

CARE

Cities As creative, crises-Responsive Environments

Towards a common manifesto of
innovative solutions for the contemporary city

International Symposium
29th – 30th September 2022, Bologna

Organising Institutions:



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA
DIPARTIMENTO DI ARCHITETTURA
DIPARTIMENTO DI ECCELLENZA MIUR
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“Crisis” comes from the Greek *krinō* meaning ‘a decision made by a jury’. As a Latin word, ‘decision’ comes from *de-caedere*, to cut. In medical terms, this term is based on a practical concept: ‘to sift’, to choose the activity of the Greeks when they sifted the grain seeds. The crisis represents the moment of choice, it indicates the unexpected modification of a physiological state, sudden and unpredictable because it radically changes previous conditions. In all aspects in which ‘crisis’ is conjugated, it indicates a distinct bifurcation, a change in the previous condition (modification or disappearance).

Despite its original meaning, we are accustomed to thinking of the crisis as a sharp fracture, rather than as the opening of a new path. Is it possible to reverse this perspective and achieve new depth in our interpretation of (and response to) crises? Some authors have reflected on how crises are reached and what causes this sharp bifurcation, focusing on the current critical situations that generate the vulnerabilities we are dealing with, as the result of a slow evolutionary path of our species.

Zardini (Doglio and Zardini, 2021) traces today’s crisis back to the 1970s, outlining what appears to be a long climatic-environmental, energy, health crisis, which also affects institutions, professions and the modern project itself. Similarly, Serres (2015) addresses the 2007 financial crisis, identifying major ‘critical’ events that have been on the way for a long time and relate to the slow pace of the relationship between mankind, the earth and technology. Latour (2017) does not speak of a crisis as a contingent and removable event, but of a perennial condition that humans have to continuously prepare for (and adapt to). This challenges the idea of crisis as a decisive moment of upheaval of the political order, replaced by an understanding of crisis as a lasting condition from which there is no escape, and which requires us to “adopt tactics more than strategies” (Pasqui, 2012) in a permanently temporary way.

Crisis is a powerful engine of urban change. It allows us to perceive disruptions, without perhaps making us sufficiently aware of continuities, of the profound solidarity of everyday practices, its embeddedness in a work of care. Solidarity, continuity, care produce differences, in a perspective that tries to think of crises in a continuum of practices and in their articulations. Every time the weights and balances change, they deposit in the city, generating new imaginaries (Brissette 2016). The use of these imaginaries allows to recover theories and models well established in history, urban planning and architectural research: the flexibility and adaptability of consolidated urban systems and spaces, the territorial proximity of architectural systems, the stable involvement of citizens in government decisions.

Crisis is also a lens to understand how people behave in their living environments. The COVID-19 pandemic crisis, for instance, showed how well designed open public spaces were able to meet the needs of communities during the lockdown phase, demonstrating their degree of resilience to the new way of experiencing social distance in everyday life (Gehl, 2021).

At the same time, at the social level, many solutions originated from the bottom-up and staged new ways of inhabiting common spaces, producing new mutualistic, creative and collective practices in response to isolation and marginalization: a care-as-citizenship model (Tronto 2013) which redefines the meanings and values of social action in the urban space – adding a layer to the framework in the history of solidarity of European cities (Cicchi et al. 2021).

Cities can also be considered as palimpsest through which to acknowledge the different stratifications - some more evident than others - built up and overlapped over time. They are indispensable to trace civic life, events or processes that generated their form, economy, history and culture, composing a common 'heritage' of solutions, treatments and strategies to learn from.

Starting from these manifold intersections between crisis and care in the urban environment, CARE: Cities As creative, crisis-Responsive Environments aims to collect reflections and contributions on how consolidated urban contexts/cities have demonstrated their creative ability to take new lasting paths or escapes and their degree of preparedness to unexpected changes and challenges, implementing and inspiring tactics that serve as lessons-learned to address long-term and future crises.

References

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Topics

Topics of investigation include urban transformations, policies, innovative programs and tools, bottom-up initiatives, adaptive reuses, historical investigations, unconventional cartographies, etc. The disciplines involved are urban history, history of architecture, aesthetics, sociology, urban planning, architectural technology and architectural design.

1. Heritage and crises

Cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, as resource and field of application of risk mitigation initiatives, safeguarding, conservation and enhancement actions addressing crises matters.

2. Urban crises in history

Lessons learned from historical experiences, surveys, memories, sudden changes, unexpected events, and so forth, to draw up and experiment solutions and hints responsive to multiple and urban crises conditions.

3. Crises preparedness of contemporary cities

Urban environments at different scale are intended as the main scenario with respect to which explore proactive tools, technologies, projects, initiatives and policies tackling a wide range of crises and challenges involving the environmental, climatic, social, political, economic, spatial, educational, migration, residential, etc. dimension.

4. Rethinking urban spaces and formats of culture

Cultural formats, programmes, ecosystems and networks, collaborative projects, temporary interventions, etc. involving urban public spaces, including unconventional ones, represent additional and integrative tools for responding to contemporary crises.

Program

> Day 1 | 29th September | 13.00 - 17.00

(Aula Magna, BUB - Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna)

13.00-13.20 Introduction: Danila Longo (Department of Architecture, University of Bologna)

13.20-13.30 Welcome greetings: Mario Losasso (President of SITdA)

13.30-15.00 Session 1: HERITAGE AND CRISES

Keynote speaker: Roberto di Giulio (University of Ferrara)

Invited speakers: Franco Niccolucci (PIN), Marco Pretelli and Leila Signorelli (University of Bologna), Claske Vos (University of Amsterdam)

Chair: Rossella Roversi (University of Bologna)

Coffee break

15.15 - 17.00 Session 2: URBAN CRISES IN HISTORY

Keynote speaker: Valentina Orioli (University of Bologna, Municipality of Bologna)

Invited speakers: Laura Kolbe (University of Helsinki), Mika Mäkelä (University of Helsinki), Ines Tolic (University of Bologna), Peter Clark (University of Helsinki)

Chair: Martina Massari (University of Bologna)

> Day 2 | 30th September | 09.00 - 17.00

(Aula Magna, BUB - Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna)

09.00 - 09.10 Opening: Danila Longo (University of Bologna)

09.10 - 09.20 Welcome greetings: Fabrizio Ivan Apollonio (Director Department of Architecture, UNIBO)

09.20 - 09.40 Opening speech: Sorcha Edwards (Secretary-General of Housing Europe)

09.40 - 10.00 Massimo Iosa Ghini (Iosa Ghini Associati) - *to be confirmed*

Coffee break

10.30 - 13.00 Session 3: CRISES PREPAREDNESS OF CONTEMPORARY CITIES

Keynote speaker: Annalisa Boni (Municipality of Bologna)

Invited speakers: Carlo Alberto Nucci (University of Bologna), Francesca Gotti (Politecnico of Milan), Camillo Boano (Bartlett Development Planning Unit, London), Saveria Olga Boulanger (University of Bologna), Gabriele Manella (University of Bologna), Gisèle Gantois (KU Leuven)

Chair: Serena Orlandi (University of Bologna)

Light lunch

14.00 - 16.00 Session 4: RETHINKING URBAN SPACES AND FORMATS OF CULTURE

Keynote speaker: Raffaele Laudani (Municipality of Bologna)

Invited speakers: Michele Trimarchi (Università degli Studi di Catanzaro), Alissa Diesch (Leibniz University Hannover), Alice Borchi (University of Leeds), Ioanni Delsante (University of Pavia, University of Huddersfield), Annalisa Trentin (University of Bologna)

Chair: Francesca Sabatini (University of Bologna)

Coffee break

16.15 - 17.00 Wrap-up and closure

Credits

Scientific committee

Andrea Boeri, Danila Longo, Beatrice Turillazzi, Saveria Boulanger, Martina Massari, Serena Orlandi, Rossella Roversi, Francesca Sabatini, Carlotta Trippa, Serena Pagliula, Giulia Turci.

Hosting Institution

TRACE - Technology and Resilience in Architecture, Construction and Environment

Organising Institutions

Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna, Department of Architecture (MIUR Department of Excellence)
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Municipality of Bologna

Symposium Office

Martina Massari, Serena Orlandi, Rossella Roversi, Francesca Sabatini.

Contact

caresymposium2022@gmail.com

Official website

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