



Designerly Perspectives on AI

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Design is a discipline that co-evolves with technology. It has repeatedly redefined itself to adapt to the possibilities brought by new technologies in order to address the changing needs of people, societies, and humanity in general.

While machines of the past replaced manual labor, sped up calculations, and transformed communications, the new machines of today—powered by large language models and generative AI—are moving ever closer to being able to converse with humans, to synthesize information, and to analogize concepts. When machines are endowed with capabilities that once seemed uniquely and unequivocally human, many questions can be raised, such as: What core human capabilities remain that are not easily replaceable by machines? And for design as a discipline in particular: If design is about “making sense of things,” what meaning can design give to an AI-enabled world in order to shape the perspectives from which to think about and design these new machines? Could design as a discipline help to strengthen core human capabilities, such as creativity, in this age of AI?

For this issue, we invited three well-known design researchers—Johan Redström, Laura Forlano, and Stephan Wensveen—to share their perspectives on AI. These perspectives were originally given in the form of keynote speeches at the IASDR 2025 conference (December 2-5, 2025, Taipei, Taiwan). Johan Redström and Laura Forlano jointly gave a keynote titled “Left by our own devices,” with each of them offering their distinct perspective; and Stephan Wensveen gave a keynote speech titled “Aesthetics of Intelligence.”

At a time when design researchers and practitioners contemplating the future of Design and AI, we believe these perspectives are valuable to a wider audience, beyond the few

hundred present at the conference. We are extremely happy that the three keynote speakers agreed to spend time turning their speeches into articles for publication. The three perspectives have undergone a peer review process and are now published in the current issue.

In the first of these articles, titled “Arts of Living Well with Machines,” Johan Redström looks back at how design has responded to revolutionary, formidable technologies in the past and reflects on how designers found a way forward by redefining what design is and what aesthetics means. With this historical lens as a basis, he argues for a new aesthetical foundation for “design (with) AI.”

In the second article, “Living in an Algorithmic Error: A Disabled Cyborg Perspective on AI,” Laura Forlano gives a first-person perspective on living “intimately” with smart machines. She provides six lessons learned from a scenario in which human and machine need to become one and in which the machine serves both as an enabler and a hindrance to her own wellbeing.

In the third article, “Aesthetics of Intelligence,” Stephan Wensveen reviews the four waves of design aesthetics and, for the fourth and current wave, proposes five principles for designing for aesthetics of intelligence. He then explores how designers, given the characteristics of AI technologies, might redefine what aesthetics could mean.

I believe you will gain great insights, as well as enjoyment, from reading these three handcrafted, designerly perspectives on Design and AI.