



# **DIVERSITY + NICHES** in design practice

By Tuoyo Jemerigbe

# Framing & Context: Definitions

## Diversity

- **1. the state of being diverse; variety.**
- "there was considerable diversity in the style of the reports"
- **2. the practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc.**
- "equality and diversity should be supported for their own sake"

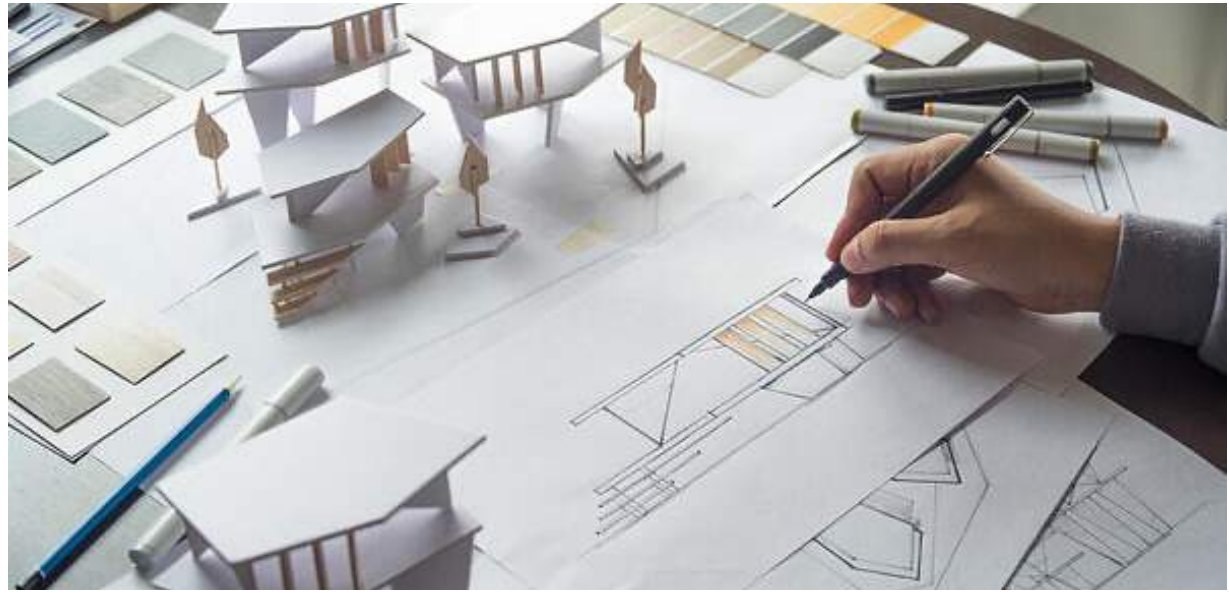
## Niches

- **a specialized segment of the market for a particular kind of product or service.**
- "he believes he has found a niche in the market"

## Design Practice

- **My reference will be 'Architecture'**





## Careers in Architecture

- Landscape Architect
- Architectural Technologist
- Architectural Designer
- Conservation/Restoration Architect
- Sustainable/Green Design Architect
- Residential Architect
- Commercial Architect
- Industrial Architect
- Interior Architect
- Interior Designer
- Urban Designer/Planner
- Research Architect
- Lighting Architect
- Political Architect  
(Municipal/City/Council Architect)
- Extreme Architect

## Careers in Art + Design

- Artist
- Industrial Designer
- Furniture Designer
- Textile Designer
- Graphic Designer
- Video Game Designer
- Photographer
- Production Designer

## Careers Outside Design

- Teacher/Professor
  - Philanthropist
  - Politician
  - Conservationist
  - Writer
  - Entrepreneur
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- [21 Careers You Can Pursue With A Degree in Architecture – Archdaily](#)
  - [8 Different Types of Architects – Barker Associates](#)
  - [7 Types of Architects - Arch20](#)

## More Careers in Architecture

- Housing Architect
- Developer
- Design & Build
- Construction
- Project Manager
- Facility Manager
- 3D Visualiser
- Expert Witness Services

## More Careers in Art + Design

- Fashion Designer
- Web Designer

## More Careers Outside Design

The list above is of course incomplete, as the careers mentioned here can be combined in many ways, and other, unmentioned vocations can be brought to the table to provide virtually infinite possibilities.

As German educator Kurt Hahn said, **"there is more in us than we know. If we can be made to see it, perhaps, for the rest of our lives, we will be unwilling to settle for less."** Don't forget that there is a sea of possibilities out there.





### Rem D. Koolhaas (Shoemaker)

**United NUDE** - Clear conception, innovation, and design, at the intersection of fashion and architecture. **United Nude** products are architectural designs with a unique DNA. Rem D. Koolhaas (nephew and namesake of architect Rem Koolhaas), together with Galahad Clark (a seventh-generation shoemaker), established UNITED NUDE in 2003.



### **Peju Alatise (Artist)**

Peju is an interdisciplinary artist, architect and author of two novels. She started her professional career as an architect while running a private art studio. She produces works across a variety of mediums, techniques and materials including but not limited to paintings, film, installations, and sculptures. In 2020, Alatise was selected as an exhibiting artist for the Venice Architecture Biennale.





## Jonathan Seagal, FAIA (Architect-Developer)

- Jonathan Segal FAIA redefines the role of the traditional architect by exclusively eliminating the client and developing, constructing and designing his own work.
- He has designed, developed, and constructed national award-winning and trendsetting single-family and medium-to high-density residential, live/work, and mixed-use housing in downtown San Diego and La Jolla, California since 1988.
- Taking control of every aspect of his projects, from designing to financing to building, he gained a wide breadth of knowledge that he could put to practice.
- Jonathan has an exceptional archipreneurial approach to his work, and a gift of combining business acumen with exquisite architecture. This recognition of using space creatively is hard for regular developers.



# Architect- Polymaths

- **Michaelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni**, known simply as Michelangelo, was an Italian sculptor, painter, architect and poet of the High Renaissance born in the Republic of Florence, who exerted an unparalleled influence on the development of Western art.
- **Leonardo da Vinci** - was an Italian polymath of the High Renaissance who was active as a painter, draughtsman, engineer, scientist, theorist, sculptor and architect.
- **Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino**, known as Raphael, was an Italian painter and architect of the High Renaissance.
- **Thomas Jefferson** - Thomas Jefferson was an American statesman, diplomat, lawyer, architect, musician, philosopher, and Founding Father who served as the third president of the United States from 1801 to 1809.
- **Ray-Bernice Alexandra Kaiser Eames** - was an American artist and designer who worked in a variety of media. In creative partnership with her husband Charles Eames and the Eames Office, she was responsible for ground-breaking contributions in the fields of architecture, graphic design, textile design, film, and furniture.
- **Buckminster Fuller** - was an American architect, systems theorist, author, designer, inventor, and futurist.
- **Demas Nwoko** – is a Nigerian artist, protean designer, furniture designer, industrial designer, architect and master builder. He was a lecturer at University of Ibadan. He was also the publisher of the now defunct 'New Culture' magazine.

# Notable Figures who left Architecture to follow other Career Paths

- **Ice Cube** – the American rapper studied architectural drafting at the Phoenix Institute of Technology beginning in 1987, earning a diploma in draughtsmanship a year later. Shortly after founding hip hop group *N.W.A.*, Ice Cube began his studies in architecture as a failsafe for his career in music.
- **Bill Gaytten** – Best known as the creative director of fashion house John Galliano, Gaytten began as a student of the Bartlett School of Architecture at University College London. Upon completion of his studies, Gaytten found himself working for designer Victor Edelstein, followed by a 23-year stint at Dior before taking the helm at Galliano after the departure of its namesake.
- **Samuel L. Jackson** – Prolific American actor Samuel L. Jackson first embarked on architectural studies at Morehouse College in Atlanta before transferring to dramatic arts. Unsurprisingly, Jackson graduated in 1972 with a degree in acting, subsequently abandoning his interest in architecture in favour of a career in film.
- **Seal** – Famous singer of "Kiss by a Rose", Seal - born Henry Olusegun Adeola Samuel - studied architecture in London. After two years of study, Seal received an associate degree in architecture, subsequently working at a series of firms while concurrently developing an interest in music.
- **Tom Ford** – Before launching his iconic self-named brand, American Fashion designer and filmmaker Tom Ford studied architecture at New York's Parsons School of Design at The New School. Ford spent a portion of his degree studying at the school's Paris campus, discovering French architecture and fashion simultaneously.
- **Courtney Cox** – Best known for her role as Monica Geller on sitcom '*Friends*,' Cox briefly studied architecture at Mount Vernon College in Washington D.C. Partially into her degree Cox withdrew to pursue a modelling career in New York City.

# Architectural Specialisation vs. Diversity

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Design practices take on different forms based on the ideology and/or training of its principals or they may evolve over time and assume new identities or approaches in response to new directions, environment or socio-economic factors.

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Some practices specialise in diverse sectors and projects and invariably become experts in these areas e.g hospitality, medical or retail architecture. The area of specialisation that many architects choose to pursue is often dependent on the architect's training, interests, and career history.

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In Nigeria, some firms may have distinguished themselves as the go-to practices for specific sectors because of their trackrecords and relevant experience. Eg. Design Group for hospitality projects, GHK for Industrial Architecture.

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Others may also develop the experience from getting the opportunity to explore those sectors, whilst working with specialists/experts in the relevant field. Nowadays, many more firms have much more diversified portfolios.

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In addition, more firms are evolving into **multidisciplinary** firms combining allied disciplines of Architecture, Urban Design, MEP Services, Structural/Civil Engineering & Interior Architecture. Eg. ACCL, CCP, JCA etc.

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Some other firms start off with a **transdisciplinary** approach to architecture and design, creating a unity of intellectual frameworks beyond the disciplinary perspectives. Eg. ALL Design (founded by the Late Will Alsop) is such a firm, Heatherwick Studio, and here in Nigeria, NLE and MOE+AA is one of those amongst others.



# Other Examples closer home

- **'Dapo Akintunde (IVIXI)**

- Architect
- Vehicle Designer
- Graphic Designer
- Product Designer
- Artist
- Writer
- Film Director

- **'Kunle Adeyemi (NLE)**

- Architect
- Urban Designer
- Researcher/Academic
- Product Designer
- Furniture Designer

- **Tosin Osinowo (CMD+A)**

- Architect
- Space Planner
- Interior Architect
- Design & Build
- Project Manager
- Furniture Designer

- **Stephen Ajadi (ACID)**

- Architect
- Development Economist
- Land Economist
- Planner
- Sustainable Development

- **Papa Omotayo (MOE+AA)**

- Architect
- Artist
- Transdisciplinary Creative Director (Film, Music, Photography, Graphic Design etc.)

- **Chuka Ihonor (ARG Studio)**

- Architect
- Product Designer
- Writer
- Catalyst for Design Progress

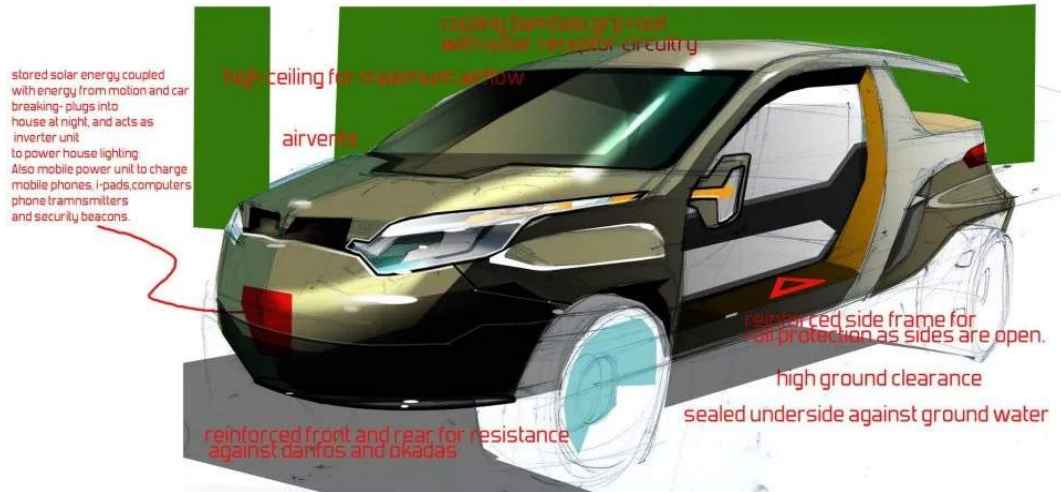
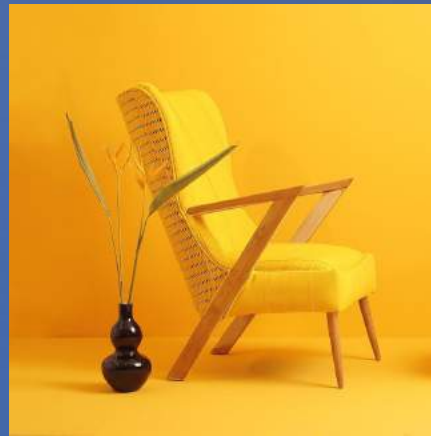
- **Tony Aihie (Design Union)**

- Architect
- Developer
- Graphic Designer
- Entrepreneur

- **Nwakego Maduekwe – Alter-EGO (Fashion Designer)**

- **Jumoke Akinwunmi – Alitheia Real Estate (Real Estate Economics & Development, Asset Mgt. Etc.)**

- **Etc.**



# **Introspective View**





**Me:**  
**Introspective**  
**View**

Architecture  
Space Planner  
Entrepreneur  
Design & Build  
Developer  
+



**Thank you**