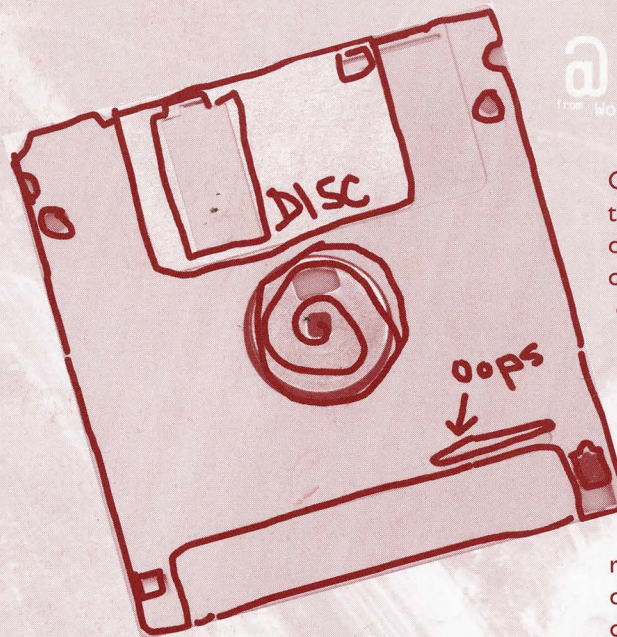## HAND DRAWN IMAGES

For the last three years the Universities of Pretoria and Stellenbosch have alternately hosted a design seminar which is attended by design educators and practitioners. The main objective of these seminars is the in-depth exploration of topics of interest from the perspectives of both design education and industry. The format is based on the presentation of two or three key papers followed by open discussion. To facilitate constructive and focused contributions, attendance is limited to approximately 25 delegates.

This year's seminar, held on the beautiful Morgenhof wine estate just outside Stellenbosch, examined the hand drawn image. The topic was explored through three themes. Prof Gregory Kerr, Head of the Department of Creative Arts at Stellenbosch University, considered creative thinking in a technocratic culture. Well-known book illustrator, Paddy Bouma gave an illustrated review of the postgraduate illustration programme at Stellenbosch University, where she is also a part-time lecturer. Conrad Botes and Anton Kannemeyer, the creators of the controversial *Bitterkomix* and *Vetkoek* series, analysed the graphic novella and comic strip genre in general and referred to their own work in particular.

The papers and the discussions examined how images work and what makes them appealing and accessible to various categories of readership. The role which illustration plays in supporting and supplementing content was felt to be of great significance, particularly in the challenge currently facing publishing in South Africa, to meet development needs. Above all the seminar underlined the wonderful richness of hand drawn images and their power to engage the reader as well as their ability to stimulate and enhance readers' imaginations.

COMPUTER GENERATED IMAGES

In contrast to this consideration of hand drawn images, was the recent design exhibition in the Campus Gallery at the University of Pretoria, which clearly illustrated the extent to which contemporary design is underpinned by technology.

The exhibition, entitled *Alias Design*, from *Work for the Unknown Client* featured work, generated solely on computer, by five designers from the Lindsay Smithers design studio in Johannesburg. This studio, under the design direction of Iaan Bekker, is producing some very innovative and exciting design. The exhibition provided an insight into a few of the reasons for this.

@lias:"DESIGN"
from Work for the Unknown Client

Contrary to traditional expectations, the exhibition did not show conventionally accepted final design products. It was in essence, an exhibition of design about design - an exhibition about the design process. The work succeeded in revealing some of the many facets of a process, often not transparent in the final design product, but which nevertheless, have an impact on how designers arrive at the design solutions which form part of our daily landscapes.

Apart from demonstrating the important role of technology and how it may be used in design, the exhibition afforded the designers the opportunity to reveal some of the internal and external factors which inform the design process. Working to a self-imposed brief allowed them to develop and probe ideas and techniques in ways which clients would normally be reluctant to accept, but which inevitably will leave traces in work accepted by clients.

The work showed how designers experiment with pushing boundaries, seeking to find how far aspects like legibility, complexity, ambiguity, simplification and layering can be extended before comprehensibility is lost. Most importantly and by extension, the exhibited work revealed the designer's ability to select and edit - to extract the essential and appropriate for use in legitimate work for real clients.