



Edited by Michel Carlana, Simone Gobbo

Labor. Geographies of Work

Quaderni luav. Ricerche

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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.

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**Labor.
Geographies of Work**

Quaderni luav. Ricerche *luav at Work*

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Edited by Michel Carlana, Simone Gobbo

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Some words, much more than others, are so common in our daily use as to appear obviously clear, while instead – if considered more attentively – they reveal a multiplicity of meanings in constant evolution and transformation.

Work, in its various connotations, has always mirrored society, and it is perhaps now as essential as ever to reflect on such a wide-ranging term, its countless definitions inspiring as many occasions for thinking.

‘Work’ is an expression that allows for a plurality of interpretations because it intersects many primary societal issues: from interpersonal relationships to life and the miscellaneous physicality of the spaces we inhabit every day. And it is exactly on this fundamental interrelation between human and space that we might want to focus a gathering of international research. It is a dichotomous bond, historically defined by constants and variants, the latter mostly belonging to the realm of technical and technological advancements, simultaneously produced by and acting on work itself.

Delving deeper into its meaning, work is understood in this small and shared editorial project as *Labor*: an ensemble of metaphorical ‘gears’, a single device¹ seen as a mechanism to ponder – also – on architecture. More precisely: a hypothetical taxonomy, an investigation in the ‘spaces’ that host the various declinations of work and production, in ‘how’ different forms of work can shape architecture, and, finally, a study of the ways architecture itself can generate new types of work.

It will be essential to question whether spatial configurations will depend on these premises or not, and it will become crucial to understand how the ‘lexicon’ will withstand certain sudden changes, accelerated by increasingly autonomous and less human intelligences.

Probably, for these very reasons, it will be necessary to reclaim a certain ‘naturalness’ of form.

Modern Times

¹ To understand the broader concept of ‘device’ refer to G. Agamben, *Che cos’è un dispositivo?*, Nottetempo, Rome 2006.

The thought that must accompany intuition and reflection is this: it is nature that has produced this beauty; and it is solely on this that the immediate interest we take in it is base.²

The premises stated above will most probably make it necessary for us to start questioning again the notion of ‘environment’ – spurring a dialogue with what exists today and with what once did – adopting a stance marked by experimentation, on the one hand, and philanthropy³ on the other; an attitude of dominance between bodies and nature worthy of a performance by Pina Bausch, where the void is occupied in the totality of its roundness, bringing to their limits concepts of physics and aesthetics.

The purpose of allotment gardens, hated by employers, is not merely to offer the wage worker of the city a little more clean air, extra food to counter the high cost of living, but a kind of rehabilitation through contact with the soil.⁴

From these conditions stems the necessity of regaining the ability to imagine space: not necessarily a ‘new’ space, but a space with an expanded and dilated capacity to inhabit time, as in antiquity. The role of architects will mostly proceed unchanged, that is to propose ‘places’ to which communities (of different times and epochs) can relate and react to – if the project is successful – with an instinctive and innate sense of belonging.

2 I. Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, Translated by J.H. Bernard, Mcmillan, London 1914, p.178.

3 Helpful here the words of Giancarlo De Carlo ‘We see instead, by turning the telescope around, that architecture becomes generous and significant for humans only if it is a gentle and delicate extension of the natural order’ in G. De Carlo, *Appunti da un breve viaggio in Morea*, «Spazio e Società – Space & Society», 55, 1991.

4 M. Yourcenar, *Quoi? L’Éternité*, Gallimard, Paris 1988, p.299.

In architecture there are, if I can so express myself, two necessary facets to be truthful. It must be truthful to the program, truthful to the process of construction.⁵

‘Work’ has indeed undergone a series of alterations related to methods, dislocations, and temporalities, to the point that one might think that, in contrast to the ‘typicalities’ of work or production spaces, often tied to functionality, the project should aim for the ‘specificities’ – if present – that characterize the geographies with which one must engage, asking (collectively) whether it is possible to speak of *Genius loci* also for these types of spaces. Beyond the ability to read the peculiarities of places, it will become crucial to think of architecture as something open, capable of transforming over time and, above all, providing those who pass through it with a sense of freedom⁶, intended in its form as a social relationship.

The image that appears in our minds when thinking of one of the films most centered on the theme of work, *Modern Times*⁷, is not the direct representation of work itself, but the life of man, the fundamental aspect that every designer should focus on.

5 Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, *Entretiens sur l’architecture*, 1863.

6 Concerning some reflections about freedom and progress refer to the work of Z. Bauman, *Freedom*, University of Minnesota Press, Minnesota 1988.

7 *Modern Times* (USA 1934-35, 1936, black and white, 85m); directed by: Charlie Chaplin; produced by: Charlie Chaplin for United Artists; scenography: Charlie Chaplin; editing: Charlie Chaplin; cinematography: Rollie Totheroth, Ira Morgan; scenography: Charles D. Hall, Russell Spencer; music: Charlie Chaplin.

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.

***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 Iuav di**

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 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 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 Mezzalana and Curzio Pentimalli, in 2010, he founded the architectural office Carlana Mezzalana 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.

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