

Symposium on Design Thinking to be Held at U.Va.



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February 15, 2011 — "Design Thinking Mashup," a symposium organized by University of Virginia architecture lecturer George Sampson, will be held Feb. 22-23 at the [School of Architecture](#).

"Design Thinking" is a way of thinking across disciplines to solve problems and suggest fresh answers to difficult business, social or personal challenges.

The symposium will explore collaboration, creative research and community, using architecture and the arts as exemplars of creative problem-solving techniques.

Unlike analytical thinking, design thinking is a creative process based around the "building up" of ideas, Sampson explained. There are no judgments early on. This eliminates the fear of failure and encourages maximum input and participation in the idea and prototype phases. Outside-the-box thinking is encouraged in these earlier processes since this can often lead to creative solutions.

The symposium's scheduled participants include dancer and choreographer Bill T. Jones, a 2010 Kennedy Center Honoree, MacArthur Award winner and creator of "100 Migrations," a collaborative dance/theater piece created during a 2008 residency at U.Va.; and Warren Berger, author of "Glimmer: How Design Can Transform Your Life, and Maybe Even the World."

Berger said, "Design thinking is a process that endeavors to solve problems and create new possibilities, generally by relying on empathic research – studying people to try to figure out what they need – combined with creative experimentation and extensive prototyping and refinement – all aimed at the goal of producing better, more useful objects, experiences, services and systems."

Sampson said, "So diverse a discipline as design thinking merits a diverse set of activities to demonstrate how innovation and creativity are attributes and interests shared both by U.Va. and by the surrounding Charlottesville-Albemarle community."

The symposium will consist of three sessions, each with a distinct focus and diverse set of panelists.

The first session, "Chance, Indeterminacy and the Creative Process," will be held Feb. 22, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., in Campbell Hall, room 153. Panelists will include Jones; Berger; and several U.Va. faculty

members, including music professor Ted Coffey, studio art professor Lydia Moyer, drama professor Michael Rasbury and art history professor Howard Singerman, all from the College of Arts & Sciences. William Sherman, associate professor of architecture, will moderate the session.

Kim Tanzer, dean of the School of Architecture, will moderate second session, "How Design Thinking Can Transform Your Life and Maybe the World," on Feb. 23, from noon to 1:30 p.m. in Campbell Hall, room 153. Panelists will include Berger, chemistry professor Cassandra Fraser of the College of Arts & Sciences, Darden School professor Jeanne Liedtka, Engineering School professor Kevin Sullivan and architecture professors Phoebe Crisman, Robyn Dripps and Jorg Sieweke.

The third session, "Innovation, Collaboration & Charlottesville: Players from the C-ville Article," will be held at the Charlottesville Community Design Center on Feb. 23, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. The participants for this session are those who were featured in C-ville Weekly's Jan. 18 article, "Make up your mind: Inside Charlottesville's brainstorming revolution," including Jeff Gunther, founder and CEO of Open Space; Sian Richards, co-founder of the Performers Exchange Project; Marie Schacht, co-founder of the Charlottesville Trade School; Debra Weiss, founder of DRW Design; and Zachary Wheat, director of U.Va. Web Communications and Interactive Media. Sampson will moderate the session.

"Design Thinking Mashup" is sponsored by the U.Va. School of Architecture, with support from the offices of the Vice Provost for the Arts and the Vice President for Research; the Dance Program in the Department of Drama; University Programs Council; Program in Arts Administration; and C-ville Weekly.

For information, visit the [event website](#) or contact Sampson at 434-924-7307 or gws6n@virginia.edu.

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