

NID adage, 'design is to improve what exists' takes on an added significance.

You have been involved with several institutions from their initial stages. How is it different starting an institution now compared to 50 years ago?

KV: I was associated with the School of Interior Design, CEPT University, Ahmedabad almost from the beginning. Krishna Shastri, the Director of SID, knew that I had completed my tenure with NID and she wanted me to help her to evolve some of the course material. I did whatever I could - I am not an interior designer. I also helped them to conduct the basic design programs. With all this I am extremely conscious that I too go on learning and I also evolve. If I have to offer a course, my first concern is not what I am going to 'teach' but the kind of experience I have gained which I am going to share further. What am I going to learn from them?

I see myself evolving, most of the time unconsciously, sometimes consciously. This happened with NID and with CEPT, and in a way the same thing happened at MIT Institute of Design in Pune. But at MITID I was also given the task of charting out the ethos and philosophy of the Institute. At the same time I, with my colleagues, worked on the curriculum, course content and also helped in selecting the faculty. I initially offered courses but not anymore. We keep in touch as I meet everybody regularly in the capacity of the Chairman of the Education Council. I am happy that things are progressing as of now.

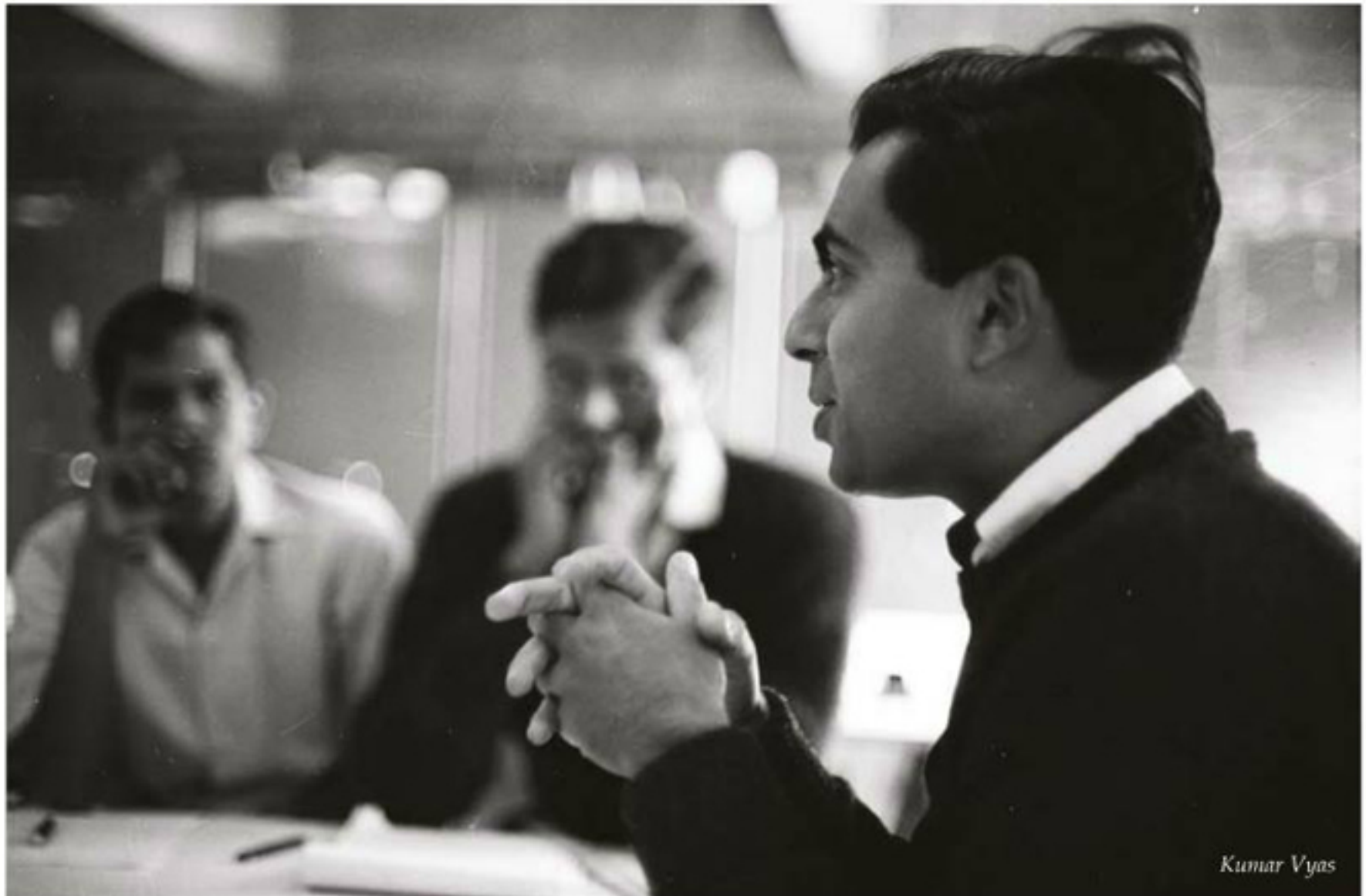
How far have we come in terms of design, design education and design practice in India?

KV: I think so far as design education is concerned, there are few institutions in India that are heading in the right direction. During the last decade so many schools of design have come up but among these only some half a dozen that I know of, seem to be charting out their own paths.

They do not seem to have come out from the same mold and they have broken away from the NID mold. For example at the MIT Institute of Design, initially we did look at the NID model as it was bound to happen, and that gave us great impetus. But I also knew that it cannot remain like that, it will have to be broken. Another very good example is that of Shrishti School of Art, Design and Technology at Bangalore, which has charted its own direction with vision and dedication. There may be few others and these are all very hopeful signs.

What is happening now is that there are very large goals overall and different paths to reach. All the same, it is good to see that each of these institutions seems to have taken the right path. And it will eventually do good for the Indian economy and Indian market, and most important, should contribute to Indian society. In my own way I am quite hopeful. I do think, however small, some good work is happening.

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