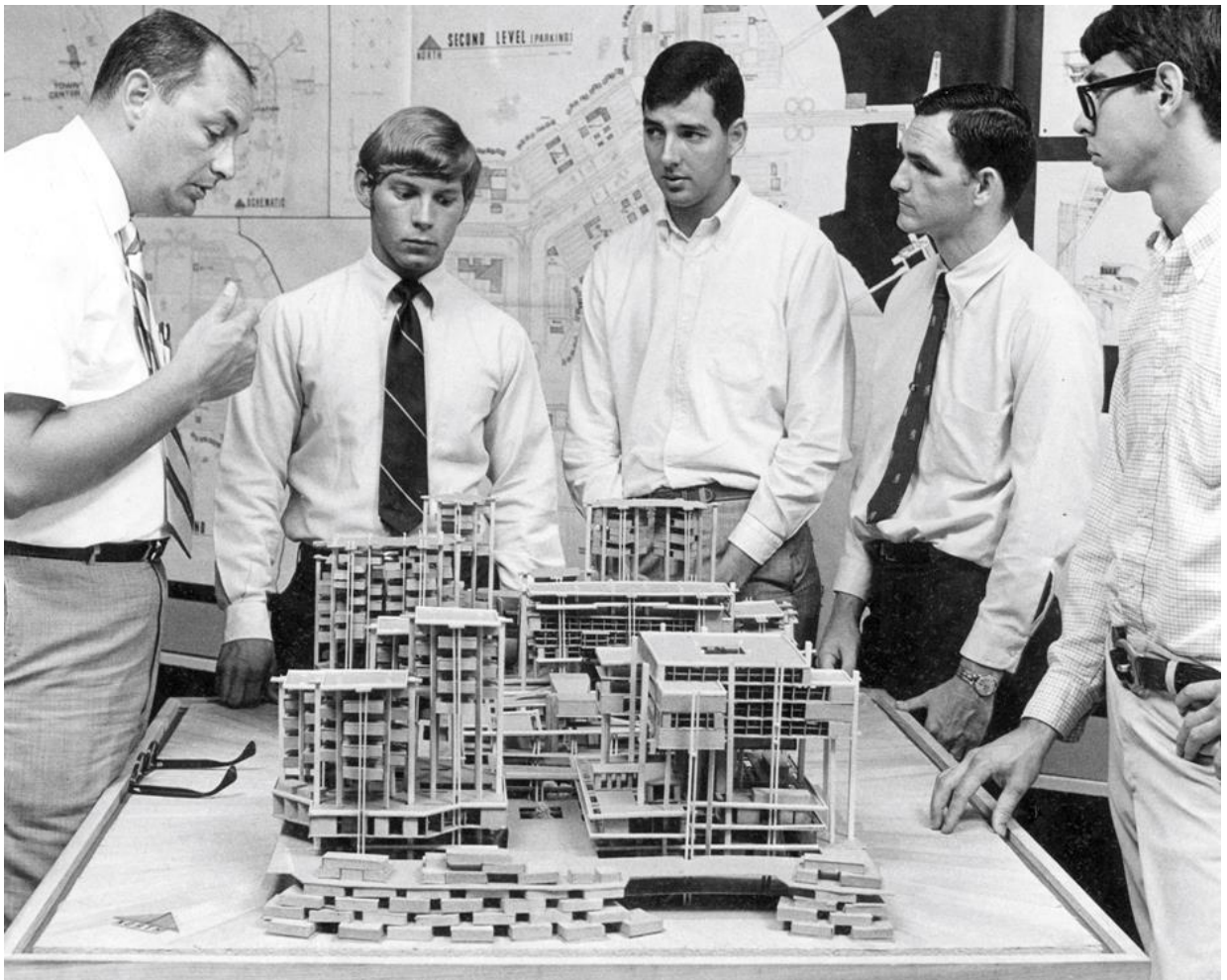
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I am also telling you this because I am a charter member of the Design Communication Association— maybe the last charter member still actively teaching. The Design Communication Association was an idea conceived and pioneered by William Kirby Lockard, one of the most distinguished and respected Professors of Architectural Design and Graphics of his time. I joined the newly created DCA in 1989 and presented a paper entitled "Perspective in the Middle" at the first DCA Conference ever held (at the University of Arizona). That conference and the ones that followed in those early years were special. Most of the established authorities in architectural graphics were present—the ones whose books we architectural students of the 60's and 70's carried in our briefcases. These were the folks that were giving keynote lectures and staging workshops: Kevin Forseth, Michael Doyle, Tim White, Tim McGinty, Robert Oliver, Mike Lynn, Jim Donnette, Will Benedict, and of course the graphic gurus—Steve Oles, Paul Leseau, Frank Ching, and Kirby Lockard. The great architectural graphics publishers, Van Nostrand Reinhold, McGraw Hill, and Norton, sent editors to encourage the younger generation of college teachers to write about their research. It was an exciting time to be involved. The atmosphere was electric.

Much of the culture of those early conferences has survived to this very day. Paper presentations covered a wide range of topics and perspectives—some delving deeply into tradition and some pressing against the cutting edge. There were panel discussions, drawing competitions, bright-eyed students intermixed with seasoned faculty, and, from the very beginning, a planned afternoon of relaxation and sightseeing in the exotic southwest. There was a sense that this was precious time together, marked by an air of camaraderie, generosity, and joy. We were all glad to be there and share in the experience. Our hosts, the design/graphics faculty of the University of Arizona, set a tone of inclusion, acceptance, thoughtfulness, fellowship, good humor, and kindness. It was pretty wonderful. Among those making us feel welcome and wanted were Chuck Albanese, Bob Dvorak, Warren Hampton, Harry der Boghosian, Doug Macneil, Bill Stamm, and, of course, Kirby.

While I was not in the first guard of DCA leadership, I did get selected to the Board of Directors in 1993 and became the Northwest Regional Director in 1994, replacing Frank Ching—try that one on for size. This was the same year that Saleh Uddin took over printing Representation. He has volunteered for that critical service ever since.

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*4th year architecture studio critique (I am second from left).*

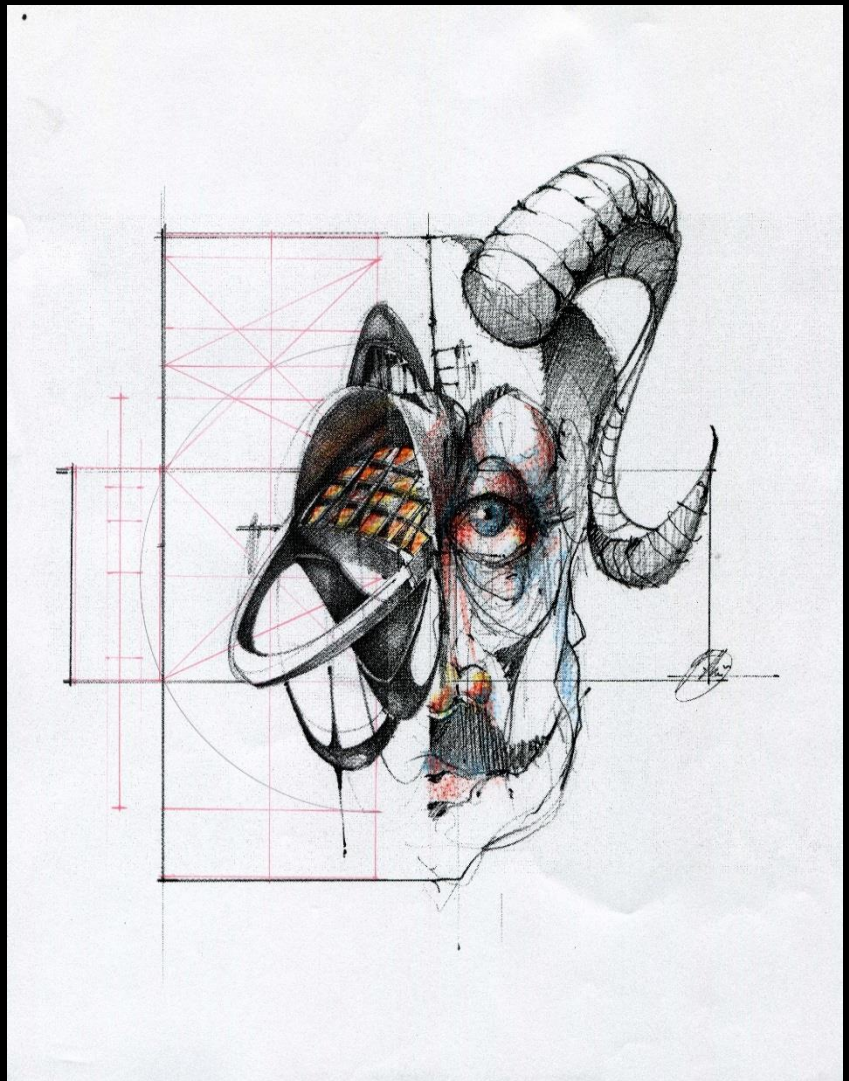
## Moh'd Bilbeisi exhibited in Fayetteville

ART VENTURES is a progressive gallery in Fayetteville, Arkansas that believes the role of the gallery is educational first and foremost. Mohammed (Moh'd) Bilbeisi was selected to exhibit in two separate events, the first was about the role of myth in illustration and the second is about the effects of the current social and political crises that marginalize and terrorize people and communities in the United States of America.

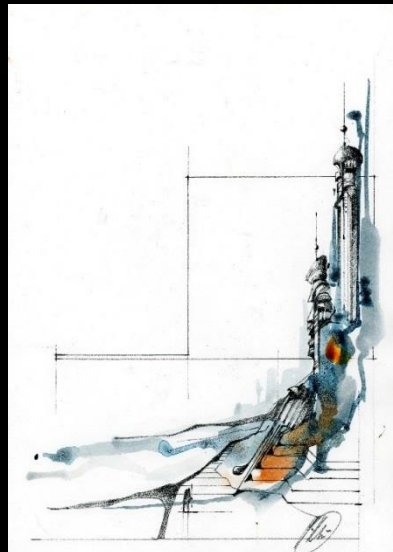
Mohammed (Moh'd) Bilbeisi is an imaginative professor, architect, illustrator, and watercolorist who is driven by an incredible passion for self-expression through art. Moh'd earned both his Bachelor and Master of Architecture degrees from Oklahoma State University and joined the faculty in 1998. His works have been featured in many exhibitions, nationally, and internationally. He also conducts workshops throughout the globe. His illustrations have appeared in numerous publications, books, journal ads, and are collected worldwide.

Art Ventures promotes the visual arts in Northwest Arkansas by actively collaborating with the community, supporting artists working to the highest standards, encouraging education and public engagement in the arts, and providing accessibility to under-represented communities. They believe that the quality of people's lives is enhanced through exposure to art.

<https://artventuresnwa.org/events/june-exhibition-kinetic-propulsive-ionized/>



*Abraham VII*



*Abraham at Sheba*



## Then and Now and a Call to Service

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It was a different time. In the beginning, there were no computers. There was no internet, no e-mail, no e-books. There were no cell phones. Imagine. We were handicapped by snail mail, printed paper leaflets and books, and land-line phones. Architects were sketching their ideas on yellow trace and manually drafting construction documents on sheets of vellum. Lettering was an art. So was sheet layout. So were hand-crafted models.

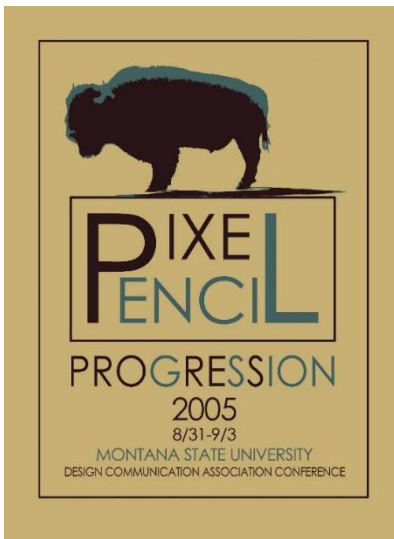
All things by nature change and evolve. What had been perhaps the premier program for architectural graphics hit its zenith and gradually, over time, its august and aging faculty began to retire—including Kirby. The leadership at the University of Arizona, shifted the focus and direction of the College of Architecture and no longer championed the DCA. Faced with finding a new home, the DCA membership voted for Headquarters to be relocated from the University of Arizona to Montana State University in 2005. For us at M.S.U., it was a great honor and privilege to be chosen, and an acknowledgement of our School's commitment to architectural graphic communication—and of the faculty involved in fulfilling that charge. And it was also a big responsibility. As part of that move, I initiated and guided the Association through the 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporate tax exemption process and served as Treasurer. I designed, launched, and continue to maintain the DCA's uniquely graphic website and served, as I still do, as Website Editor.

As Headquarters is authorized to host every second or third international conference, I along with other DCA members of our faculty (Zuzanna Karzewska, Steve Juroszek, Chris Livingston, Barry Newton, and Bradford Watson) hosted the 2016 fall conference at Montana State University and Chico Hot Springs. I have now served as DCA Co-Conference Chair and Host on 3 occasions. In my time, I have also served as Northwest Regional Director, Exhibition Coordinator, Co-President, and President. And I have Chaired the Journal Editorial Board. When the Biennial Conference of the Design Communication Association has not been hosted here at Headquarters, I have often been invited by the Conference Chairs to provide a graphics workshop for participating faculty as part of the slate of conference activities.

Why on earth am I blowing my own horn so hard and loud you ask? Frankly, it does feel a bit awkward, and way too self-serving. But I have a point to make. It is important for each of you to grasp the concept, to know for a fact, that the Design Communication Association, like many professional societies, is shaped and managed by a few dedicated, caring individuals. I really consider myself extremely fortunate to have found an opportunity where I could contribute and make a difference to something that mattered in my life. The DCA matters to me. The DCA helped make it possible for me to continue with my career in teaching, to achieve tenure and promotion. It gave me a platform for publishing my academic research, for peer recognition, and for sharing ideas with and being inspired by like-minded individuals.

The DCA has never had a paid professional Executive Director—someone specially trained and focused on coordinating and carrying out the mission and operations of the Association—arranging and hosting international conferences, publishing the conference findings and following up with professional journals, organizing international drawing competitions and cataloguing those results, publishing a semi-annual newsletter, maintaining a professional website, boosting membership, collecting dues and maintaining membership roles, and advertising regional, national, and international events. Instead, the DCA is led by a handful of volunteer Officers from college faculties across the country who contribute their expertise and effort as a form of service. Working together, they are the engine that fuels and propels this organization. And they do it on a bare-bones budget. The truth is we are a fairly small society. We can't afford an Executive Director and hold our dues to anywhere close to current levels. In many ways it may be best that we tackle these tasks ourselves as labors of love.

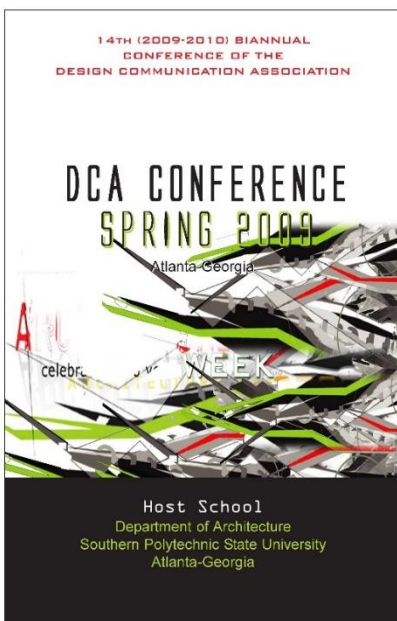
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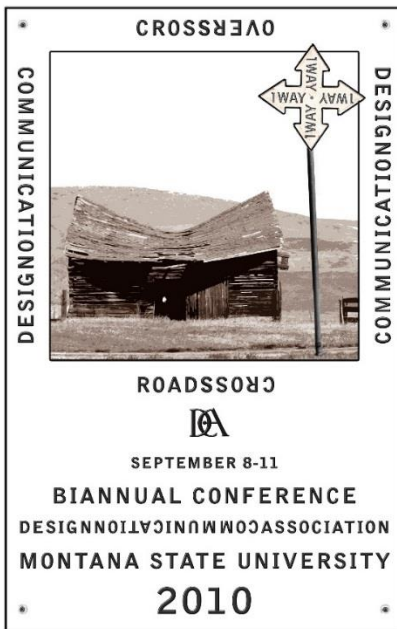
*2005 DCA Conference Advertisement  
Montana State University*



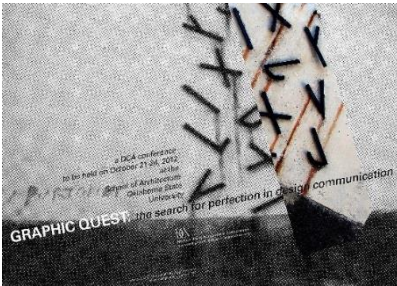
*2007 DCA Conference Advertisement  
Ball State University*



*2009 DCA Conference Advertisement  
Southern Polytechnic State University*



2010 DCA Conference Advertisement  
Montana State University



2012 DCA Conference Advertisement  
Oklahoma State University



2016 DCA Conference Advertisement  
Montana State University

## Then and Now and a Call to Service

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The Design Communication Society has always struggled with size. While we are the largest international professional association in our fields of learning, we are not very big. We are not as big as we deserve to be. We do not serve as many faculty as our mission would seem to benefit. For some reason that escapes me and other long-serving members, it has always been this way. We have tried to increase interest and membership by having our Regional Directors contact schools in their districts, sending notices to ACSA schools, and advertising in professional journals and competition websites. We try to share our events and interests with other related professional societies like ACADIA and the American Society of Architectural Illustrators. Yet we seem to hang more or less steady, losing some faculty each season but also gaining new converts. Our membership seems to typically run between 60 and 90 souls.

According to anthropologist Robin Dunbar's research, human beings can only comfortably maintain about 150 stable relationships. Beyond that number there is a tendency for social problems to erupt. Group dynamics for numbers larger than 150 generally require more restrictive rules, laws, and enforced norms to maintain a stable, cohesive group. Apparently this holds true in military camps, factories, on-line social networks, and... professional associations. So the good news is that the DCA could probably double its membership and still maintain its cool—that is its sense of intimacy and fellowship. I know we are stretching to accommodate a more convenient and accessible arrangement with European and Asian schools by holding DCA related conferences outside this continent on a regular basis. Certainly that is part of our future. But our present and future here at home ride a fairly fine and delicate edge between stability and uncertainty—not quite a conference-to-conference existence, but not a sure thing either. Our history with the University of Arizona shows that we, just like every other institution depending on internal leadership, are vulnerable. But we have also learned that we are adaptable. Here we are, more than 10 years after leaving Arizona, motoring along relatively smoothly.

The world is changing. The nature of the university and academia is shifting. How have the evolving roles provided by traditional hand versus advancing digital graphic tools shaped your own work and affected your teaching? Do you record your lectures so students can revisit them at their leisure? Do you use I-Clickers to stimulate interest and interactive behavior? How many of you deliver part or all of your courses on-line? Do you actually, in fact, meet with your students in person? Do you still read paper journals and newspapers, or do you depend primarily on digital websites and blogs? How do you best communicate with your colleagues to share knowledge and teaching strategies? Might Lynda.com or YouTube be your primary go-to learning resource?

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2014 DCA Conference Advertisement  
Southern Polytechnic State University

## Then and Now and a Call to Service

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For the DCA to be relevant, we need to distinguish what about our Association is precious—timeless and universal—and so, important to maintain, and what needs to be added, revised, or scrapped to forge the best set of opportunities for our membership in this increasingly cyber-oriented academic environment. Whether we realize it or not, the DCA is approaching a point of decision and change.

It may be worthwhile to review what our Bylaws state as our Mission and Purpose:

- a. To maintain a dialog among design communication professionals and educators concerning creative alternatives for teaching and promoting the concepts and skills of design communication.
- b. To encourage design communication educators to keep teaching these essential skills by offering them the opportunity to present and publish the results of their teaching and research.
- c. To improve communication and support among the various design professions and education levels based on our common interest in improving the way we formulate and communicate design ideas to our profession and the wider community.

During the business meeting of the 2016 DCA Conference, a number of proposals were raised to improve our window on the world. One was to reengineer the Association website; one was to provide on-line access to a complete archive of Representation and Proceedings files; one was to strengthen and synchronize our WordPress blog, our LinkedIn, and our Facebook sites under the management of a single Social Media Editor and to provide posts on at least a monthly basis—though I really think weekly would be much better.

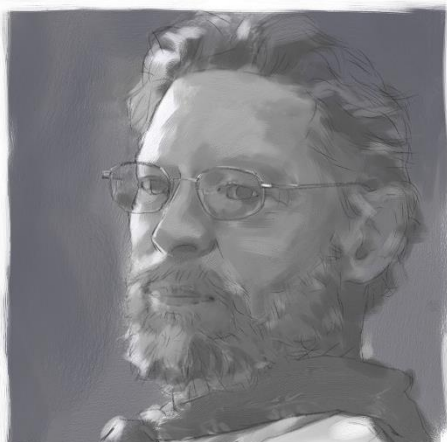
And so here at DCA Headquarters, we have begun working with a professional media firm to initiate a process for converting the DCA website to a content management system. One that is easy to update, that can handle conference paper and drawing submission requirements and materials, that encourages members to self-maintain their contact information and current status, and automatically links to social media for posting news and events. And more.

We are also in the process of documenting DCA materials printed before the advent of computer processing so we will be able to post a complete inventory of the Association's publications. We are moving forward.

Now back to me. Not counting possibilities resulting from paper and drawing submissions for this conference, I have had eight research-oriented articles published in Representation and eleven illustrations selected for the Juried Design Communication Exhibition including three Best in Category Awards, two Jurors' Awards, and one Best in Show Award. Architecture students under my guidance have garnered forty four Accepted Drawing Awards, one Honor Award, one Merit Award, five Best in Category Awards, and four First Place Awards. As you can see, the DCA has been very, very good for my career. I have tried hard to return the favor.

Times are changing and so am I. I am 72 years old. So are George Bush and Sly Stallone. We are getting on—short timers with more days behind us than ahead. I am not sure how much longer I will be teaching but the end is out there making its presence felt at the back of my consciousness. Not to worry. The DCA has a dedicated and talented core of seasoned individuals committed to its mission and willing to contribute their wisdom and expertise to its on-going success. I know for a fact that there is no lack of vision or void in leadership to hold us back or bring us down. And I see bright, capable young faculty joining our ranks, eager to do their part in sharing their talent and energy, building on the excellent foundation laid by Kirby Lockard and the University of Arizona.

Could you be one of them?



*Henry Sorenson – Self portrait*



*At my graphics demonstration table (notice the cracked mirror) in the mid 1980's.*

## DCA at Cornell 2018

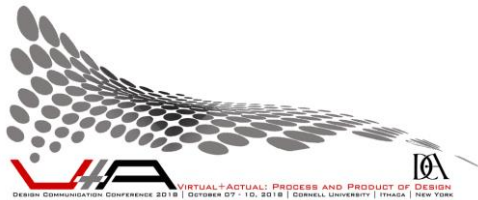
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**David J. Lewis** is Associate Professor of Architecture and a founding principal of Lewis.Tsurumaki.Lewis (LTL Architects), a design intensive architecture firm located in New York City. LTL Architects is the recipient of the 2007 National Design Award for Interior Design from the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum and was selected as one of six American architectural firms featured in the U.S. Pavilion at the 2004 Venice Architecture Biennale. David Lewis has also taught at Cornell University, the University of Pennsylvania, University of Limerick, and Ohio State University.

**Jenny Sabin** specializes in adaptive architecture, bio-inspired design, material computation, programmable matter, sustainability, responsive materials, digital ceramics, biomimicry, and Kirigami geometry. Jenny Sabin's work is at the forefront of a new direction for 21st-century architectural practice; one that investigates the intersections of architecture and science, and applies insights and theories from biology and mathematics to the design of material structures. Sabin is an Associate Professor in the Department of Architecture at Cornell University. She is principal of Jenny Sabin Studio, an experimental architectural design studio based in Philadelphia, and director of the Sabin Design Lab at Cornell AAP, a hybrid research and design unit with specialization in computational design, data visualization, and digital fabrication

As a former resident of up-state New York, I can attest to the beauty of Ithaca and the Finger Lakes Region in the Fall. For further information and to register the website is open and available at

<http://www.dcaconference2018.org/index.html>



2018 DCA Conference Advertisement – Cornell University

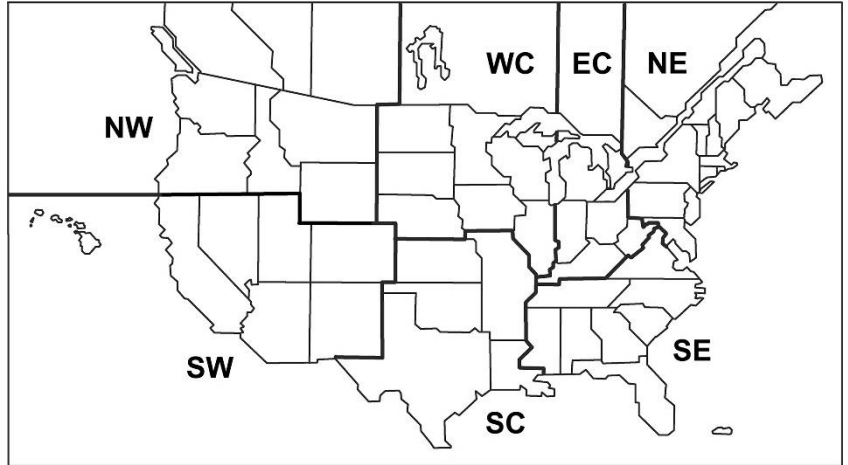


Martha Van Rensselaer Hall

## The Newsletter of the Design Communication Association Summer 2018

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