

# BILL MOGGRIDGE, AND THE MUSEUM AS DESIGN STUDIO



Bill Moggridge has died.

With his warmth and sense of humor he embodied the human in human-centered design.





Bill in class at Stanford, before he went off to direct Smithsonian Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum – click on images to enlarge

The obituaries give the details of Bill's extraordinary contribution to industrial design.

With Bernie Roth and Meghann Dryer, he introduced me to the wonderful world of the d.school [Link]. When he went off to direct Cooper-Hewitt (what a job to take on as a second career!), it seemed that indeed the world of industry, heritage, and design history could again combine to look forward into the future, as they had done in the early decades of the industrial revolution, when museums, like the Victoria & Albert in London, could be inspirational (to) design studios. An archaeologist, I felt completely at home in Bill's world. It was about storytelling.



This is Bill showing off IDEO's museum of marvelous materials

Here is what David Kelley said in the NYT:

He saw what was most interesting about the new electronic things in California was going to be software. He didn't want to leave it to the engineers.

He wanted the designers to do it. He called it “soft face”: software interface. I thought that was a crazy name, but it grew into interaction design.

Last year, on my 60th birthday, he couldn't be here but he went into Central Park and dressed up as a penguin and made a video. He had a fascination with video as painting a picture of the future. I think he saw the designer's role as painting a picture of the future, which is so inherently positive. You have to be positive if you're all about the future.

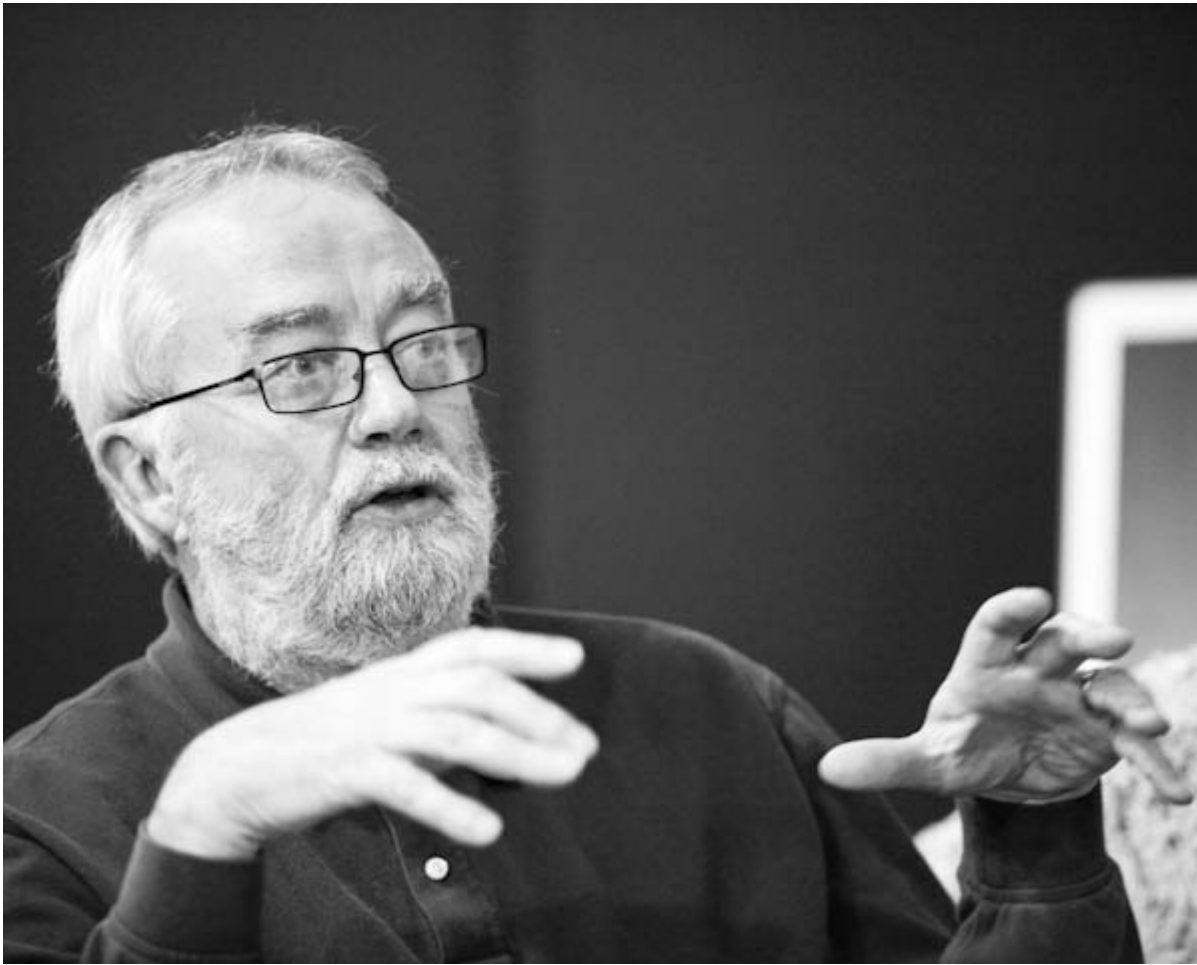
Here is John Maeda, President, Rhode Island School of Design

Most people who are fans of Bill's book on interaction design would be surprised to learn that all the videos for it were shot by Bill himself. When he interviewed me for the book, I asked him where his video crew was. He said: “It's me. And I'm also the audio person and the makeup person. So can you please lean forward so I can work on the shine on your forehead with my makeup kit?” I never expected such an entourageless luminary. Bill's unexpected humility and curiosity have stuck with me ever since. Around five years ago, I invited him to give a talk at the M.I.T. Media Lab. In his

patented knightly accented English, he asked for an extra audio feed. How did he use it? To power his own D.J.-ing of background music for the various parts of his lecture. It was elegant and awesome. I'd never seen anything like it before. And I am sad that I won't see it again.



The Grid Compass, the first laptop with the archetypal hinged screen, for which Bill was famous. Bill – “We spent so long on that hinge. But then I realized that what really mattered was the world behind the screen ...”



With Bernie: Bill could listen – “it was never the Bill Moggridge show”

## A tribute from his friends

New York Times – [\[Link\]](#) – some great tributes.

BBC – [\[Link\]](#)

The Guardian – [\[Link\]](#)