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**DORI RECOMMENDS**  
02.03.2008 - WRITER  
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## MELBOURNE CONFERENCE

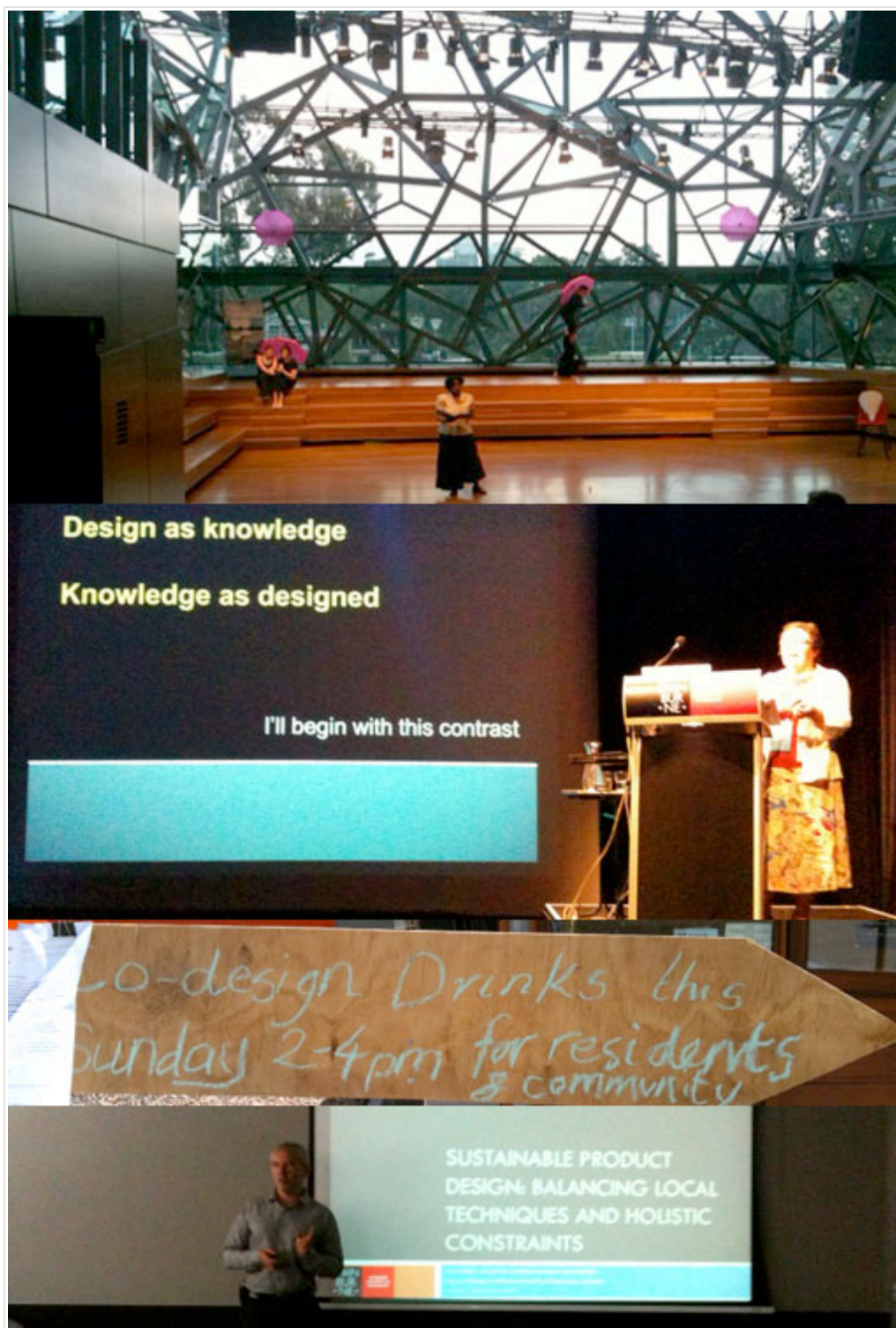
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I went to the [Cumulus Conference](#) in Melbourne, Australia. It was hosted by two universities located in Melbourne, [Swinburne University](#) and [RMIT University](#). Swinburne has a [design faculty](#) headed now by old friend Ken Friedman and RMIT has architecture and industrial design. We had the opportunity to spend time in both schools during the sessions. One of the more interesting parts of participating in such conferences is being in the schools, where the learning and research takes place every day. To compare and browse the things on display and actually just conditions. The event was quite successful this time. These conferences have become somewhat similar every time since the format has not changed much. Therefore the events and institutions and locations become platforms for comparison. I did not go to the last one in London, being far in Africa, but was informed that it was not very well organized and the only highlight was the lecture given by the by now academic pop star Ken Robinson. Anyway, I met some very interesting people, working in textiles, industrial design and architecture. It is stimulating to see hard working people developing research in how to educate designers and how to develop new technologies, even sometimes based on interesting ideologies. What impressed me greatly was how relaxed the people in Australia and New Zealand have with merging digital capabilities and traditional work. This I tried to develop while I worked as a dean in Oslo and it sometimes was very slow. I became aware of interesting work in textiles, patterning, architecture and in landscape modelling, using mathematical pattern generators and mathematical models for studying behaviour and evolution. All very interesting.

Before the start of the conference I also participated in a workshop on sustainability that was run by professor [Peter Stebbing from the Hochschule fur Gestaltung Schwabisch Gmund in Germany](#). He has developed a working group in the network to concentrate on sustainability and has run workshops in other countries previously. There like minds met and discussed perspectives and how design is involved in all the greenhouse effect issues. This resulted in me visiting a 3 weeks old [urban farm](#) initiative in the docklands in Melbourne driven by a hardcore group of people experimenting with sustainable design to make strategic changes in the community. They have been working very hard and on the day of my visit there was a community consultation workshop that I was able to participate in (did thought more observation than participation). It was great to listen to the conversation about possibilities and further options that the community would like to see done. The images tell the story. Later that day I visited a great Sunday party with Tika, (the gardener in the project) located on a sustainable farm on the outskirts of the city. Great party with loads of people that are interested

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 Myalgic Encephalopathy

in sustainability, the farm comprising of all kinds of agriculture, farming, running a Co2 free house, bicycle workshop etc, etc. Leaving Melbourne left me uplifted about the attention that people are giving to the future of our planet. Of course I realize that this is only a fraction of the global (and Melbourne) community, but often the seedlings of activity can spread into the wider culture with good results. The Copenhagen meeting will take place soon and we all have to make an effort to influence our local community and global activity. More about that later, but I look forward to our trip to Iceland and Norway with local Mozambican students that are going to make a documentary about sustainability in our countries and disseminate at home.

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## USER COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK

No comments posted.

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