

Interpretive Spaces

**How can design students develop intercultural competencies using critical approaches to global consumerism?**

AIGA Design Educators Conference 2015

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# introduction

- Aims
- Context
  - critical approaches to design consumerism
  - Intercultural competencies in HE and design education
- Case study - 5 go to Mozambique
- Discussion
- Conclusions – lessons learnt that can be extrapolated

# our aims

## PROJECT

- to develop student intercultural competencies using critical approaches to global consumerism through a cultural learning experience in Africa, a continent where the inequalities of global capitalism are most acute.

## COURSE

- Employability
- Transferable design skills through engagement with global citizenship and mobility
- Cultural learning experience in a challenging environment

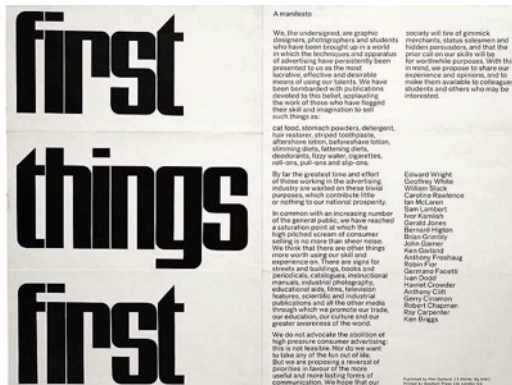
# First things first - 2000



Ken Garland

*There is a massive over-emphasis on the commercial sector of society, which consumes most of graphic designers' time, skills and creativity.*

(Poynor 1999: 56)





*Designers must break out of the obedient, neutral, servant-to-industry mentality, an orientation that was particularly strong in the Reagan/Thatcher 1980s. . . . **Design is not a neutral, value-free process.***

*A design has no more integrity than its purpose or subject matter.*

(McCoy 1994, 111)





***Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale.*** But its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively, white, or Black, or Western, or Oriental.

***Yet just as human beings make their own history, they also make their cultures and ethnic identities.*** No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness, as if that was all human life was about.

(Said 1994: 336)

# methodology

- 2 phases
  - preceding, during and on return with 5 students travelling to Mozambique in May 2014
  - 5 months later interviews with students who followed project from UK
- Qualitative data was generated through reflective logs, a project online blog, and in-depth interviews.
- Students designed and made their own books and short films.





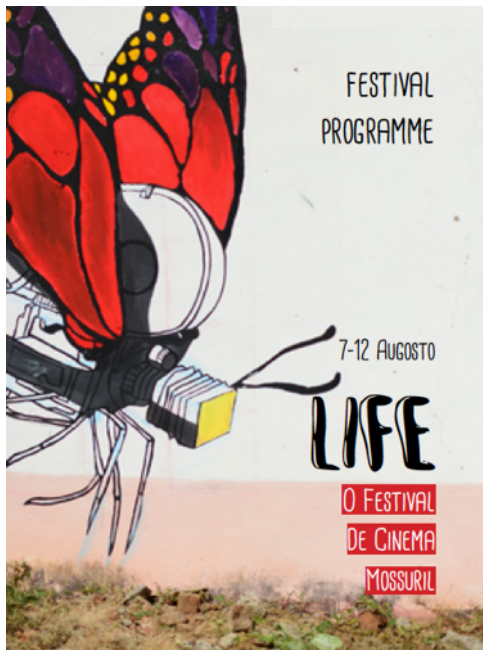
The image features a central white circle with a black sunburst icon above the word 'shine' in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font. Below 'shine' is the word 'MOÇAMBIQUE' in a smaller, uppercase sans-serif font. The background is a vibrant, multi-colored sunburst pattern with segments in yellow, orange, red, and blue. Each segment contains white hand-drawn patterns: concentric circles in blue, wavy lines in green, teardrop shapes in blue, and various leaf and branch motifs in green and yellow.

**shine**  
MOÇAMBIQUE



# LIFE and SHINE projects

- Collaboration with NGOs - Breaking the Ice and Teran Foundation
- Crowdfunding
- Soap wrapping
- Film festival branding – design makes project concrete



# SHINE - a soap cooperative in Mozambique

Story

Updates 6

Comments 8

Funders 66

Gallery 11



418 117 0

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The campaign to support seven women and their soap cooperative in northern Mozambique draws to a close with a last minute appeal from one of the women.

Mossuril, Mozambique Small Business

**\$5,655** USD

RAISED OF \$10,000 GOAL



This campaign started on Nov 24 and closed on January 12, 2014 (11:59pm PT).

- Verified Nonprofit
- Flexible Funding

**CAMPAIGN CLOSED**

This campaign ended on January 12, 2014

## SELECT A PERK

**\$5** USD

### Thank you e-card

Thanks for supporting the coop's dream of soap. We'll send you an e-card, designed by Edinburgh Napier student Ekebom, to say thank you.

Estimated delivery: **January 2014**



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## SHINE

L.I.F.E. - Local Initiatives of Film Enterprise



### SHINE - a soap cooperative in Mozambique

The campaign to support seven women and their soap cooperative in northern Mozambique draws to a...

**\$5,655** USD

57%

0 time left

## Making a difference in Mozambique

Teran Foundation helps in Mozambique because it is one of the poorest countries of the world.

### What we do:

Teran Foundation helps community projects in N Mozambique for:

- Helping social enterprises in the bush
- Education: especially English and computer lessons
- HIV- AIDS awareness, malaria-awareness and prevention programmes, maternity assistance
- Conservation
- To provide skills and training in community tourism
- Community outreach - micro-credits for small industry and private enterprise, community centers etc.

### Objectives:

- To help strengthen rural communities
- To motivate anti-malaria and HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns
- To help local government upgrade rural schools
- To encourage and support local entrepreneurs

### Ultimate aim:

To motivate people to help themselves with trade not aid



ONE WORLD 365

meaningful travel





## BETTER TOGETHER.

Breaking the Ice started with a simple question: What if a group of people could discover mutual ground by relating to each other through their differences? [find out more...](#)

### CURRENT PROJECTS

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#### SHINE

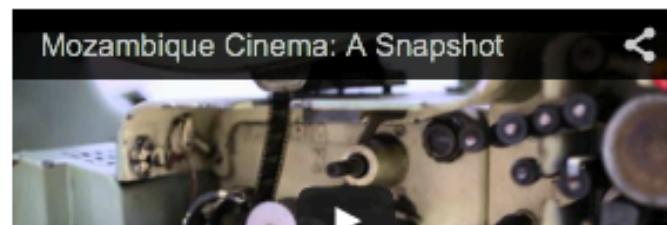
SHINE, a TV-drama and cross-media project about a soap cooperative in northern Mozambique, is currently in story development.

[More](#)

#### ENABLE L.I.F.E – LOCAL INITIATIVES OF FILM ENTERPRISE

A project by Breaking the Ice and the [Teran Foundation](#), Mozambique.

L.I.F.E. is a social enterprise project that aims to foster film production, media knowledge and training and cultural infrastructure in the north of Mozambique.







# SUNSET BOUL AVANTAGE





*No one who has lived in the bush takes things for granted again: even little things like turning on a tap or switching on a light remain miraculous.*

*(Teran 2007: 137)*



# **thematic impact**

- Developing communication skills
- Intercultural competencies
- Critical approaches to global consumerism





A man in a bright blue t-shirt and dark cargo shorts is painting the mural. He is standing on the left side of the wall, reaching up with his right hand to apply paint to a red shape.

A man in a white and blue striped shirt is sitting on a wooden chair, painting the mural. He is positioned in the center of the group, facing the wall.

A man in a brown t-shirt with "G-STAR" printed on the back and blue jeans is standing on a wooden chair, painting the mural. He is positioned in the center of the group, facing the wall.

A woman in a dark blue t-shirt and brown shorts is standing on a wooden chair, painting the mural. She is positioned in the center of the group, facing the wall.

A man in a blue and white striped t-shirt and khaki shorts is standing on the right side of the wall, painting the mural. He is holding a paintbrush and looking towards the wall.

A red bucket is on the floor, likely containing paint. It is positioned in the center of the group, near the doorway.

Several paint containers and brushes are on the floor, scattered near the base of the wall.





SURIL  
CAFÉ







*We have to say that adjusting to the environment has been a little difficult at times- in respect to realising how far away we are from home for the very first time, and coming to grips with the way of life here, and how things are done.*

(Student E blog entry 2014)





*We took three of the SHINE women to the new SHINE mural and painted their hands with white paint. Part of the SHINE brand contains a pattern of hands, and we hope that by letting the women create this pattern using their handprints, they can feel more connected to the creative process and their brand.*

(Student M blog entry 2014)





*For the past week we have been mentoring some local lads, mostly we paint together, solving problems as they arrive. Two of them helped us today with the sail, with no questions asked, after school.*

*(Student J blog entry 2014)*





*I definitely wish to keep in contact with them. I feel we made an impact whilst we were there by teaching them something new, something I hope they will always remember so I don't see why the communication needs to stop- especially now that they are on Facebook, it's a perfect platform for now to talk to them every now and then...I think they would be interested to see the other methods we use to create our work, they became more and more involved as the time went on.*

(Student S)





*Painting a sail is greatly unheard of here, yet they got stuck in without a blink. By now they knew the score, and the great rotational painting circle ensued, with 5-8 people all holding paint brushes. By nightfall the sail was painted, looking swish and (with the help of car lights) had attracted a fair sized crowd. It was a great achievement, and a great collaboration.*

*(Student J blog entry 2014)*







*Already, a lot of the local children have been an audience for the painting and they seem to be fascinated by the things being created. It's great to hear that the paintings now seem to be in demand; they must be making a huge impact.*

(Student E blog entry 2014)





Z A I D S H O P  
M O S S U R I L











*My perception of Africa was so naïve...It's such a cliché to say that 'travel broadens the mind' but it's true.*

*It makes you realise how blissfully ignorant your life can be.*

*(Student R)*







Telecoms advertising





LIFE

By: MR. ...













LIFE











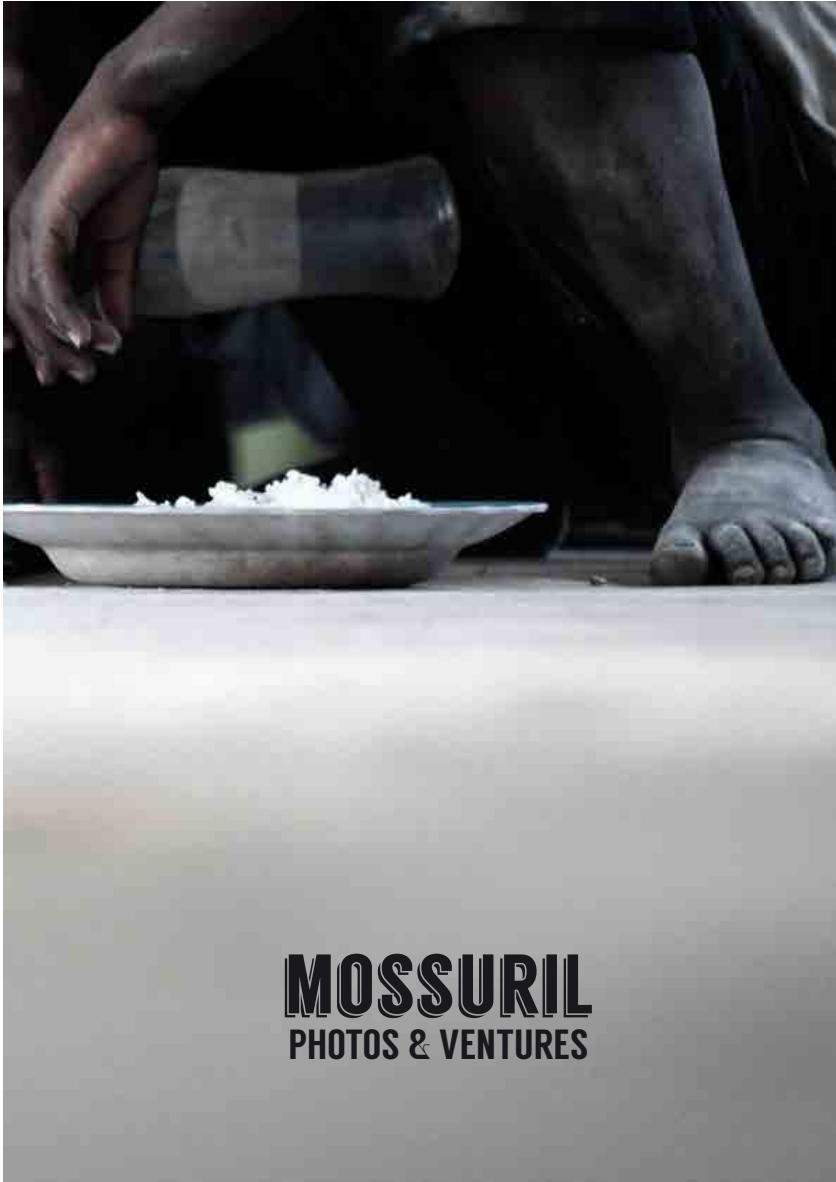


Yesterday one of the villagers said that the Napier visit had lifted Mossuril out of obscurity; as though the butterfly was physically lifting the local people up into the air.

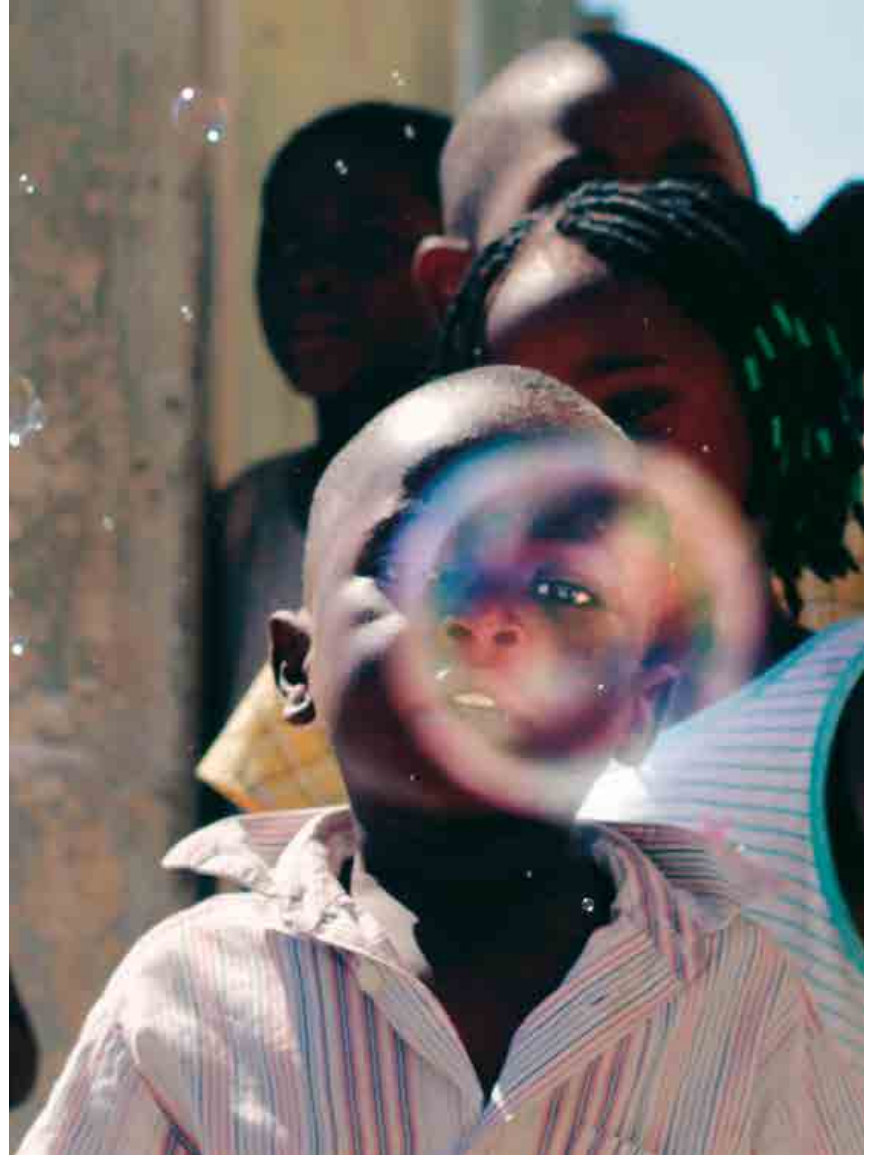
(Teran blog entry 2014)



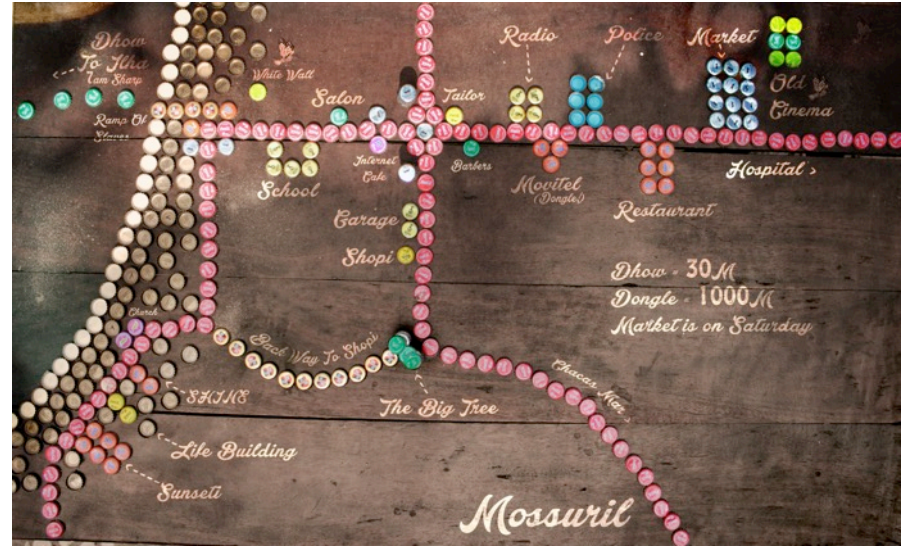
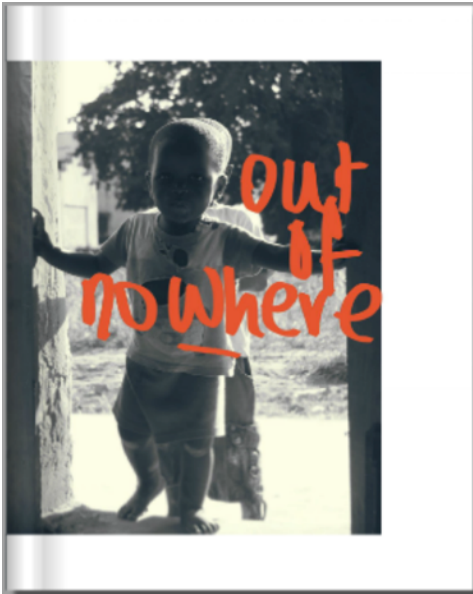




Student work



The bubbles went down an absolute treat.



## FLA X FLU



A narration of passion and fanaticism that will accelerate the heartbeat of all sports enthusiasts. The film invites the viewer to share one of Brazilian football's most charming feuds - the rivalry between two of the largest football clubs in Brazil: Flamengo (Fla) and Fluminense (Flu). Aside from rescuing historical footage and memorable football matches, Fla x Flu alternates between factual and personal statements from both teams, giving rise to provocation, banter and high emotion.



## THE DEEP BLUE SEA



Terence Rattigan's romantic drama set in a repressive postwar Britain is brought to the big screen superbly by Terence Davies. Master chronicler of post-War England, Terence Davies directs Rachel Weisz as a woman whose overpowering love threatens her well being and alienates the men in her life. Rachel Weisz plays Hester Collyer, the wife of an upper-class judge (Simon Russell Beale) and a free spirit trapped in a passionless marriage. Her encounter with Freddie Page (Tom Hiddleston), a troubled former Royal Air Force pilot, throws her life in turmoil, as their erotic relationship leaves her emotionally stranded and physically isolated.





FIVE GO TO MOZAMBIQUE - Five graphic design students and two tutors from the BDes(Hons) Graphic Design programme at Edinburgh Napier University take their skills to Mossuril in Northern Mozambique.

Monday, 23 June 2014

## . . . and finally.

And so our story comes to an end - as I write this, Elliot, Ross, Sarah, Jacob and Mikaela are in Nampula Airport, about to board a plane home.

We are all very proud of what has been achieved in the last month - this has been an amazing experience.

We dedicate this blog to the Macuan people of Mossuril and the surrounding district, who warmly welcomed us into their community . . . and to Mozambique - what a place you turned out to be.

Maybe - to be continued . . .

Posted by [principal skinner](#) at 04:20 No comments:

Recommend this on Google

Saturday, 21 June 2014

## The Cinematic End

Sarah says...

As the final days of our adventure began, we wanted to get everything completed that we set out to do- and we have done just that and feel a huge sense of achievement amongst ourselves. The festival programmes have been finalised and so we began with the rest of the tasks.

About Me

[principal skinner](#)

[View my complete profile](#)

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[Talcal's Wedding](#)

[Journey To The Wedding: Biking Waes-ly](#)

[Ross says...](#)

[For our University - with thanks](#)  
..

[Moz Moments...](#)





# conclusions

- Live projects offer an opportunity for highly motivated learning and sharing of ideas and practices with people from different cultures.
- Dramatic impact on visibility of NGO online and in Mozambique
- Increase in student self-esteem and value of their work
- A positive 'life changing' experience for students
- Broadened cultural perspectives of students from UK and in Mozambique
- Knowledge transfer between UK and Mozambique students



Impact in Mozambique – film festival and soap press





Student and staff exhibition in Edinburgh

# conclusions

- The wider impact is also positive on those students remaining in the home country, as they can see the value of design in a different context where it is not purely corporately driven or trivialised, but radicalised to provide economic, ecological or cultural empowerment on a local and global stage.
- Similarly, we hope that this study will inspire others in HE to engage in design without borders.
- Students and teaching staff across all disciplines can begin to open their eyes to wider opportunities for social change and global citizenship.
- **Design can make a difference.**







Thank you.

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