

Editorial

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Editorial

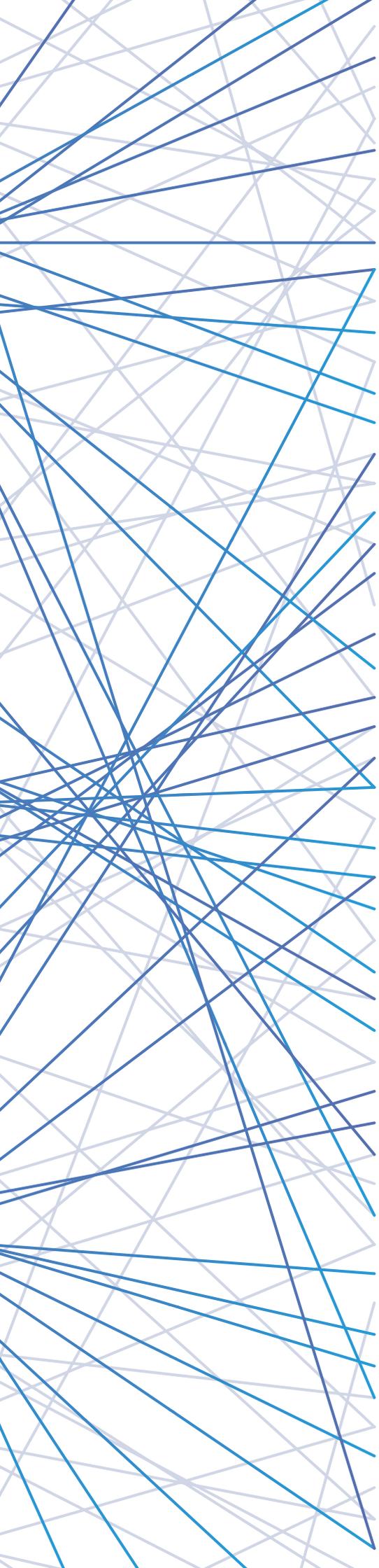
The RSD10 symposium was held at the faculty of Industrial Design Engineering, Delft University of Technology, 2nd-6th November 2021. After a successful (yet unforeseen) online version of the RSD 9 symposium, RSD10 was designed as a hybrid conference.

How can we facilitate the physical encounters that inspire our work, yet ensure a global easy access for joining the conference, while dealing well with the ongoing uncertainties of the global COVID pandemic at the same time? In hindsight, the theme of RSD10 could not have been a better fit with the conditions in which it had to be organized: *“Playing with Tensions: Embracing new complexity, collaboration and contexts in systemic design”*.

Playing with Tensions

Complex systems do not lend themselves for simplification. Systemic designers have no choice but to embrace complexity, and in doing so, embrace opposing concepts and the resulting paradoxes. It is at the interplay of these ideas that they find the most fruitful regions of exploration. The main conference theme explored design and systems thinking practices as mediators to deal fruitfully with tensions. Our human tendency is to relieve the tensions, and in design, to resolve the so-called “pain points.” But tensions reveal paradoxes, the sites of connection, breaks in scale, emergence of complexity. Can we embrace the tension and paradoxes as valuable social feedback in our path to just and sustainable futures?

The symposium took off with two days of well-attended workshops on campus and online. One could sense tensions through embodied experiences in one of the workshops, while reframing systemic paradoxes as fruitful design starting points in another. In the tradition of RSD, a Gigamap Exhibition was organized. The exhibition showcased mind-blowing visuals that reveal the tension between our own desire for order and structure and our desire to capture real-life dynamics and contradicting perspectives. Many of us enjoyed the high quality and diversity in the keynotes throughout the symposium. As chair of the SDA, Dr. Silvia Barbero opened in her keynote with a reflection on the start and impressive evolution of the Relating Systems thinking and Design symposia. Prof. Dr. Derk Loorbach showed us how transition research conceptualizes shifts in societal systems and gave us a glimpse into their efforts to foster desired ones. Prof. Dr. Elisa Giaccardi took us along a journey of technologically mediated agency. She advocated for a radical shift in design to deal with this complex web of relationships between things



and humans. Indy Johar talked about the need to reimagine our relationship with the world as one based on fundamental interdependence. And finally, Prof.Dr. Klaus Krippendorf systematically unpacked the systemic consequences of design decisions. Together these keynote speakers provided important insights into the role of design in embracing systemic complexity, from the micro-scale of our material contexts to the macro-scale of globally connected societies. And of course, RSD10 would not be an RSD symposium if it did not offer a place to connect around practical case examples and discuss how knowledge could improve practice and how practice could inform and guide research.

Proceedings

RSD10 has been the first symposium in which contributors were asked to submit a full paper: either a short one that presented work-in-progress, or a long one presenting finished work. With the help of an excellent list of reviewers, this set-up allowed us to shape a symposium that offered stage for high-quality research, providing a platform for critical and fruitful conversations. Short papers were combined around a research approach or methodology, aiming for peer-learning on how to increase the rigour and relevance of our studies. Long papers were combined around commonalities in the phenomena under study, offering state-of-the-art research. The moderation of engaged and knowledgeable chairs and audience lifted the quality of our discussions.

In total, these proceedings cover 33 short papers and 19 long papers from all over the world. From India to the United States, and Australia to Italy. In the table of contents, each paper is represented under its RSD 10 symposium track as well as a list of authors ordered alphabetically. The RSD10 proceedings capture the great variety of high-quality papers yet is limited to only textual contributions. We invite any reader to visit the rdsymposium.org website to browse through slide-decks, video recordings, drawing notes and the exhibition to get the full experience of RSD10 and witness how great minds and insights have been beautifully captured!

Word of thanks

Let us close off with a word of thanks to our dean and colleagues for supporting us in hosting this conference, the SDA for their trust and guidance, Dr. Peter Jones and Dr. Silvia Barbero for being part of the RSD10 scientific committee, but especially everyone who contributed to the content of the symposium: workshop moderators, presenters, and anyone who participated in the RSD 10 conversation. It is only in this complex web of (friction-full) relationships that we can further our knowledge on systemic design: thanks for being part of it!

Dr. JC Diehl, Dr. Nynke Tromp, and Dr. Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer
Editors RSD10