

The Ecological Turn

21st–22nd
January 2021

Design,
architecture
and aesthetics
beyond
“Anthropocene”

PROGRAM



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2021 – Bologna

21st January 2021
02:00 – 06.30 pm

- Stefania Barca
 - Laura Centemeri
 - Emanuele Leonardi
 - Miriam Tola
- + Paper presentation

22nd January 2021
09:00 – 05.00 pm

- Kjetil Fallan
 - Studio Formafantasma
 - Maurizio Carta
- + Paper presentation

The Conference will
be held online on zoom.
Participation is open
and free but registration
on the website
is recommended

<https://eventi.unibo.it/theecologicalturn-architettura-bologna-2020/registration-form>



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE
DIPARTIMENTO DI ECCELLENZA MIUR
(L. 232 DEL 1/12/2016)

ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN CULTURES
PHD PROGRAM

The Ecological Turn

Design, architecture and aesthetics beyond “Anthropocene”

Alma Mater Studiorum
University of Bologna
Department of Architecture

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

21st – 22nd January 2021
Bologna

PROGRAM

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Participation is open and free but [registration](#) on the website is recommended

How does the ecological thinking affect architects, designers and the design culture itself? The Anthropocene is a geological event, but also a political one that lies in overcoming the idea of crisis. Acknowledging this change means rethinking the very ecology of the project in environmental and atmospheric terms.

The changes we face don't depend on missing balances, but on compromises reached between conservation and exploitation. The Anthropocene is in our suggested reading the time of the end of our representations and the time of the beginning of other narratives that belong to a non-linear dimension.

The ecological mindset understood here will not be a generic reconciliation with nature, but a political project, a clash between narratives, a challenge to designers and architects, their materials and their design practices to rethink the way in which human beings define themselves, their images and relationships within the world in which they live. In other words, a renewal of conflicts: between classes, between nations and production models, between technological choices.

Anthropocene is a category which has the merit of challenging our conventions in an oblique manner by reconnecting the history of mankind with the history of the Earth. In this respect, design visions can be the tool for activating new relations.

Within this process of change, how do the figures of architects and designers rethink their role, their knowledge, experimenting with new design approaches?

The conference wants to explore these issues from different points of view, in particular the “socio-bio-geosphere in its uncertain becoming by making the disciplines of the project communicate and by varying the scale of analysis, from the molecular scale of the environmental effects on our heritage, to that of the world's flow of goods and capital organized by the World Trade Organization, passing through the local scenarios of industrial sites or socio-environmental mobilizations” as Jean Baptiste Fressoz and Christophe Bonneuil wrote.

The questions that guide this talk are on two levels of reading:
1 - How to represent, imagine, visualize the Anthropocene through the design cultures?
2 - How can this political event change the design and production processes?

keywords

visual culture, strategic design, urban metabolism, feeling / thinking with

Day 1

**Thursday 21st
January 2021**

02:00 / 06:30 pm

Alma Mater Studiorum
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Department of Architecture

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PROGRAM

02:00 pm
Institutional Greetings
Professor Annalisa Trentin

02:15 pm
Tools For After.
A selection of video, project,
images from the international
call

02:35 pm
Maurizio Corrado
Tools For After

02:50pm /
Paper Presentation + Q&A
*Overlapping narratives:
self-representations
of the Anthropocene*
Stefano Ascari
(University of Bologna)

*De-sterilizing design: towards
non-anthropocentric strategies
beyond the inert*
Elena Brea,
Pablo Ferreira Navone,
María Buey, Gabriel Alonso
*(Institute for Postnatural
Studies)*

*Mapping, Sensing and Hacking
– Rethinking Architecture
in the Era of the Anthropocene*
Yael Eylat Van Essen
*(HIT- Holon Institute of
Technology Tel Aviv University)*

03:50 pm
Coffee break

04:00 pm
Welcome to the Anthropocene
Screening of the short film

04:10 pm
Lecture + Q&A
● **Stefania Barca**
*(Center for Social Studies
of the University of Coimbra)*
*Welcome to the Anthropocene:
a tale of eco-capitalist realism*

04:30 pm
● **Laura Centemeri**
(EHESS/CNRS/INSERM, Paris)
*Repairing, nurturing,
reinhbiting: reflections on
a care-oriented engagement
with/for the environment*

04:50 pm
Coffee break

05:00 pm
● **Emanuele Leonardi**
*(University of Parma,
Center for Social Studies
of the University of Coimbra)*
*The Anthropocene as
a Regime of Visibility*

05:20 pm
● **Miriam Tola**
*(University Of Lausanne,
Institute of Geography
and Sustainability)*
*Improving Mars: Elon Musk,
Geopower and Colonial
Habitation*

05:40 pm
Coffee break

05:50 pm /
Round table
Anthropocene and Care.
Speaker
Stefania Barca,
Laura Centemeri,
Emanuele Leonardi,
Miriam Tola
Moderator
Ivano Gorzanelli

06:30 pm
Closing Greetings

Day 2

Friday 22st
January 2021

09:00 / 04:30 pm

Alma Mater Studiorum
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Department of Architecture

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

21st – 22nd January 2021
Bologna

PROGRAM

09:00 am
Institutional Greetings

09:20 am /
Lecture + Q&A

- **Kjetil Fallan**
(University of Oslo)
Deep Ecology as Deep Design

10:10 am /
Paper Presentation + Q&A

*Agency and participation
in a more-than-human
anthropocene: reflections on
designing with different others*

Gionata Gatto,
Alessia Cadamuro
(Dubai Institute of Design
and Innovation/Open University)

The User in the Anthropocene
Tuğba Deringöl, Sema Serim
(Abdullah Gul University, Turkey/
Erciyes University, Turkey)

Arks. Architectures of Retention
Alberto Petracchin
(Politecnico di Milano)

11:10 am
Coffee break

11:30 am /
Lecture + Q&A

- **Studio Formafantasma**
(Andrea Trimarchi and Simone
Farresin, Amsterdam)
Cambio

12:00 pm /
Paper Presentation + Q&A

*Syntropic materials.
Designing forests to design
natural materials*

Eugenia Morpurgo
(Independent researcher)

*Carpentered Diegetic Things:
Alternative Design Ideologies
for AI Material Relations*

Franziska Pilling,
Paul Coulton
(Lancaster University, LICA)

*Metabolic Architecture:
Dialogues with Microbes*

Rachel Armstrong,
Rolf Hughes
(Newcastle University, United
Kingdom/University of Leuven
Faculty of Architecture, Campus
Sint-Lucas, Ghent, Brussels)

01:00 pm
Lunch break

02:30 pm /
Lecture + Q&A

- **Maurizio Carta**
(University of Palermo)
*Neoanthropocene
Augmented Cities*

03:30 pm /
Paper Presentation + Q&A

*Towards conviviality in smart
territories*

Federico Diodato
(Università di Bologna/
Université de Paris-Est, France)

*Unblackboxing in practice.
A set of actions enabling
circular city-making*
Saverio Massaro
(University of Basilicata)

*Pictures of floating grounds.
voluntary exiles and ecological
narratives: the case of Oceanix
floating city project*

Matteo Vianello
(Iuav University of Venice)

04:30 pm
Closing Greetings

keynote speakers

Day 1

Thursday 21st January 2021
02:00 / 06:30 pm

Stefania Barca

(Center for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra)

Welcome to the Anthropocene: a tale of eco-capitalist realism

I will briefly present the argument developed in Part I of my *Forces of Reproduction* (Cambridge U.P. 2020): that the Anthropocene concept has originated a hegemonic end-of-history narrative, whose message is that the scope of environmental politics is not systemic transformation but the continuation of the present system within planetary boundaries. Centered on a content and format critique of the *Welcome to the Anthropocene* video, my argument echoes Mark Fisher's concept of "capitalist realism", extending it to the current phase of neoliberal environmental governance. Considering eco-capitalist realism as a discursive dispositif with important implications for narrative justice, and for the politics of climate justice more generally, my critique aims at allowing for the emergence of a counter-hegemonic narrative of the Anthropocene.

Laura Centemeri

(EHES/CNRS/INSERM, Paris)

Repairing, nurturing, reinhabiting: reflections on a care-oriented engagement with/for the environment

In this contribution, I draw on research conducted on the permaculture movement in Italy to develop some reflections on the forms taken by an environmentalism oriented by the aspiration to "care for the earth" and "care for people". This care-oriented environmentalism is focused on practices and, in particular, on ecological design practices. There is, however, an important difference in practicing ecological design exclusively as the design of "permanent" ecosystems or the design of places where to "reinhabit", through "repairing" and "nurturing" social and ecological relations that can sustain the transition towards a more socially and ecologically just society. The study of permaculture movement and initiatives thus makes it possible to reflect on the ways in which ecological design activism can bring together 'technical courage' and 'political courage', both of which are necessary to fight what Stefania Barca defines as the "master's narrative" of the Anthropocene.

Emanuele Leonardi

(University of Parma, Center for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra)

The Anthropocene as a Regime of Visibility

The ever-growing Anthropocene-debate has so far mostly concerned the definition of this controversial new geological era - as well as its political implications, and its origins - with proposals ranging from the spread of agriculture to the Columbus Exchange (or globalization of food), from the first Industrial Revolution to the so-called Great Acceleration. My paper quickly reviews these disputes in order to focus on a different, but interrelated, question: when did we start to "see" the new geological epoch? From this perspective, the Anthropocene appears as a regime of visibility which emerged in the late 1980s to (attempt to) manage two key issues associated with the collapse of the Fordist system of regulation: the ecological crisis and the digital economy.

Miriam Tola

(University Of Lausanne,
Institute of Geography and Sustainability)

Improving Mars: Elon Musk, Geopower and Colonial Habitation

Proposed by earth scientists in the early 2000s, the Anthropocene has gained traction as a new imaginary of the earth in which the human species acts simultaneously as agent of disruption and redemption. In the Silicon Valley the Anthropocene imaginary finds a perfect embodiment in the figures of entrepreneurs who design solutions for the ecological crisis, and the venture capitalists who invest in these innovations. Sometimes, as in the case of Elon Musk, the same individuals occupy multiple roles. In conversation with feminist and decolonial engagements with the Anthropocene, this talk explores Musk as the embodiment of the "good Anthropocene," the idea that since the human species has become a geological agent, now it

has to take charge of the planet. A white migrant from South Africa, Musk is widely celebrated as "the architect of tomorrow." He called for a revolt against the oil industry and, as the creator of Tesla and other "green" technologies, advocates a sharp turn away from fossil fuels to alternative energy. His vision for the future extends to outer space as new frontier for value extraction. As the creator of SpaceX, Musk invests in the project of terraforming, settling and improving other planets, creating a multiplanetary space for (some) humans. In considering Musk's figure, this talk analyses the patriarchal, colonial and capitalist underpinnings of what Frédéric Neyrat and others call "geopower". This power formation extends the project of capitalist modernity by claiming that the earth and everything making up multi-planetary processes can and must be reconstructed through technological interventions. The analysis of Musk's figure allows to interrogate how contemporary geopower updates modern forms of colonial habitation predicated upon the exploitation of life and nonlife.

Day 2

Friday 22nd
January 2021
09:00 / 05:00 pm

Kjetil Fallan

(University of Oslo)

Deep Ecology as Deep Design

Coined by Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss in 1972, the concept of 'deep ecology' has since travelled far and wide, both politically and academically. Rarely, however, has it been explored in relation to design. By revisiting the core principles of Næss' ecophilosophy from a design historical perspective, this talk aims to show that the leap from deep ecology to deep design is hidden in plain sight and more relevant than ever before. Næss was no design theorist, and his philosophical program was not formulated explicitly for design. However, emerging as it was at a time when the environmentalist movement had awoken designers, critics, and consumers alike to the ecological entanglements of design, it is easy to understand the appeal and relevance many found in the concept of deep ecology. His simple cabin life, his passionate and advanced mountaineering, and his championing of 'clean' climbing technologies was part and parcel of his ecophilosophy. From this acknowledgement, I will argue that the intellectual roots of the deep ecology movement provide fertile ground for exploring the interface between ecophilosophy and ecodesign.

Studio Formafantasma

(Amsterdam)

Cambio

Formafantasma (Andrea Trimarchi and Simone Farresin) are designers who dissect the ecological and political responsibilities of their discipline. Their holistic approach reaches back into the history of a particular material used by humans, out towards the patterns of supply chains that have developed to support and expand its use, and forward to the future of that material's survival in relation to human consumption. The keynote 'Cambio' explores the intersection between design and ecology, focusing on the latest homonymous research project commissioned by Serpentine Galleries London.

Maurizio Carta

(University of Palermo)

Neanthropocene Augmented Cities

We are living in a syndemia, a perverse alliance between various unsustainable development pathologies. Covid-19 has been the signal that the planet sent to our species warning us about the urgency of change: 98% of the Earth (the nature) rebels against the enormous environmental impact produced by the remaining 2% (the cities). Humanity life must return to a right balance between men, other living species and with the planet itself, because we have entered the "new climatic regime", abandoning the alleged superiorities behind which the real fragility of our systems was hidden in their predatory expansion. The Anthropocene is the "super-diffuser" of syndemia, the vast urbanization that has devoured the natural soil, cultural palimpsest, lowlands, coasts and mountains, forests and beaches, and with its enormous social injustice. In short, it turned out to be an Anthropocalypse! To get out of it we need new types of cities and communities, which I name "Augmented Cities", namely as the human - and not human - habitat of the Neanthropocene. The augmented city is, for me, a new paradigm that generates a spatial, social, cultural and economic device capable of providing new and urgent answers to the metamorphosis we are going through. It is the concrete answer to the four main revolutions of contemporary society: improving the knowledge society, thinking again to the networked society, fighting climate change and reactivating the urban metabolism.

Scientific Committee

The Scientific Committee is composed by the members of the Academic Board of the Architecture and Design Cultures Phd Program, of the Department of Architecture of Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna.

Information: <https://phd.unibo.it/architettura/en/people>

Organising committee

XXXIV PhD Cycle in Architecture and Design Cultures:
Loreno Arboritanza, Anna Chiara Benedetti, Simone Gheduzzi,
Ivano Gorzanelli, Rosa Grasso, Simona Rinaldi, Ilaria Ruggeri,
Karilene Rochink Costa, Laura Succini, Ilaria Maria Zedda

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