October 13, 1997

Professor Ralph Johannes
Arch. HBK
Rustermark 30
D-45134
Essen, Germany

Professor Johannes,

I am writing to thank you for your submission to the special edition of Design Studies on design education.

After reviewing your submission, we feel that it would be of interest to the readers if the following additions and improvements are made.

Your version of architectural design education is an interesting approach, as exemplified in this paper and your previous papers on MADE. To be of interest to our readers the paper will need more formal assessments of the MADE technique. These assessments can take the form of quantitative measures of learning by the students (either summative or formative), comparative evaluations of MADE with other architectural education techniques, or longitudinal studies of the students progressing through the architectural program. In addition, the paper should more clearly address the pedagogy and how it is addressing the student's learning needs.

It is evident that the MADE technique should be of interest to design educators, and they would be interested in learning of its effectiveness. The opinion polls that were conducted of the student projects touch on the issues previously described, but they are primarily summative and subjective.

I will retain your abstract submission with the associated attachments until I receive notification of your intentions of submission.

Thank you for considering our special issue.

sig. W. Michael McCracken

W. Michael McCracken
Co-Editor, Special Issue of Design Studies on Design Education
Dear Professor Johannes,

I am a PHD student at University of Tehran in Iran and my PHD research project is about „applying alternative methods in design studios of architecture in two year vocational courses of architecture based on needs of specific users of architectural projects”. As I saw your method I found it very useful, not only for my project, but also for applying in various architectural courses in my country. So I would ask you is it possible for you to provide me with some constant consultation so that I could conduct, a trial alternated example of MADE system that is more matched with problem defined in my PHD proposal?

Sincerely yours,

Masoud Nan Ghomi.
msnarighomi@ut.ac.ir
Dear Professor Johannes,

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The revisions we are asking you to make are of two kinds. I enclose the report of our reviewer, who considers that a substantial proportion of your ideas are twenty years out of date. I know that the philosophy of architectural design is a controversial subject, and I can think of at least one Australian professor of architecture who would agree with you more than with our reviewer. However, I think his comments are well taken, and I would ask you to give them your careful consideration.

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If you decide that your paper should stand as it is\(^1\), then I think it would be useful if you added a paragraph or two giving your reasons, and citing some of the people quoted by our reviewer. We will leave the decision to you, and we will publish your revised paper (Part I only) without further review.

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Yours sincerely,

sig. Henry Cowan

\(^1\) This paper was later published without any alterations in *Design Studies*:

Johannes, Ralph:

**Architectural design: A systematic approach. Part 1**


ISSN 0142-694X

Johannes, Ralph:

**Architectural design: A systematic approach. Part 2**


ISSN 0142-694X
Review

One could be forgiven for thinking that the author had spent the last 20 years with limited access to material on developments in philosophical thought in general, and on designing and the teaching thereof in particular. Teaching on the basis of Gestalt theory of the order of form, denies the work of many including Jones, Rittel, Schon, Broadbent et al (even Heath), to say little of the work on understanding art, and from it, design as analogy and metaphor, as in the work of Gadamer, Heidegger, Snodgrass et al, (as derived from Foucault or as a response to Derrida), or of the work of logic and the geometry of design as in March, Stiny, Steadman etc:

Specific Comments
Part 1. Where the author states that „everybody knows process“, much of this Part could be deleted, substituting a concentration on the difference of his Process (as in p7 before and after). There is also much repetition p10. Figure 5 suggests a great concentration on Pre-Design tasks, but nothing explicit on what or how to do Designing. I suppose that once a Gestaltian has conceived (of) a whole (design) it is a bit superfluous to worry about how to design the parts.

Part 2. p19 is unnecessary and p28 forces me to ask - must, should, can & wish?

The whole work parallels of the 60s and 70s Design Process era, with a disciplined overlay. Although the different models of designing by process have been explained time and again since then, and there are no references to previous writers on process (see above) nor to the Philosophy or logic writings which underpin this type of work. It all makes me doubly suspicious that there is anything original in this work.

To be of value the paper should be rewritten (and shortened), the basic idea should be clearly explained and positioned vis a vis all the previous models and groups of writers thereof, and then the advantages and disadvantages of this process should be described.

This is the type of approach to design that was tried and failed in the 70s, and was abandoned in many places, especially in respect of the concentration on the Pre-design tasks (the easy part), rather than on the actual designing (of an object) (the hard part). The paper is biased toward user needs and, in that sense is humanistic or at least humanitarian in its approach, but it is not much help to a designer on how to translate this data and on how to design, nor is it much help to a teacher on how to teach a student to design.