

*The more complex
the world becomes,
and the more
knowledge there is to
master, the more a
designer's broad-
based education and
knowledge will
increase in value.*

of new construction. In the United States, most interior programs begin with interior decoration; an exception is the program at The School of the Art Institute started by Ms. Marya Lilien, a Polish architect and the first woman apprentice to Frank Lloyd Wright. She taught “design from the inside out” prior to World War II. The interiors program at the Rhode Island School of Design was redirected in the late 1940s by Ernst Lichtbau, who desired a more rigorous approach to design. He also emphasized an architectural sensibility heavily influenced by his Austrian education under Otto Wagner and other Viennese designers of the Secession. Following World War II, more schools began offering programs in interior design. The Interior Design Educators Council states that there were 70 four-year degree programs in interiors at mid-century. In 1971, the Foundation for Interior Design Education and Research (FIDER) was formed by the Interior Design Educational Committee (IDEC) and other professional societies. FIDER proposed to establish and administer a voluntary plan for accreditation of interior design education programs. A formal exam, the National Council for Interior Design Qualifications, was created in 1974 by the design societies, including Industrial Design. In 1990, the Coordinators Network of the IDEC surveyed 75 of 213 baccalaureate-degree interior design programs in the United States and Canada. At that time, only a few architecture programs co-listed emphasis or degrees in Interiors. In the year 2000, FIDER listed 130 accredited programs in Interiors, and the *Peterson Guide to Architecture Schools of North America* showed almost one-third of the 130 accredited architecture programs offering degrees in Interior Design or Architecture.¹⁷

Unfortunately, design is not considered valuable and essential to education. The vocabulary and understanding of design thinking is not presented in the early educational system. Young designers thereby miss an invaluable introduction to this necessary interface with living and learning. Meredith Davis, board member of the American Center for Design, completed a two-year study with the National Endowment for the Arts to see how design was being used in K–12 classrooms. The study, “Design as a Catalyst for Learning,” published in 1997, selected 169 teachers from 900 nominees purported to be using design in their classrooms. Of the 169 teachers who were selected on the basis of course outlines and project descriptions, fewer than 5 percent were art teachers. Most of their references were to the “elements and principles of design” (color, line, shape, etc.) rather than to the kind of complex