

**DESIGNING THE FUTURE**

**The future lies in Beauty**

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## DESIGNING THE FUTURE

The future lies in Beauty

Wisława Szymborska tells us: "When I pronounce the word future, the first syllable already belongs to the past". Only a poet can have things so clear. And the future is already here since yesterday, since so long ago.

It's not that the world is changing, it's that it has already changed and humans haven't noticed, so immersed is everyone in their smartphones. When I ride the Metro first thing in the morning, and last thing in the evening too, everyone is abducted by their smartphones. And in Callao, the Metro station where I transfer, the walls are lined with ads from El Corte Inglés announcing a last generation smartphone at a good price, in case anyone escapes. And in the art of abduction there is no one to match El Corte Inglés. Only the few of us who are left without a smartphone see these ads because the rest pass by fleeting and crazed all with their faces illuminated by the light of their smartphones that absorbs them.

### THE FUTURE

The day is near when there will be a white paint with suspended LEDs with which, painting a complete wall of our house, from top to bottom, from side to side, we will turn it into a screen "in blood", without borders, total. And with the remote control we have at home some real scale images. Real reality and real royalty. Or better yet, after touching with our finger, like the old ET, connect with the world. Of course, the next step is to paint with the same paint the other wall and the ceiling, we have the three-dimensional images living with us.

The day is near when there will be, isn't there already? another white paint with leds in suspension with which, painting a complete ceiling of our house, it will turn all of it into a lamp. And it will light up all of it, or the part that we indicate, with the intensity that we want, after pressing the control or touching with our computerized finger where it is necessary.

The day is near when there will be a backpack that we will carry on our back and that, expelling air pressure downward, will lift us off the ground and propel us so that for adequate distances we can dispense with the car.

The day is near when there will be a washing and drying tunnel in our bathroom in which, after jumping out of bed half asleep, we get in and after an intense automatic scrubbing and washing, and after drying with hot air and then cold, we come out looking as good as new. No more washing towels. What seems unbelievable is that it took so long to arrive.

The day is near when there will be work chairs that ergonomically adapt to the body to be always in the most appropriate posture. Steelcase has been making them for some time now, and very well.

The day is near, Apple has them stored in a drawer waiting for the right time, when there will be glasses, glasses, in which everything will be possible: virtual but possible.

The day is near when there will be tattoos and bracelets and rings and earrings and the like, made with LEDs capable of being activated and making remote controls disappear. Thus the relationship with the devices will be direct, either by voice, as there are already, or by contact with these non-invasive body devices. If we carry our non-transferable fingerprints with us, why carry and lose identity documents and passports?

## PROJECT

Projects will continue to be done in the head, by the hand of reason and with the precision of numbers. Because, although the means are fantastic, the most advanced CAD and 3D programs and whatever comes, what matters is the head. The project is generated and solved and developed in the head. We build ideas, and ideas are not generated with the feet, although some people insist on doing it with such extremities. Then come the forms, drawings and models with which to continue analyzing and confirming the validity of the projected space. We will make them with our hands in what I have so often called thinking with our hands. All of this constitutes an investigation of the architectural space. Because this project work is a real research work. Of course, computer media facilitate the necessary precision that architecture demands in the plans of an execution project. And that the correction of these plans is facilitated, as is their reproduction. Computer media effectively assist in the translation of ideas and drawings into precise plans.

## BUILD

Construction still has to change with respect to the primitive, yes primitive, way in which buildings are still erected. And even if hands are still indispensable, we should demand more skilled hands at this stage from the first moment of the conception of the idea. It is not right that automobiles are built with the latest technology, with robots, while our houses are still built with pastaciuta.

## STUDY

On the contrary, the studies to become architects must recover a longer time to give a better training. To understand things in depth you need time. Although my school, the ETSAM in Madrid, happens to be one of the best in the world, its programs should be completed with more humanistic subjects. Philosophy and music and poetry should be recovered for these studies. And more mathematics and more physics. The graduating classes before mine had to study two years of mathematics. I think it was a very good thing.

An architect never finishes studying. I study now more than ever. And I feel that I am just beginning to start. My father, who was a very good surgeon, died at the age of 104 and I always, until the end, saw him reading and studying. I would like to reach my father's

age with his same intensity, that of the future, that of someone who is always starting to begin.

Newton said: "I do not know how I may be seen by the world, but in my opinion, I have behaved like a child playing at the edge of the sea, and amusing himself by looking from time to time for a more polished stone and a prettier shell than usual, while the great ocean of truth lay exposed before me completely unknown". So is this society today: we are already immersed in the future and they do not realize it.

Designing the future. Designing the future? Designing the future is to seek and find beauty to make men happy. A beauty that is the splendor of truth as Plato taught us. A beauty capable of remaining in time.

To design the future is to project by living intensely in the present and understanding well the past. What TS Eliot summarizes so well in "Burnt Norton", the first of his Four Quartets: "Time present and time past / Are both perhaps present in time future / And time future contained in time past".