

MR RAJEEV SANTHI: Thank you.

The meaning of measure. May I request you all very briefly to close your eyes. Go on. Please try and feel nothing. There is a way to see emptiness, void. There is a quality of complete silence. Touch if you can the source of your centre and experience stillness. There are no beginnings. Even happiness, like grief, is a movement.

From where I come, to go beyond happiness is to be immeasurable and divine but we are gathered here in this city of desire to achieve the opposite. Relax, Richard. Even God felt the need to create. The bud of desire appeared like a jasmine near his nostrils and bloomed like a goddess and the world came to be. A little movement made everything measurable. Just as we talk about the creation of all the elements, empty space, sound, the first beginning of movement, creating air and that moment creates friction, heat, fire, sight, condenses to water, taste, and from this appears the earth and smell. These are all creative indices used in common language by people who work with their hands or perform with their bodies.

So if God succumbed, who are these mere mortals governed by rules and policy seeking a measure to determine the immeasurable? Ultimately, who is to say what life chose is creative. The important point is the manner in which the belief itself mediates and defines a relationship between human knowledge, local context and the alchemy of nature. It's not just about happiness. Often agony leads to the ecstasy of creation and innovation.

Ways of respect signal the self-definition and soul of any culture. These are the first to be disembowelled by the overzealous desire to homogenise or create commerce. One has something to be wary of the impatient and the greedy arbitrating structures of change.

At a summit held to discuss possible means of creating standards of measurement and analysis, may I also make a case

for going beyond this lowest common denominator for subjective highly local systems that are time tested and I have offered vulnerable but very tenacious means of measuring excellence for both the community and the individual. Quantitative analysis is essentially the product of scientific empiricism, not necessarily typical of Asia, but we need to identify key data fields for workforce, income levels, number of libraries, museum, restaurants, cinemas.

We must ask ourselves are these all we need to know, and this can partially be answered by asking are there other ways of knowing available to us? I have tried in my life to try and answer this by putting a very simple talisman of how do we measure creative growth. I brought a 21st century talisman to show you what can be considered creative in any culture. Our actions or ideas are not creative if they make our world more voiceless, which disenfranchises people or communities. If it's housing the poor or self-empowerment where do architects, where do people like us fit in?

Jobless descaled society does not promote local employment, hand looms as against machine made and many other issues that I won't be able to go into detail. Rootless does not give you any bearings, a sense of pride and originality. Imitation always leads to mediocrity and, of course, the question we continue to ask, if westernisation is modernisation?

If it's ruthless letting loose the tiger of commerce without a social contract, it creates a greater divide between the rich and the poor, between genders, between the urban and the rural, between communities, between those that are physically challenged and those that are more fortunate. Futureless, when we create monstrosities for quick profit that are not worthy of the ageing process.

The forbidding prospect of a mono culture where consumption is gaining and culture is a handmaiden. Few are bothered about the ecological footprint of their products and

services. At the present rate of our recklessness, I don't have to go into it, but we haven't even started talking about factor 4, factor 10, what actually should really be ultimate -- I give many examples there of stories of yoghurt, of gold, of toilet paper. We don't have time for that.

Finally, we have a rather bland future, so if we continue towards cynical disregard for the spiritual sacred dimensions to our everyday life. So voiceless, jobless, rootless, ruthless, futureless; certainly not creativity of any kind.

Even in the field of science, I will give you an example from the realm of science itself, Ayurveda, the traditional Indian health system, has a physiological theory. It views the living being as a microcosm of the macrocosm outside. Each individual is considered to belong to a specific constitution type. It's very, very difficult to codify this because it becomes the personal knowledge of each practitioner.

There are things that you can share. Excellence is therefore created with harmony and treatment informed by a subjective but personal approach. Even plants, when you went to pick them up, who picks them up? What time did you pick them up? With what feeling did you pick them up? How do you codify this measurement of excellence which is typical of local knowledge.

Southern India is the home to many rices, each of which was earlier known -- practically 20,000 kinds of rice -- known for its particular medicinal property. Some were said to be beneficial to pregnant women, some for lactating. They are meant to be eaten at the midday meal. Today, when it's just a question of counting calories or a kilo of packet that we buy, breaking its nutritional content down to percentages of carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, what knowledge is lost.

There are numerous examples of such indigenous knowledge for a textile craftsman that I know who used to put a bit of dye on his palm and taste it to know whether it was

correct or not. Now, there are 50 kinds of dyes that he knows that he measures by taste. Where would he have the equipment to buy whatever we create as an index? He has traditional knowledge, knowledge which has an intangible dimension to it, very difficult to codify, or raise down to a lowest common denominator.

Now, a carpenter I once knew built six storeys of houses on pure wood. He would shake one pillar to see if all the joints were connected and then he would remove one bridge from the end of a pillar and the whole structure would fall into place. His sense of engineering, his sense of form, his sense of structure was something that we have lost.

In the act of trying to teach this we haven't been able to teach it in architectural colleges. Sculptor hit the rock with a mallet and listen to its density through sound to identify -- this is a charocco. Charocco is again the melting of it, or smelting and casting it. The Musari, the head man, knows the colour of the flame to determine its exact temperature. It's not any thermometers, it's not complicated machinery that he has, but he does manage to find what it is. The sculptor hits the rock with a mallet and listens to its density. Through sound he identifies if it is male or female and accordingly, uses it for the deities. How do we negotiate such culturally specific means of defining appropriateness?

The Indian reporter, Charles Eames and Ray Eames, was eloquent about the lothar, one of the most commonly found and perfected objects in India. They analyse around 20 factors that a modern designer might take into consideration while designing the same lothar, clearly showing how something so commonplace was formed over the period of time through the collective creativity and thought processes of many people across generations.

But how did one go about designing the lothar? First one would have to shut out all preconceived ideas of the subject and then begin to consider factor after factor. The optimum

amount of liquid to be fetched, carried, poured and stored in the prescribed set of circumstances; the size and strength and gender of the hands, if hands, that would manipulate it; the way it was transported: head, hip, hand basket, cart, the balance, the centre of gravity when empty; when full its balance when rotating for pouring.

The fluid dynamics of the problem while filling and cleaning, and onto the complicated motion of head carrying, slow and fast. It sculptures as it fits the palm of the hand, the curve of the hip. It sculptures is complement of the rhythmic motion for walking. The relation of volume in terms of storage, objects other than liquid. The size of the opening of the inner contour in terms of cleaning. The texture inside and outside in terms of feeling. Heat transfer. Can it be grasped if the liquid is hot? How pleasant does it feel eyes closed, eyes open? How pleasant does it sound when it strikes another vessel? It's set down on ground, on stone, empty or full or being poured into. What is the possible material? What is the cost in terms of working? What is the cost in terms of ultimate service? What kind of an investment does the material provide as a product as salvage, recycling? How will the material affect the content? How will it look if the sun reflects off its surface? How does it feel to possess it, to sell it to give it?

To quote the in statement of the 1950s, with many cultural values on the brink of inevitable destruction in the face of the immediate needs of the nation to feed and shelter itself a driver quality takes on real meaning. It is not a self-conscious effort to develop an aesthetic, it is a relentless search for quality that must be maintained if our country is to survive.

If you take this lothar many times further, the technology, we need to revisit the Eames, his sensibility, look at the different materials. This is the way it's been carried. I'm sorry, I just didn't listen any longer to what the slides should be telling me. The fact that it has its

different ways of forging, forming.

We have many, many such things that go to make the actual act of collating figures, of assessing what will make these indices for creativity an extremely difficult one. I go into great detail on textiles, a great more detail on performance and what it means to us. I take cross-cultural references and, of course, if I may, so to -- Benin or Haiti, do I pass through life or does life pass through me? As the Sufi poet and musician has recognised, the question answers itself. What thought comes to a man who sits on the doorstep in the cool of the evening, muses the Othello Caldeno in Invisible Cities, or the man in Benin or Haiti or in Malaba who slips in out of the spirit world, or to the Polynesian whose ancestors built the largest known culture, a sphere of 10 million square miles on ocean currants alone. Or to the Mazatec Indian in Mexico who would send complex messages across hill and valley to the Amazonian Veronian who sends each beast that passes by its urine; to the native Australian creating his parallel universe of the Dreamtime.

These are all the people that are continually telling us that there has to be another paradigm. We have such one in our country, like many others, Onrassa. You call it different things and different names. I won't be able to go through the detail of what this matrix is because, again, it is a question of measurement and from where I come it's considered to be of great value having no sense of time. But here at least I must respect what has to be done. Thank you.