Serious Fun: Designing Engineers

Chris Wise and Ed McCann
of Expedition (engineers for the 2012 Olympic Velodrome and much other stuff too)

Lecture: Ed Burke Theatre, TCD, 4pm on Friday 15th February 2008

Q: When does a person decide to become an engineer?
A: When he realises he doesn't have the charisma to be an undertaker.

(Mr Hilarious, the Internet p7 2008)

Most engineers don’t think of themselves as particularly charismatic….indeed your friends (if you have any) will quite likely taunt you from time to time with “jokes” like this one. Similarly, engineers don’t usually think of themselves as particularly creative, preferring instead to define themselves in terms of either their practical prowess (Bob the Builder) or their analytical skills (Professor Calculus).

Chris and Ed come from very different backgrounds but are both recognised for the creative edge that they bring to their projects. They and their colleagues have designed (and more often than not seen built) water supply systems, walking buildings, skyscrapers, wobbly and non-wobbly bridges, river diversions, coastal defences, pollution control systems, museums, train stations, educational facilities, airships, airport terminals, drainage systems, water powered lifts and the occasional roman catapult.

In “Designing Engineers”, Chris and Ed will (entirely without the aid of mathematics) set out to demonstrate that that everybody has a latent creative potential…..and that more than most, engineers need to realise this potential if we are to be successful in our efforts to make a world worth living in.

For academic staff, they will look at the role of universities in the provision of a C21st engineering education

For engineering students, they will cover everything else

The sessions will be partly interactive.