

# Interior Design Newsletter

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## Department Review

The Summer Term began with the Interior Design Department joining a new, innovative design organisation, the Society of British Interior Design (SBID).

SBID is an organisation dedicated to the highest standards of interior design. Axel Griesinger, Dean of Interior Design, plays a key role as Founder Member and Education Director of SBID. He recognises students as the future of the design industry and strongly supports their growth and development. The Interior Design Department are delighted to be a part of this exciting new organisation and look forward to the opportunities it will bring them.

To read an interview with Founding Chair, Vanessa Brady and more information on SBID, turn to page 3.

### Careers Event

In April the SBID Student Chap-

ter and AIU Careers Department joined forces by producing an Interior Design Careers Event. Designers from several aspects of the design industry came and spoke to Interior Design students about the industry and careers within the field. Eleanora Cunietti of *Carden Cunietti* offered insight on interviewing for a design jobs, Debi Harris of *Porous Designs* gave advice on running an interior design business and Darren Grapes of *Grapes Associates* talked about the commercial sector of the design industry.

Vanessa Brady and Simon Cavelle from the Society of British Interior Design discussed the launch of their new organisation. Over 30 students attended the event that officially marked the launch of SBID's first Student Chapter at AIU, run by Student Chapter Representatives Breanna Wucinich and Joanna Severin.

### End of Year Exhibition

The term ended with the Interior Design Department's Annual End of Year Exhibition. The exhibition was designed by the Spring 2009 Event Design class, under the supervision of lecturer, Shay Alkalay, and showcased the work of some of the department's most talented students from the past year. The opening night on 29th May, 2009, was a great success with an audience of students, lecturers, External Examiners, design professionals and SBID Board members.

### Art in Marylebone

AIU took part in this year's annual Marylebone Summer Fayre by joining with an outreach project for Art in Marylebone, an organisation of artists living in Marylebone. The organisers approached the Interior Design Department requesting that AIU See page 2

*We welcome your feedback and contributions. Send us your comments, news items and pictures that you would like included in our future newsletters.*



From left to right: Breanna Wucinich, Simon Cavelle, Vanessa Brady, and Joanna Severin



Careers Event Presentation with Darren Grapes of Grapes Design



Breanna Wucinich talks to Interior Design students about the new SBID Student Chapter

## Message from the Dean



Axel Griesinger, Dean of Interior Design

Two weeks ago Axel Griesinger attended a presentation for the Milan based Macef Au-

turn 2009 exhibition in his role as Education Director of the Society of British Interior Design (SBID). The organiser, the Italian Chamber of Commerce, who is the official representative of the main Italian trade-fairs organisers, Fiera Milano and Verona Fiere, was assisted by SBID to introduce these fairs to the British Interior Design Industry.

Macef is a leading International Home Show with over 80,000 visitors annually. SBID will be represented at the Fair in Milan. More information about this event will be available in the near future.

The Interior Design Department is organising a trip to next Spring's Salone Internazionale Del Mobile Milan. It is the largest and most important furniture fair in the world. Please contact Axel Griesinger ([agriesinger@aiulondon.ac.uk](mailto:agriesinger@aiulondon.ac.uk)) or Breanna Wucinich ([wuci4098@aiulondon.net](mailto:wuci4098@aiulondon.net)) for further information.

There are many interesting interior design exhibitions currently happening in London. Our SBID Student Chapter Representatives have arranged two visits for interior design students this term. See page 4.

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students get involved with their exhibition design to showcase the artists' work. As a result the ID students of the Event Design class developed a design concept for the exhibition. Also Visual Communication students created a flyer and other promotional material. The event took place in AIU's Theatre. It was a great success, well attended, with celebrity visitors, including the Lord Mayor of Westminster.



### Graduation Day

AIU's 2008-2009 Graduation Day ceremony was held at the Great Hall of the Royal Borough of Chelsea and Kensington Town Hall, London, on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2009.



Interior Design Students anxiously wait to graduate

Twenty-one Interior Design students graduated, including Heather Lindahl who received a BA (Hons) from London South Bank University. Hearty congratulations to AIU Interior Design graduates, the department is extremely proud of you. From this day forward, your journey into a new way of life begins.

## 2009 Outstanding Student—Lacey Zubak

As a recent graduate of AIU London, I feel very fortunate to have had the experience of attending this school. It was an amazing adventure! My name is Lacey Zubak and I grew up in Southern California. From an early age, I dreamed of becoming an architect. In high school, I began by taking every available elective class related to architecture. My growing passion for architecture led me to my love of Interior Design. During my college years in the States I worked as a Design Consultant in a furniture store. This job gave me the opportunity to accept a position as assistant to the designer decorating three model homes. Prior to my graduating with my Associates degree, my sister and I had taken a trip to London which left me intrigued with the city. Needless to say, I found myself enrolled in the Interior Design Programme at AIU.

During my two years with AIU, I have gained knowledge, confidence, and independence. I discovered these qualities are essential for succeeding in life. Although it was difficult in the beginning, with hard work and discipline I achieved more than I could have ever imagined. At graduation I was

honoured with being the chosen recipient of the Annual Outstanding Student Award in the Interior Design Programme. I felt excited and very proud to be recognised for this award. I'd like to take this opportunity to give special thanks to family, friends, and faculty who supported and encouraged me through this life changing experience.



Lacey Zubak

# SBID Student Chapter Page

## What is SBID?

The Society of British Interior Design is a dynamic, transparent "not for profit" organisation focused on raising the standards of the interior design profession with the ultimate goal of protecting the title. It is a new and growing organisation dedicated to promoting development in the 'complete' interior design sector. AIU joined SBID in April 2009, launching its first Student Chapter.

## Why join?

Joining a professional organisation is one of the most important decisions a student can make during their studies. By joining SBID now students start building links early on with the industry of which they are about to be-

come a key part. Also it gives students the opportunity to network with existing designers, companies, and suppliers operating within the market, thus expanding their knowledge at a practical level.

For all degree-seeking interior design students wishing to join SBID, AIU will pay for their first year of membership. Please contact SBID Student Chapter Representatives:

Breanna Wucinich [wuci4098@aiulondon.net](mailto:wuci4098@aiulondon.net)  
or Joanna Severin [seve2849@aiulondon.net](mailto:seve2849@aiulondon.net)  
for further details.

## Student Chapter Representatives

Breanna Wucinich from Seattle, WA is in her last year of studies at AIU. She has been Student Chapter Representative since Fall

2008. Joanna Severin is from Sweden and is beginning her second year of study. She is currently working for a design firm in Sweden and will be back in the Fall Term.



Breanna Wucinich



Joanna Severin



Vanessa Brady, Chair and Founding Trustee of SBID, is an internationally recognised interior designer. Below she shares her experiences and tips on how to keep abreast of changes in the interior design industry.

## Why did you start SBID?

I was frustrated that I belong to an industry that requires perhaps as much (or even more) knowledge than others and yet it remains without regulation or direction. There seemed not to be representation in the areas SBID are competing within – so seeing and seizing the opportunity of a slowdown in the market – I (and my peers) have an unusual window of time to enable us to create a national body to address the issue.

## Why join SBID?

It is the only national organisation that will induct interior design students on a degree course. This immediately raises the bar of SBID to a higher level of competence as a member of the public sourcing a professional designer. Additionally, the calibre of membership is academically higher and, therefore, SBID will actively promote the qualification and professional skills of its members giving them an advantage over their competitors.

## Where do you see SBID in ten years?

I would like to think that the constant shaping and forming we are creating now will become a platform over the next two years that will change the perception of interior design in the UK. If this occurs within that time-frame, then I would hope that the SBID would be as strong and highly regarded as all other professional independent industry bodies. The SBID aims to suitably reflect the benefit interior design brings to the UK, but, in the main, I would hope it will be synonymous with quality across the board when thinking of interior design.

## What advice can you give to students who want to become an interior designer?

Interior designers must be organised and good listeners. They must be strong enough to handle the volatility and emotional swings and pendulums of clients, especially when working within the residential sector. Having a nerve of steel and being able to hold their tongue is essential. It's also important to be legally compliant and have a good accountant and bookkeeping system. The main ingredi-

ent is possessing a natural talent, as well as taught talent.

## How important are internships?

It certainly is paramount for any training designer to gain an internship with leading designers already established in the industry. Gaining first-hand experience of the interior design sector plays an instrumental role when studying for an Interior Design qualification. Having the opportunity to work on real projects in real time with real budgets is something which will seriously benefit a student studying for an Interior Design qualification.

## What do you look for when hiring a new person?

Presentation is a key indicator, as this reflects on the business. Punctuality, personality and, of course, demeanour are also important, but ultimately how the candidate responds to my questions and the competence demonstrated along with IT skills have a major input into my decision.

## How can students gain experience in the interior design field during their studies?

They need to attend as many exhibitions and read as much material, as they can obtain, in relation to past and future styles, designers, products and trends. It's also important to see how other firms compete in terms of sourcing and gathering the knowledge to match it – this will instantly make students more suitable candidates than those simply turning up from a course with a lack of additionally sourced knowledge.

