



Edited by Michel Carlana, Simone Gobbo

Labor. Geographies of Work

Quaderni luav. Ricerche

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# Labor. Geographies of Work



*Labor. Geographies of Work*, is a small book, a breviary intended as an initial table of comparison and discussion on the theme of work in architecture, related to the society and time in which we live. An 'archipelago' of universities reasoned about the meaning of the word *Labor*, the central theme of the 25th edition of the WAVE (international architecture workshops) at the Università luav di Venezia.



**Quaderni Iuav. Ricerche**

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**Labor.  
Geographies of Work**

## Quaderni luav. Ricerche *luav at Work*

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### Labor. Geographies of Work

Edited by Michel Carlana, Simone Gobbo

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## Contents

- 6 *Labor. New Workplaces, Theories and Forms of Collaboration*  
Benno Albrecht
- 12 *WAVE's Next Frontier: Internationalization as an Educational Strategy*  
Angelo Maggi
- 18 *Modern Times*  
Michel Carlana
- 22 *Why Does Work Modify Space and Require Us to Think New Theories?*  
Simone Gobbo
- ### I. Work and Relationships
- 28 *Labor Coreographies*  
Armin Linke
- 50 *Labor and the Architectural Laboratory: Evolving Work, Craft, and Experimentation*  
Bartlett School of Architecture  
Alberto Campagnoli, Günther Galligioni
- 54 *Flexibility and the Relation Towards the City*  
Bauhaus-Universität Weimar  
Christian Felgendreher, Christina Köchling
- 58 *The Work of Architecture and the Architecture of Work*  
CEPT University  
Smit Vyas

## Contents

- 62 *Temporary Vendors Versus Commercial Centers.  
The Future of Urban Streets' Vitality*  
Feng Chia University  
Lorena Alessio
- 66 *4 Algorithms for the Concept of Labor*  
ITESO, Universidad Jesuita de Guadalajara  
Sandra Valdés Valdés
- 72 *The Evolution of Labor Spaces: Seven Emerging  
Typologies of Contemporary Workscapes*  
School of Architecture at the Central Academy of Fine Arts  
Zhu Pei
- 76 *From Hierarchical Space to Diffuse Space*  
School of Architecture La Salle Barcelona  
Josep Ferrando
- 80 *The Arc of Architecture and Labor in the U.S.*  
Thomas Jefferson University  
David Breiner, Lisa Phillips
- 84 *The New Fundamentals: Time, Labour, and the  
Architecture of the Future*  
TU Delft  
Georg Vrachliotis
- 88 *The Thinking Hand*  
Università Iuav di Venezia  
Roberta Albiero
- 92 *Perpetua. The Work of Time*  
Università Iuav di Venezia  
Michel Carlana
- 96 *Labor is 'What We Are Doing on the Earth'*  
Università Iuav di Venezia  
Fernanda De Maio

## Contents

- 100 *Lost Labor*  
Università Iuav di Venezia  
Antonella Gallo
- 104 *Theory is an Unfinished Worksite*  
Università Iuav di Venezia  
Simone Gobbo
- 108 *Producing the Factory: Architecture and Space  
of Industrial Work in Italy*  
Università Iuav di Venezia  
Guido Morpurgo

## II. Work and Geography

- 114 *Spectrum. Geographies of Labor*  
Riccardo Miotto
- 139 Profiles

Work produces an extensive system of transformations within our realities; through employment and human activities, we have historically generated spaces and invented forms of landscape organization.

*Labor*<sup>1</sup>, the word chosen to encapsulate WAVE 2025, carries many meanings and, in its etymology, suggests an attitude of commitment to an activity with the goal of creating something useful.

I believe this represents a positive approach, one that seeks to use design as a tool for improving reality. Work produces objects that meet material needs, but it also generates forms of thought, theories, and cultural structures that cultivate desires and new possibilities.

Every context is shaped by transformations, by phenomena of change that have given form to space, placing work as a fundamental element within the complex system of reality's organization. Architecture has always played a significant role in giving meaning and physical presence to our society. It is an art that has continually attempted to represent humanity's emotions and desires. For example, it has created spaces for rituals, places for preserving knowledge, for transforming raw materials, for cultivation and nourishment, for rest and security.

Today, as these fundamental needs seem to be taken for granted, and as we become less attentive to highlighting the importance of physical space in relation to well-being and mental conditions, we must question architecture's role as a theoretical dimension capable of influencing and guiding choices regarding the future of places.

The space of work has undergone rapid transformation during the challenging period of the COVID-19 pandemic, and we

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## Why Does Work Modify Space and Require Us to Think New Theories?

1 The etymology of *Labor* derives from labors; fr. labeur; sp. labor; port. lavor: from the lat. *Labor*fatigue, whence *Labobàre* toil and also to operate while toiling, that is to work: from the radix *Labh*, which seems to have the proper meaning of grasping and the figurative meaning of turning the desire, the will, the intent, the work to s. c.,» which is to say to yearn, to undertake, to obtain, to take possession, which originally must have been *Rabh*, the *R* changed to *L*, as *Ruc* gave *Luc* etc.

now experience conflicting sentiments regarding the dematerialization of spaces, increasingly replaced by new digital habitats.

As a scholar and researcher, I believe these uncertainties present an opportunity for architecture across the globe. Through an international platform like WAVE, we can collectively reflect on the potential of workspaces, comparing diverse conditions and geographies, and exploring responses and themes that each university will address through its specific knowledge and design methodologies.

Universities themselves are workplaces, serving as ideal arenas for investigating the future relationship between humanity and professional engagement. We must work together to answer a crucial question: Why does work shape space? What theories can help architecture establish new strategies and collaborative conditions in the contemporary world?

We are living in a social phase deeply marked by individualism, and as scholars, we have a central role in promoting collaboration and the sharing of new theories on spatial organization. As architects, we can learn from the diversity of contexts and grasp the profound meaning of using design as a tool that consciously utilizes resources.

Work and its spatial dimension will confront new economic models, the challenge of scarce resources and the application of new technologies designed and managed by artificial intelligence: this will put traditional approaches into crisis, suggesting bolder theoretical perspectives that envision a still-crucial role for architecture.

With *Labor*, we will seek to understand how architecture can apply its knowledge to help each of us contribute meaningfully to society. I think of the history of collaboration and, specifically in the Italian context, figures like Adriano Olivetti<sup>2</sup>

2 'The city of man will arise in a world freed from the slavery to the force and excessive power of money, at the end of that struggle in the material field and in the spiritual sphere which is the highest commitment and the reason for my life. The light of truth, my father used to tell me, shines only in actions, not in words.' The reference is to the book: A. Olivetti, *La città dell'uomo*, Edizioni comunità, Ivrea 2015, p.251.

and Giancarlo De Carlo<sup>3</sup> – individuals who sought a balance between society, work, and architecture.

This isn't a nostalgic<sup>4</sup> reminder of these important past Italian experiences, but rather a reflection aimed at fostering an approach toward architecture theory able to combine human needs and the imperatives of our present economic reality. Architecture always operates to place and shape spaces mediating between different demands, a complex aspect in contemporary times, yet necessary as a hypothesis for the resistance of architecture itself.

Answering to the initial question, we must turn to the need for architecture to find new theoretical paths, to bring research and teaching to a boldly experimental condition – taking risks while at the same time maintaining awareness of our habitat, the specificity of places and techniques, the resources, and the constraints that belong to each project.

Let's start again with schools, international collaboration, and dialogue on possible responses to the future of workspaces. This is not merely a spatial issue but, above all, a new cultural field that our scientific communities must attempt to redefine together.

3 Reference is made in particular to the book: *L'architettura della partecipazione*, edited by di Sara Marini, Quodlibet Abitare, Macerata 2013.

4 Against a nostalgic idea of organization of time, reference is made in particular to: M. Heidegger, *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik. Welt, Endlichkeit, Einsamkeit*, edited by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, Königshausen und Neumann, Würzburg 1994; transl. it. *Concetti fondamentali della metafisica*, Il Nuovo Melangolo, Genoa 2005.

## Profiles

WAVE 2025, with the *Labor* edition, saw the involvement of many international geographies with the intention of initiating a debate between schools and territories. The photographic and artistic contribution of Armin Linke and Riccardo Miotto completed, with different gazes, a hypothetical mapping that has no defined boundaries, both human and imaginary.

### *Armin Linke*

Armin Linke (1966) is a photographer and filmmaker who investigates the formation – the ‘Gestaltung’ – of the natural, technological, and urban environment, perceived as a diversified space of continuous interaction. His practice is carried out with aesthetic, anthropological and sociological criteria, and combines various image-processing technologies to analyze the relationships between the collective and individual dimensions.

### *Riccardo Miotto*

Riccardo Miotto (1982) is an architect and visual artist. His work explores the space of the format through the relationship between drawing – recto – and its shroud – verso – investigating the tension between the rational and irrational components hidden in the production of images, objects, and spaces.

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Venezia. A multiplicity of institutions wrote and reflected through many scholars from different parts of the world (and with very different backgrounds), so as to begin to draw a shared picture of the different realities of schools of architecture and the transversal teaching and working methodologies that distinguish each of these very specific approaches.

### Bartlett School of Architecture, London, United Kingdom

**The Bartlett School of Architecture at UCL is a world-leading centre for architecture and design. Its MA/MLA Landscape Architecture programme explores how landscapes shape cities, ecosystems, and communities. Students engage in design-led research, tackling issues like climate change and biodiversity. With London as a laboratory, they develop skills in sustainable design, urban planning, and ecological restoration, preparing for careers in landscape architecture, environmental planning, and research.**

### *Alberto Campagnoli*

Alberto Campagnoli (1988) is an architect focused on regenerative processes and the civic role of landscape architecture. An Università Iuav di Venezia graduate with the thesis Tokyo Re-Edit, he has worked at award-winning firms and explores the interaction of built form, nature, and human activity.

### *Günther Galligioni*

Günther Galligioni (1984) is an Iuav Venice grad in Architecture & Landscape. With extensive experience at top international firms, his work champions innovative design and fosters inclusive, sustainable communities.

Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, Germany

The close connection between architecture and urban studies characterize the work at the faculty and promotes an interdisciplinary culture of study and exchange. The urgent future issues of ecologically and socially sustainable development are at the center of a holistic view of the built and designed environment. The interdisciplinary work is based on working together on a small campus, in studios and workshops as part of the project study programme.

*Christian Felgendreher*

Christian Felgendreher (1980) founding partner of 'Felgendreher Olf's Köchling' is also a member of the design committee Bremen. After his studies at the UdK Berlin he worked at David Chipperfield, London and Kuehn Malvezzi, Berlin. Until 2018 he was teaching assistant at Hilde Leons Chair at Leibniz University Hannover.

*Christina Köchling*

Christina Köchling (1979) Juniorprofessor at the Bauhaus-University Weimar is originally a carpenter and graduated in architecture at the University of Arts in Berlin. She worked for Christ Gantenbein in Basel and Krucker Bates in Munich. In 2015 she founded her office together with Christian Felgendreher and Johannes Olf's in Berlin.

CEPT University, Ahmedabad, India

Faculty of Architecture, CEPT University, is one of the vital centres of thought and education in the field of Architecture in India. It aims for excellence in its teaching and research

programs. It aims to give its students a breadth of cultural exposure that shapes a reflective and critical outlook based on social and environmental awareness and responsiveness. The faculty enjoys an excellent reputation nationally as well as internationally.

*Smit Vyas*

Smit Vyas is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Architecture, CEPT. He offers design studios for the undergraduate and master's program and courses in architectural history, theory, drawing and documentation. Smit heads STUDIO 4000, an award-winning design practice based out of Ahmedabad.

Feng Chia University, Taichung City, Taiwan

**Feng Chia University, located in Taichung City, Taiwan, is a long-established and vibrant private university. Feng Chia University offers a diverse range of colleges. The establishment of the School of Architecture at Feng Chia University aims to break through traditional architectural education models and cultivate the architectural-related 'professional talents' needed by society. The school emphasizes the integration of theory and practice, cultivating students' practical skills and innovative thinking through design workshops, internships, and industry-academia collaborations.**

*Lorena Alessio*

Lorena Alessio graduated from the Politecnico di Torino, she got a Master of Architecture at Pratt Institute, New York and a Ph.D. at Nihon University in Tokyo. She is a professor at Feng Chia University in Taichung. Since 1999, she

has been leading LAA architectural office, with several international works.

ITESO, Universidad Jesuita de Guadalajara, Tlaquepaque, Mexico

**With 60 years of tradition, the ITESO School of Architecture is part of Guadalajara's rich architectural heritage, influenced by Luis Barragán. Its humanistic and sustainable approach shapes critical and creative architects committed to their social and environmental context. Through community engagement, experimentation, and innovation, it integrates technology and design with an ethical vision. Its faculty and academic events foster dialogue and reflection on the role of architecture in society.**

*Sandra Valdés Valdés*

Sandra Valdés Valdés, architect and coordinator of the ITESO Architecture program, is the founder of Anillo Primavera AC, focused on the conservation of the La Primavera Forest. With a master's in history and as a PhD candidate, she integrates research, teaching, and environmental management in her academic and professional work.

School of Architecture at the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), Beijing, China

The School of Architecture at the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) was officially established in 2003. Rooted in the century-old artistic heritage of CAFA, a world-renowned institution for fine arts, the school has developed an architectural education system aimed at cultivating «creative architectural talents with artistic

and humanistic qualities». It comprises four departments and five divisions: the Department of Architecture, the Department of Interior Design, the Department of Urban Design and Planning, the Department of Landscape Architecture, the Foundation Division, the Graduate Division, the Academic Division, the External Relations Division, and the Exhibition and Publishing Division.

*Zhu Pei*

Zhu Pei, born in Beijing and studied at Tsinghua University and UC Berkeley, founded Studio Zhu Pei in 2005, and from there he has produced an extraordinary corpus of cultural works that have made him one of the leading figures of his generation. Marked by his American experience, which includes teaching at Harvard and Columbia, he is the current Dean and professor of the School of Architecture at Central Academy of Fine Arts in China, and visiting professor at Yale University. He was recognized with Honorary Fellow of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) for his contribution to architecture.

School of Architecture La Salle Barcelona (ETSALS), Spain

The learning experience in Architecture at La Salle combines practical work with technical and humanistic courses through a learning-by-doing approach. With Barcelona as a classroom, the campus as a living lab, and an international network as a global workspace, students engage with renowned architects. Moreover, the personalized methodology allows them to tailor their studies to their individual sensitivities, offering multiple paths to explore architecture.

*Josep Ferrando*

Barcelona architect and director of Josep Ferrando Architecture, he embraces a multifaceted vision of architecture, combining his roles as a craftsman, academic – dean of ETSALS – and cultural manager – former director of the Open Architecture Center at COAC.

**Thomas Jefferson University,  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,  
United States**

**Thomas Jefferson University, founded in 1824, is a preeminent national doctoral university delivering high-impact education in 160 undergraduate and graduate programs in the sixth largest city in the USA. Jefferson is a top-ranked National Research University, and hosts extensive pioneering research institutes, centers and labs. These facilities enable interdisciplinary collaboration among faculty, students and researchers to tackle urgent issues like climate change and social justice.**

*Lisa Phillips*

Lisa Phillips, NCIDQ graduated from Temple University and is an Associate Professor of Interior Design at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. Her areas of research focus on design pedagogy and the study of the senses as they relate to the user experience in built environments.

*David Breiner*

David Breiner graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture (University of Notre Dame) and a Ph.D. in the History of Architecture & Urbanism (Cornell University). An Associate Professor at Thomas Jefferson University, his scholarship focuses on architectural history in the USA and in Renaissance Italy.

**TU Delft, Faculty of Architecture and  
the Built Environment, Belgium**

**The Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at TU Delft plays a leading role in education and research worldwide. The driving force behind the faculty's success is its robust research profile combined with the passion and creativity of its academic community, which is dedicated to improving the built environment through a broad set of disciplines. The faculty works closely with other faculties, universities, private parties, and the public sector, and has an extensive network in the Netherlands as well as internationally.**

*Georg Vrachliotis*

Georg Vrachliotis is Professor and Head of the Department of Architecture at TU Delft, where he leads the pioneering Design, Data, and Society Group. His research and curatorial work explore the intersections of architecture, media, and technology. He previously served as Dean at KIT and as senior researcher at ETH Zurich.

**Università Iuav di Venezia, Italy**

**Born in 1926 as the Higher School of Architecture of Venice, Università Iuav di Venezia is today a small-sized university with a strong experimental vocation: the first among Italian universities to introduce design laboratories, its didactic model combines theoretical training in the humanities with laboratory work oriented towards making and experimentation, coordinated by architects, artists and designers.**

*Benno Albrecht*

Benno Albrecht has been rector of Università Iuav di Venezia since 2021.

He completed his studies at Iuav with Vittorio de Feo and he then worked with Vittorio Gregotti and Leonardo Benevolo. He received architectural prizes for his projects and buildings, he won design competitions and his projects were shown in Italy and abroad.

*Angelo Maggi*

Angelo Maggi is professor of Architectural History, History of Architectural photography at Università Iuav di Venezia. He earned his PhD in Architecture and Visual Studies at the Edinburgh College of Art. He is full member of the PhD School in History of the Arts (Ca' Foscari University Venice) and he is acting as Vice-Rector Iuav for International Relations.

*Roberta Albiero*

Roberta Albiero (1965) is a professor of Architectural and Urban Design at the University Iuav of Venice. Her current research focuses on Italian architecture of the late 19th century, particularly on museography and exhibitions, as well as the relationship between architecture, archaeology, art, and the landscape of the Venice lagoon.

*Michel Carlana*

Michel Carlana (1980) graduated from the Università Iuav di Venezia, where he currently carry out collaborative and research activities. With Luca Mezzalira and Curzio Pentimalli, in 2010, he founded the architectural office Carlana Mezzalira Pentimalli based in Treviso, Italy.

*Fernanda De Maio*

Fernanda De Maio (1967) Architect and PhD in Urban Design, graduated from the Università di Napoli Federico II. She is currently Full Professor of Architectural Design at the Università Iuav di Venezia. She was co-founder

of the architectural office Na.o Mi. and from 2008 Consultant for Architecture of the Im.Ing Engineering based in Naples.

*Antonella Gallo*

Antonella Gallo, architect, PhD in Architectural Composition, is a Full Professor of Architectural and Urban Composition. She is the Coordinator of the PhD program in Architectural Composition at the Doctoral School of the Università Iuav di Venezia.

*Simone Gobbo*

Simone Gobbo (1980) graduated from the Università Iuav di Venezia, where he currently carry out collaborative and research activities. With Alberto Mottola and Davide De Marchi, in 2007, he founded the architectural office DEMOGO based in Treviso, Italy.

*Guido Morpurgo*

Architect and National Academician of San Luca, he is an associate professor of interior and exhibition design at Iuav. After having been associate in the firm Gregotti Associati, he founded in Milan the studio Morpurgo de Curtis Architetti whose works have received several awards.

## Quaderni Iuav. Ricerche *Iuav at Work*

The series of volumes in the collection Quaderni Iuav. Ricerche *Iuav at Work* is published as part of the 19th International Architecture Exhibition of Venice, within the *Iuav at Work* project, as an extension of the Venice Pavilion into the urban territory. The list of published books can be found at the link provided by the following QR code.

