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AZURE



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TO DO Talks Symposium: *Designing the Future of Work* Saturday, January 20, 2018 George Brown College, Toronto



TO DO's third annual symposium brings together 12 multidisciplinary speakers to contribute to a better understanding of how design can, and must, be leveraged to make the future of work work for all of us. The four-hour event features keynote speaker Joost Schouten, two thematic sessions, and an opportunity for discussion among those in attendance.

Theme

The world is increasingly digital, and with it, so too is work. With a widespread shift towards greater connectivity, and robots capable of performing complex tasks, the landscape of work has changed dramatically, rendering a future that is less predictable and more complex.

This new landscape offers a rousing combination of opportunities and challenges. More workers experience different work environments that allow and encourage flexibility. Spaces, structures, lifestyles, and values are changing in tandem with how we work. Design plays a major role in reshaping the way we work. It helps us imagine different futures, transitioning "old ways" of doing things, to new and "better" ways of doing and being.

Keynote



Joost Schouten

It is evident that our conventional ways of working are insufficient in meeting the needs of our constantly changing markets. This has sparked a wide range of alternative ways of working. Though a welcome shift, it is still mostly fuelled by organizational needs from conventional frameworks. How well can we self-organize work if we don't address the power structures in our organizations? And what about our morality and values? What place will they hold in the "Future of Work"?

In this session, we will explore and challenge the driving forces of our organizations. We'll touch upon some alternative ways to hold power and make decisions, and lay out design challenges to be tackled in order to transform our organizations to facilitate our collective needs, rather than merely striving for maximizing efficiency, growth, and profit.

Session 1: Work and Technology

Start time: 1:00pm

Human-Computer Collaboration

Jon Tirmandi, Co-Founder and Partner
Normative

A new generation of workers are coming—they are software, robots, and machine intelligence. We're already seeing this shift as software permeates our built environment, our cars, and even our clothing. Over time, the line between what's human and computer will be blurred. How can we embrace this progress in our workplaces in order to augment our own work? How can we work with machines to leverage the best of human capability and the best of computer capability? Human-computer collaboration is here to stay and has the potential to create a better and fairer society for everyone. It's up to all of us to shape how.

Mediated Atmospheres - A Workspace That Responds To Your Needs

Nan Zhao, Research Scientist
MIT Media Lab

The sensorial qualities of a space—the atmosphere—shaped by the composition of light, sound, objects, and people have a remarkable influence on us. Manipulating it has been shown to be powerful affecting cognitive performance, mood, and even physiology. Emerging technologies for spatial augmentation provide new opportunities to enrich everyday environments and potentially new kinds of architectural services. This talk presents how these technologies could be used to improve the workplace, wellbeing, and performance.

Ritual and The Workplace: Exploring employee experience and physical expression in the digital age

Sean Hazell, Principal and Strategist,
Hazell & Co.
Nick Hobson, Ph.D., Behavioral Scientist
at Psychology Compass
University of Toronto

As large organizations double down on digital, do they risk losing out on the meaningful benefits of physical work experiences? In this talk Sean Hazell and Nick Hobson look to workplace rituals—past and present—to highlight the tension between digitization and employee experience.

Working outside the box: Design for flexibility

Heather Dubbeldam, Principal Architect
Dubbeldam Architecture + Design

Much research has been done on emerging trends in the modern office, exploring how people work, how they interact with technology, and how this has affected the spaces that they require to do their jobs effectively and comfortably. With the rise of modern technology, skyrocketing real estate costs and the unparalleled mobility of today's workforce, flexible and adaptable workspaces with a balance between focus and collaborative spaces, are the order of the day. Heather Dubbeldam will share three case studies of how her award-winning firm has successfully tackled this challenge, including for the world's fastest growing tech company, Slack.

Empowering Creatives with Modern Manufacturing

Dawn Laing, Director of Marketing &
Communications
Notion Manufactured Goods

Merging technology and tradition is the future of manufacturing. This talk is targeted at artists, creatives, and designers with an interest in making sustainable, on demand, modern manufacturing work for them. This talk will offer an insider's viewpoint to both the inner workings of a modern boutique factory and how creatives can mitigate financial risk when starting out.

Session 2: Work and Humanity

Start time: 2:45pm

Fluidity: The Future of Meaningful Work

Jonas Altman, Partner
Social Fabric

The future of work is here. It is bleak and it is bright. Conventional jobs and the security they bring fade away while new principles for organizing ourselves emerge. The focus is now on fluidity; the ability to move with dexterity amidst constant change. Meanwhile, finding meaning in the work we do has fast become a global imperative. This talk explores the changing nature of work and its reinvention in real-time.

The future of work is about more than work

Julie Sommerfreund, Innovation Designer
The Moment

The future of work is about more than work—it's about work-life fit, and making space for human-centred values in both work and home life. Through a lens of the lived experiences of parents in non-standard work, this presentation focuses on design and innovation opportunities driven by a broader framing of the Future of Work to include a consideration of other shifts underway in society, the corollary systems that support workers, and the broader reality of workers themselves that extends to life beyond work, i.e. family life.

Choose More Empathy

Chris Graham, Principal
TellPeople

Imagine that going to work made you a better partner, parent, or friend—no matter what your job. How would that change your life? How would that change the world? 'Choose More Empathy' argues this future is not only possible but inevitable. Drawing upon research in behavioural economics and cognitive neuroscience, Chris will explain how small changes to everyday workplace interactions can "nudge" everyone to choose more empathy.

The Proper Lab: Designing For Prosperity

Chenny Xia, Innovation Designer
The Moment

Markus Grupp, Director Experience Design
Indigo

Using the tools and mindset that we rely on daily, we tackled the wicked problem of reducing poverty in East Toronto. We'll share our story of how everyday designers were able to help people-in-need find employment, housing, or go back to school. By building safe and inclusive learn-by-doing environments, we created real-life learning opportunities to help low-income individuals develop the critical soft-skills, confidence, and support they needed to rise above poverty.