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<th><strong>Title</strong></th>
<th>The social role of a designer</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Author(s)</strong></td>
<td>Lim, Bryan Wei Ye</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Citation</strong></td>
<td>Lim, B. W. Y. (2010, March). The social role of a designer. Presented at Discover URECA @ NTU poster exhibition and competition, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
<td>2010</td>
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<td><strong>URL</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://hdl.handle.net/10220/8927">http://hdl.handle.net/10220/8927</a></td>
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**Project Title:** The Social Role of Designer

**Supervisor:** Asst Prof Nanci Takeyama

**Collaborator:** Reaching Out

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**Category:** 1

**Project ID:** ADM09027

**Student:** Lim Wei Ye Bryan

**School of Art, Design and Media**

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**URECA**

Undergraduate Research Experience on Campus

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**“Good Design is Good Citizenship”**

– MILTON GLASER

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**THE OBJECTIVE**

- Good design is not all about aesthetics and wit anymore.
- Imperative for visual communicators to realise the responsibility they have.
- Design, beyond aesthetics, can help educate, increase awareness, improve administrative, communication, organisational and business models of a social organisation (Fig. 1).
- By working with a social organisation, the project is able to
to discover the extent in which design can play a role within a
social organisation.

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**THE CONTEXT**

- This URECA project is partnering with is Reaching Out.
- It is a fair trade organisation located in the Old Town of Hoi
An, Vietnam, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Employs physically impaired persons as crafts men and
women to produce Vietnamese souvenirs.
- Provides the necessary training for the craftsmen based on
their ability and interest.

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**RESEARCHING VIETNAM**

- Research process enables the project to re-contextualise the
designs in a contemporary context.
- Initial research: Traditional craft culture of Vietnam.
  - Categories of study included the raw materials, such as
    bronze, clay and wood
  - Artefacts and techniques research, include statutory,
vessels, architectural forms, furniture, paintings and prints.
  - History and how China as a colonial master has influenced
the Vietnam’s craft culture
  - Attempts to study the lesser cultures, such as the minority
  ethnic groups, at the later stage.
- A swirling motif struck us as prominent and recurring (Fig. 2).
  - Motifs are associated with nature and the divine.
  - This study became the inspiration for a new logo that
we were developing for the organisation.

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**RE-DESIGNING REACHING OUT**

- Trip in December 2009 included the re-designing of products,
understanding the organisation’s
operation and presenting a new
logo concept that was worked on
prior to the trip.
- Central concepts surrounding the
  logo were the sense of traditional
  Vietnamese culture, a handmade and sincere quality and their
  slogan “gifts that give twice”.
- Swirling cloud motif was used
  represent the central idea of
  Reaching Out – gifts that gives
twice (Fig. 4).
- The inward curl of the cloud motif
  hopes to encapsulate the idea of a
  reciprocal appreciation.
- The cloud motif as empowerment
  represents also the artisan’s craft
  and creative skill as a divine gift.
- The colour is filled in with a slight
  misprint, like the traditional Dong
  Ho woodblock prints.

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**Figure 1:** Investigation process.

**Figure 2:** Swirling motifs in Vietnam.

**Figure 3:** Photographs from our work at Reaching Out in December 2009.

**Figure 4:** (Top to bottom) New proposed logo and old logo.