

Nexus

**Contemplating nexus interiors
during a period of isolation**

**A virtual exhibition of works by
Year 2 Interior Architecture Students
in celebration of IFI World Interiors Day 2020**

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Foreword

March 2020 saw the lockdown of nations across the globe due to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. Still ongoing, this period presents challenges in the university context. We are contemplating not only what social distancing means for design education founded on dialogue and human interaction but also what this means for the design of interiors, as spaces that foster connection, empathy and human-ness.

The paradox of designing in isolation while designing interiors proves to be something in need of acknowledgement, processing, provocation, and sharing while we adjust to what designing and making interiors will mean going into the future. For students of interior design, a particular curve ball is in their court. From an educator's perspective, I believe that this reality offers the potential for a resilient generation of designers to emerge.

In this spirit, our students embrace the IFI World Interiors Day theme of Nexus, with its meanings of centre / focus / node and connection and address this through personal expressions and interpretations during this time of isolation.

Reconnecting with the tactile nature of physical creation (in contrast to the sudden surge of digital substitutions), they used physical medium of their choice to deliberate the theme as individuals. Their works are represented through their own digital photography and artists' statements. The submissions are shared on Instagram using #WIDWednesdays and #BoukundeJournal.

I welcome you to enjoy these personal works created by the 2020, Year 2, BSc Interior Architecture students.

Zakkiya Khan (Lecturer & Co-ordinator BSc Interior Architecture, Co-opted Expert Member of International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers)



The center of happiness

In the now, we face very challenging times. In these times it is important to know what is most important. What connects us to ourselves. What is the center of our happiness? By investigating this, I made a collage. The disorientated layout represents this current time we are in. The colors represents everything that makes me happy is connected In some way to make a center picture.

Louné Basson



These 4 Walls

Designing in isolation presents a different experience to designing within a more accessible frame of reference. Our usual continual interaction with a multitude of interior spaces is limited to just that of our own individual living space. This space then becomes the nexus (center or focus) of our everyday lives. Personally, it seems my whole world exists between these 4 walls.

Photographed, is a simplified depiction of my room, and the many ways in which it is now used. It is often difficult to separate distinct spaces for things like work, play, and rest, and so many activities overlap in the same spaces.

Beyond the walls, and inaccessible to me, is the exterior environment. If I didn't know that those were my surroundings before being isolated, I would never have known the context of the space between the walls. It's as if it is detached from reality and could be situated almost anywhere. I rely on my slightly unreliable memory of what lies beyond. This is depicted through very rough grey scale sketches, fading away, just like my recall of both the physical experience, and the human connections of the outside world.

It is now that memory of what was, and imagination of what could be, become imperative.

Franchesca de Moura



Disconnect to connect

When designing in isolation one thinks of all the activities such as going to work or the gym or sitting in traffic, being with crowds of people, making money, you cannot do because you are isolated from everything and everyone. But instead of seeing the disconnection of everything rather let us focus on what we are able to connect with. This art piece shows all the different aspects of our life that we are currently disconnected from. Then it shows that when we disconnect from those things, we are able to connect to ourselves and the more important things in this moment. This isolation allows us to connect more with ourselves, our souls and our families. This isolation allows us to connect to ourselves by disconnecting from the world.

Anri Groenewald



*Elevate beyond yourself, for we share a common language
 Cut elements and trace a pattern in concrete and steel
 Construct, sculpt, carve tread and riser
 And create a malleable element of monumental emotion
 I am an Architect*

An influencer if you will

Building together connective material

*The tape measures the form, through movement dictates our pacing, whether walking steady into a library or
 brisk into an old pub*

*Pure physical elements pieced together with major and minor care
 And enormous drama*

*The dynamics of safety and relationships
 Feel smooth like freshly casted concrete could get*

*And there is a recurring tread
 A stringer with varied practicality*

I am equipped

With trowel, formwork and cement

As I hand carve the details of every elevation

Every staircase perfectly crafted for the duration of every grand entrance

At bespoke I cast and cure this craft

I can't leave as its never enough

And sometimes it happens off the step

Other times its a patient progression of a riser

From A to B

Sometimes I create for hours even days

Then I watch as it progresses

You have no idea of the ways in which I design this magical place

Mmamoagi Kungoane



3. CENTER, FOCUS

These words make me think of the phrases “centre of gravity” and “focus on a point”. This object is an abstract artistic way of ‘forcefully’ leading the eye of the user to focus on one point, which is the ‘centre’ of the object. This is done with random objects found in the kitchen such as a cereal box and skewers. These elements circulate a specific point that makes you focus on the centre piece which is a mixture of blues to evoke calmness. The way of representing is it putting it against a monochrome background (Being the grass) to emphasise on the focus being on the centre. Overall the elements in the photograph lead the viewer to appreciate and focus on the focal point of the entire object.

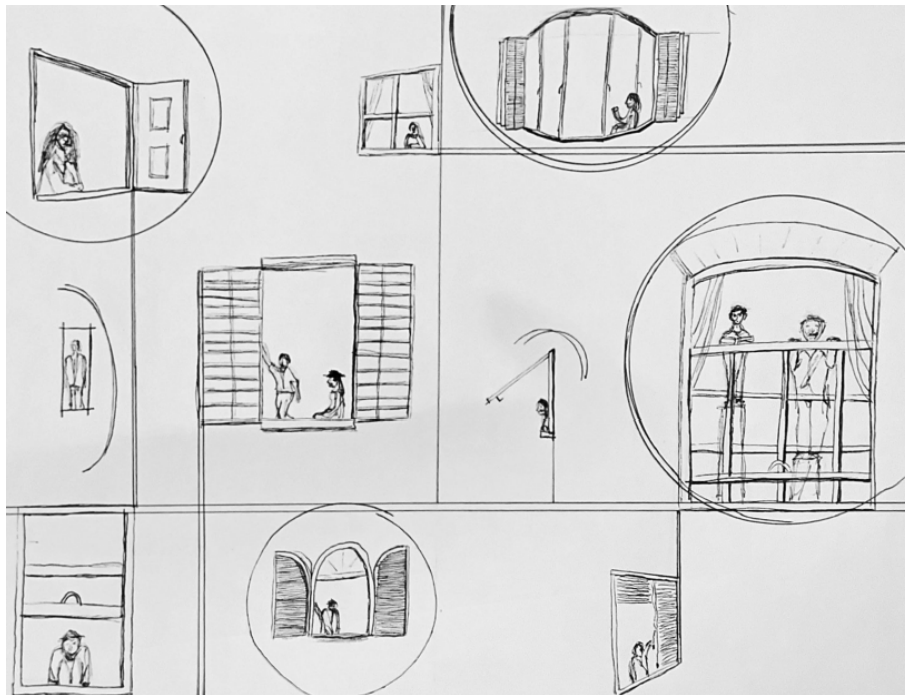
Neo Mabasa



Centre, Focus 2020

*Bless the designs and condemn the designer!
Curse the architect whose inspiration fails time and time again!
Forsake you, who isolates from nature!
For how can we design for people?
For how can anyone be a role model?
For how can we claim to be apart from nature?
We are in nature.
People are too idiotic to be inspiring.
There is no God without nature.
May nature be the centre focus.
May nature never forgive us.
May Human creation be an offering to nature.*

Chris Maree



This WID artwork represents nexus as a connected group of people in our “Covid-world” where we are separated and yet possibly more connected than ever. This depicts how our physical interactions have been limited to see each other through our windows. Windows are no longer simply design elements letting natural light in or to have a view to the outside world. They are now windows into the life of our neighbours in both the literal and figurative sense. The circular borders and lines are to emphasize the quarantine regulations put into place limiting are physical interactions with other people.

Kieran McKenna



When you are feeling alone in a world filled with uncertainty, isolation and devastation, just remember that almost 7 billion people all around the world share the exact same feeling..

YOU ARE NEVER ALONE

Lara Meissner-Roloff



Isolation

The whole world has been put on pause since the breakout of a pandemic and our homes have become our sanctuary and they have been multitasking as such. They have become the center and focus for most people, therefore future designs must support and uplift humans which has become a task for interior designers. The picture is a painting of the world without humans; it portrays how the skies have become clearer, trees greener and the streets empty. Does it take being in isolation for things to be normal in the world? A connection to our homes has created the new normal which makes interior designers design in isolation. Will the undisturbed, peaceful world become a concept for designers in future? It might inspire a lot of people.

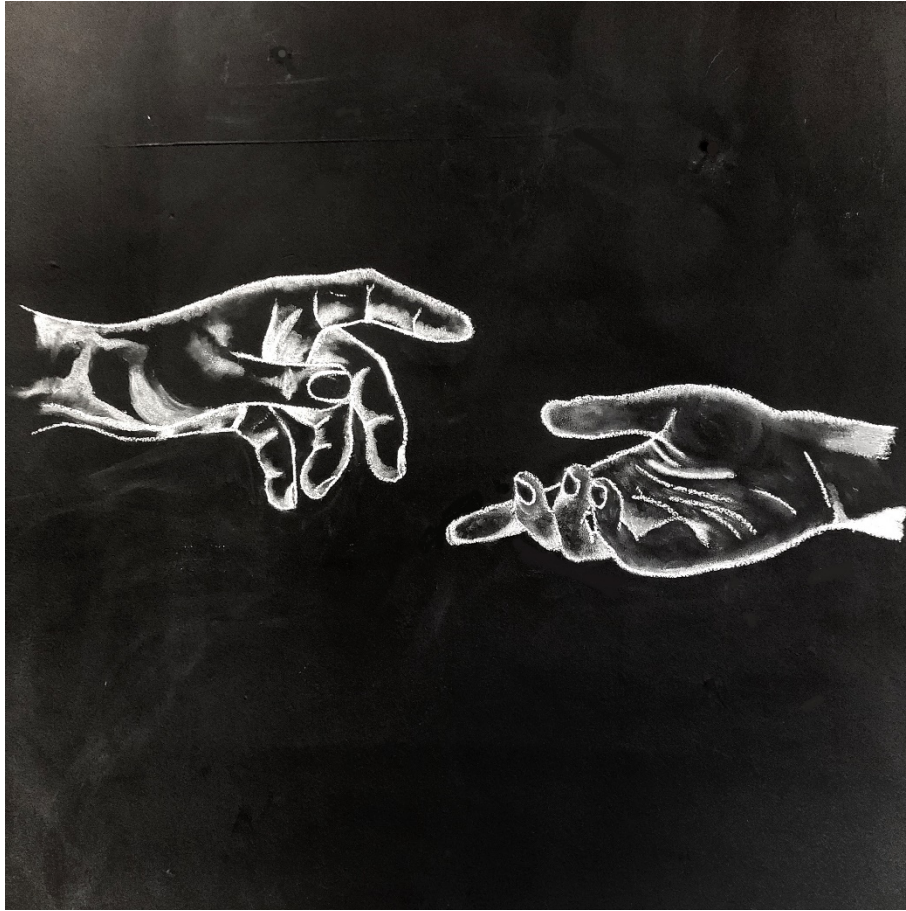
Luyanda Mkhize



Animated living room

A connected group/ series, this is a series of different décor for a living room space in an animated display. The mystery of this image is where designed spaces are located, just by looking at the spaces one can identify a piece of décor that represents the space and immediately the person will place a location according to the design still. This shows how universal that art of interior design is because of the identity it brings to a space by using a certain type of décor to define the surroundings of where each space is. These different variations could be in one apartment building or a singular place that has been changed over time. Interior design is a discipline that always people to explore the world in one space, it represents a variety of things within one shift of a decorative element.

Lerato Mosai



Lend the world a (clean) hand

Mural: White chalk on a painted wall (wall not painted with chalk- friendly paint)

Every day I pass by this sombre, dark room and its gloominess has never bothered me much, but during these lockdown-days, it has been bugging me more than ever. Perhaps it reminds me of the endless darkness which is currently crippling our world? On every television station, every radio station and every newspaper heading has been proclaiming the bad news that consumes my days.

Yet, in some instances, the world has never been gentler. And although the bad news is rife in the world, it is those with open hands and sincere hearts that link the world together, especially as the need for human connection has never been stronger. And in a world where physical touch is limited, it is the kind words and compassionate deeds that touch the weary hearts of the world.

Be it a healthcare worker's soft, healing touch, the five Rand donation to the solidarity fund, lending out a laptop to a student in need, forgiving a struggling parent for not paying rent on time or sharing a piece of bread with the hungry— it counts.

It is the hands of those caring for others that brighten the world (and this dark room), giving each of us a sense of purpose and the responsibility to lend a hand to strengthen the human connection across the world.

Sonja Paul



Connected Spaces

The whole world is affected by the pandemic. Physical distance is needed, but socially we are more connected than ever before. Everyone is working together; from healthcare workers, to firemen; from grocery cashiers to police; even everyone working from home or having to stay home. Designers and architects are also a group of people affected. Thankfully in these dire times, we all came together to help those in need and those who work on the frontline. This piece is not to take attention away from the important frontline workers, but to celebrate designers and architects during these times. This piece consists of square boxes, which represents the spaces we occupy (at the moment, most people are at home –so living rooms, bedrooms and kitchens). In this piece you will see several designers who helped with the cause for fighting the pandemic (sewing masks, donations, etc.). You will also see a few items used in interiors to create a space, and to create a home. Silhouettes of people represents each and every one of us. They are holding up the 'spaces' they occupy and indirectly holding up the burden of the coronavirus. This shows how if we all can work together, we can fight this.

Bianka Prins



Inspiration In Isolation

In this piece, the dull border is made up of articles on COVID-19, this represent the world presently. In contrast, the Nexus is the colour wheel layered with a collage that represent where designers can find inspiration during isolation. This includes objects in their own homes, tv, the garden, old magazines, in textures and in colour.

Megan Rivas



Reality Imagined

The piece is a collage inspired by graphic artist Jimmy Turrell and the new album cover he created for Beck called 'Colours'.

I chose the Nexus theme of connection and the idea is that interiors connect with the person who inhabits the space. Therefore behind every design is the individual. The collage is made up of layers of images. Behind the free flow shapes of colour is an old man. He represents the person (reality) who is cultured by life surrounded by design (the colours, the imagined) that works in conjunction with who is behind it.

The collage also shows for me a connection between reality and imaginery which is brought together to form one thing.

Mari-Louise Theron



Diversity Nexus

In order to appreciate diversity we must first accept that we're all the same. We all have red blood in our veins and that is the life force that connects us. This photograph represents the connection between the drop of blood and the humans that it connects thus forming a Diversity Nexus.

Ockert van Rooyen

Acknowledgements

Brief: International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI) World Interior's Day theme of Nexus Interiors, adapted by Zakkiya Khan

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Nassuuna Lumu

Chris Maree

Neo Mabasa

Kieran Mc Kenna

Lara Meissner-Roloff

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Bianka Prins

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Robyn Wolmarans

Digital Exhibition: compiled by Zakkiya Khan (Lecturer & Co-ordinator BSc Interior Architecture, Co-opted Expert Member of International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers)

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