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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 Iuav di Venezia.

Edited by Michel Carlana, Simone Gobbo

*Labor. Geographies of Work*

**Quaderni Iuav. Ricerche**

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# Labor.
# Geographies of Work

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# Labor.
# Geographies of Work

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# The Thinking Hand



Hands are not merely physical instruments; they are cognitive agents that allow us to explore the world in a more direct and sensitive way. Manual activities – writing, building, drawing, playing instruments, painting, sculpting – engage a deep cognitive process, fundamentally different from the one activated by using a keyboard.

The slowness and awareness that accompany handwork cultivate an experiential form of learning that digital tools struggle to replicate. Manual skill is not just a physical act; it is a way of thinking, of engaging with the world, of sensing and knowing.

The use of the hand has played a crucial role in shaping the human brain's evolution: the ability to grasp, create tools, and manipulate objects led to the development of a larger and more complex mind. The act of grasping contributed to the emergence of language and creativity.

Hands are also essential for communication: gestures, sign language, and craftsmanship reveal the deep interconnection between body and mind. Studies on neuroplasticity show that the brain adapts to new conditions, as seen in bionic prosthetics that respond directly to neural signals.

Today, technology is advancing toward artificial hands that can be controlled directly by thought. This interplay between hand and brain is at the heart of learning by doing.

Tim Ingold developed a theory in which learning unfolds like a line, drawn step by step through the act of doing. Each gesture and action we take weaves a thread of knowledge, proving that learning is not an abstract process but one rooted in physical and material connections – in direct experience.

Thus, hands are not just tools; they are an integral part of thought and perception. From this perspective, manual *labor* is not just about making things – it is a bridge between thinking and acting. Through practice, we establish a living relationship with culture, community, and environment – a connection that goes far beyond mere physical execution. Handwork is a deep form of learning, shaping individuals in a holistic way.

In The Perception of the Environment (2000), one of his most influential works, Ingold explores the idea of the line as a metaphor for life and learning. Rather than a sequence of discrete events (cause and effect), life is a continuous movement, unfolding through direct engagement with the world. Every step follows from the previous one, and every manual action is part of an evolving trajectory of experience, linking thought, environment, and culture. Change, in this view, is not a sudden rupture but an ongoing, gradual process.

The concept of process is fundamental to both nature and the human body: every action, every gesture, every experience contributes to an unbroken flow. The hand, as our primary tool of interaction, becomes the medium through which perception and action intertwine.

For Ingold, learning is a journey, and every manual gesture is part of an ever-evolving narrative. When an artisan creates, they are not simply producing something useful or beautiful; they are engaged in a transformative process, one that involves both material and personal experience. The true significance lies not in the final product, but in understanding that art and craft are learning processes in themselves.

Learning by doing is an act of discovery and adaptation. It is not just about absorbing knowledge but about interacting with the material world. In other words, we do not truly learn anything unless we are immersed in an experiential process – one that transforms us as we learn.

When we work with our hands, we actively engage with materials, and through this engagement, our understanding evolves. This process of learning is both cyclical and progressive: each movement – both mental and physical – shapes the object and, in turn, the surrounding context.

Creation is not a solitary act but a relational process: the artisan is in dialogue with their material, influenced by cultural traditions, and shaped by the environment. What they create is more than just an object – it is a trace of that relationship, an imprint of the ongoing exchange between body, mind, and the material world.





We cannot separate thought from action – thinking emerges through doing, and every movement of the hand contributes to an unfolding process of personal and cultural growth.

# 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 Olfs 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 Olfs 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.

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