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LETIZIA DIPASQUALE
SAVERIO MECCA
LUCIA MONTONI

Heritage for people

*Sharing vernacular
knowledge to build
the future*







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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Foreword	12
Hubert Guillaud	
Foreword	14
Marwa Dabaieh	
Heritage for People. A project for connecting people with their tangible and intangible heritage	16
Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas	

LESSONS FROM VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE TO SUSTAINABILITY 30

VerSus Methodology: development and application	32
Gilberto Duarte Carlos, Mariana Correia	
Transmission of the VerSus method to architecture students and lecturers	38
Sebastien Moriset	
From intangible heritage to circular knowledge	44
Letizia Dipasquale, Saverio Mecca, Lucia Montoni	
Indigenous & traditional knowledge systems and the circular paradigm	50
Debora Giorgi	
Diversity and sustainability of traditional architecture in global warming and ecological and digital transitions	56
Saverio Mecca	
Lessons on conservation from vernacular architecture	62
Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto, Valentina Cristini, Lidia García-Soriano	
Vernacular parameters of sustainability in 21st century architecture	68
Juan María Songel, Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto, Juan Bravo	

STRATEGIES FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE 74

Conservation and design	76
Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto	
Conservation and restoration of traditional architecture	80
Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas	

<i>Restoration of a vernacular house in Sesga, Valencia (ES) Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas</i>	86
<i>Urban building on calle Maldonado 33, Valencia (ES) Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto</i>	87
<i>Conservation of a Valencian barraca (ES) Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto</i>	88
<i>The sun temple (IN) Edoardo Paolo Ferrari</i>	89
Renovation and adaptive reuse of vernacular architecture	90
Letizia Dipasquale	
<i>Alcino Cardoso house renovation by Álvaro Siza (PT) Teresa Cunha Ferreira, Soraya Genin, Mariana Correia</i>	97
<i>Toolkit for innovative and eco-sustainable renovation process Lucia Montoni, Gisella Calcagno, Giacomo Pierucci, Antonella Trombadore</i>	98
<i>Renovation of a stone and rammed earth house in Tuscany (IT) Elena Rigano</i>	99
<i>Memory garden in Vinaroz, Castellón (ES) Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto</i>	100
<i>Renovation, seismic and energy retrofit of a farmhouse in Val di Chiana, Tuscany (IT) Sara Bartolini</i>	101
Designing with tradition: old techniques for modern architecture	102
José Luis Baró, Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto	
<i>Tile vaulting in 21st century Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto, Lidia García-Soriano</i>	108
<i>House of Nature, Silkeborg Højskole by Reværk Birgitte Tanderup Eybye</i>	109
<i>Ses Menorquines Alicia Casals, Karl Nyqvist</i>	110
<i>Fan Forest Houses by Bergmeisterwolf Studio (IT) Matteo Zambelli</i>	111
Education strategies	112
Sebastien Moriset	
Teaching architecture and heritage to kids	118
Sebastien Moriset	
<i>Educational trunk in support of traditional architecture Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas, Lidia García-Soriano, Valentina Cristini</i>	124
<i>Rehabimed kids: workshop on traditional architecture Letizia Dipasquale, Montserrat Villaverde</i>	125
<i>Practical tools for teaching architecture and heritage to children Borut Juvanac</i>	126
<i>Elémenterre Nathalie Sabatier, Alba Rivero Olmos</i>	127

An overview of university and post-university education in vernacular architecture	128
Bruno Andrade, Telma Ribeiro, Mariana Correia, Goreti Sousa, Ana Lima	
<i>DSA: earthen architecture, building cultures and sustainable development</i> Bakonirina Rakotomamonjy	136
<i>Workshops on traditional trades and preservation of traditional techniques</i> Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas, Valentina Cristini, Lidia García-Soriano	137
<i>The first Traditional Architecture Summer School in Portugal</i> Rui Florentino, José Baganha, Alejandro García Hermida	138
<i>Teaching vernacular architecture: different pedagogical approaches in higher education</i> Telma Ribeiro	139
Training with craftspeople and maintenance of traditional knowledge	140
Sebastien Moriset	
<i>The artisans of Venice</i> Angela Squassina	145
<i>Italian Dry Stone Walling School</i> Edoardo Paolo Ferrari	146
<i>Restoration of heritage assets programme at Duoc UC professional institute</i> Carmen Gómez Maestro	147
Community engagement	148
Mónica Alcindor, Emilia Simão	
Traditional heritage preservation and enhancement through community participation	152
Sebastien Moriset	
<i>Terraccogliente experience</i> Walter Secci	158
<i>El Cabanyal: neighbourhood participation against urban expropriation</i> Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas, David Morocho	159
<i>Adopt a house in Rosia Montana, Romania</i> Stefan Balici	160
<i>Andean architecture and earthen construction Lab</i> Julieta Barada, Jorge Tomasi	161
Participating in building and restoring vernacular heritage	162
Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto	
<i>Repart</i> Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto	167

<i>European Heritage Volunteers</i> Valentina Cristini	168
<i>Cob in Lower Normandy, France</i> François Streiff	169
Gamification for community engagement in heritage and sustainability	170
Alessandro Merlo, Letizia Dipasquale	
<i>Calasetta heritage games</i> Amanda Rivera Vidal, Maddalena Achenza	176
<i>Artisans to the rescue</i> Davide Leone	177
<i>The Seven Families of Formentera</i> Nuria Sánchez Muñoz	178
<i>Contahistoria</i> Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas, Marina Elia	179
Knowledge management and dissemination	180
Letizia Dipasquale, Saverio Mecca	
Documenting and safeguarding intangible heritage	184
Letizia Dipasquale, Edoardo Paolo Ferrari	
<i>Ràixe: Digital Spaces for Tabarkan Culture</i> Marzia Varaldo	190
<i>Practices of Cultural Re-appropriation: projects in co-authorship with the First Indigenous Peoples of South Africa</i> Magda Minguzzi	191
<i>The village of Esfahak: knowledge transmission on vernacular construction techniques in the Iranian desert</i> Edoardo Paolo Ferrari	192
<i>Red de maestros - network of master builders</i> Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas, Valentina Cristini	193
Documentation and digital survey of tangible heritage	194
Alessandro Merlo, Gaia Lavoratti	
<i>International workshops on traditional architecture in Rincón de Ademuz, Valencia (Spain)</i> Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto	200
<i>Documenting and virtual visiting World Heritage in 3DPAST</i> Mariana Correia, Gilberto Carlos	201
<i>3D survey of the vernacular architecture of the Aysén region</i> Carlos Castillo Levicoy, Constanza Pérez Lira, Amalia Nuevo-Delaunay	202
<i>Modelling traditional knowledge on earthen domes of Syria</i> Letizia Dipasquale, Saverio Mecca	203

Managing constructive and architectural knowledge for builders and designers	204
Letizia Dipasquale, Telma Ribeiro, Rui Florentino, Mariana Correia	
<i>Heritage for people: a collaborative app</i> Letizia Dipasquale, Lucia Montoni, Edoardo Paolo Ferrari	210
<i>Learning to conserve</i> Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto	211
<i>Cartoterra</i> Sebastien Moriset	212
<i>Mapadaterra platform</i> Leticia Grappi, Kin Guerra	213
Sharing knowledge with a wide public	214
Sebastien Moriset	
<i>Full Immersion nella Terra</i> Maddalena Achenza	219
<i>Grains d'Isère Festival</i> Bakonirina Rakotomamonjy	220
<i>Homo faber Exhibition</i> Francesco Trovò	221
<i>Regio heart</i> Alina Negru, Alessandro Serra	222
<i>El Adobe educational video</i> Amanda Rivera Vidal, Cristian Muñoz Catalán	223
CASE STUDIES: FORMENTERA AND SANT'ANTIOCO ISLANDS	224
Formentera: cultural heritage and sustainability	226
Fernando Vegas, Camilla Mileto, Lidia García-Soriano, Valentina Cristini	
Sant'Antioco: cultural heritage and sustainability	240
Letizia Dipasquale, Alessandro Merlo, Gaia Lavoratti, Lucia Montoni, Maddalena Achenza	

HOMO FABER EXHIBITION

Francesco Trovò

Università IUAV di Venezia, Venice, Italy

The island of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice hosted the second edition of *Homo Faber*, an event devoted to the international exhibition of objects produced by numerous craftsmen specialised in decorative manufactures and applied arts. The visit offers an immersion in the applied knowledge of high-quality craftsmanship in various fields, documented through a variety of materials transformed into products. In addition to the exhibition hosted in the cloisters of the convent of San Giorgio, it is also possible to visit craftsmen scattered throughout the city and the islands, all of which are open to visits for the duration of the event, thus facilitating the unfolding of an immersive itinerary, which can also be tailor-made to the interests of each visitor, who in this way can witness the daily life in a workshop and observe craftsmen as they demonstrate their skills.

The event offers an opportunity to reflect more generally on the role of craftsmanship in the context of the safeguarding of the built heritage, in particular of the building of historic centres which are more common and less monumental, thus including examples of vernacular buildings, or building components. It is quite evident, in fact, that transformation interventions which regard unlisted historic buildings, which often make up the fabric of the historic centres of large cities, such as Venice, or are rural expressions of the built environment spread throughout the territory, are frequently less concerned with preservation. This trend depends, of course, on the existing legislation, but is also favoured by the fact that the crafts involved are increasingly less related to the place in which they operate, and often belong to other fields, such as that of new constructions, that lack the necessary references to the material culture underlying vernacular architecture, which in turn is an expression of the material products of craftsmanship practices.

In an era characterised by the prevalence of mass production, as well as by the digitisation and dematerialisation of processes, the success of the two editions of the exhibition, with more to follow, confirm the importance of this event as a worldwide reference, and demonstrates the great interest of the public in craftsmanship, its expressions and outstanding products. The spirit which guides the promoters of the initiative, a non-profit organisation from Geneva which supports contemporary craftsmen throughout the world, is also that of sending a signal about Venice, helping it to become once again an active place, declaring that craftsmanship, in all of its forms, from historicist accounts to more contemporary interpretations, represents the appropriate formula for saving the city from its decline.

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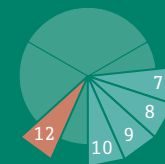
www.homofaber.com/en/guide

USERS

Craftsmen, master artisans, general public

VERSUS SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

- 7. Transmitting and sharing building cultures
- 8. Encouraging creativity
- 9. Recognising intangible values
- 10. Encouraging social cohesion
- 12. Promoting local activities



Three works created by the paper sculptor Cristian Marianciuc for Magnae Chartae at the Homo Faber Event 2022

(credits: Cristian Marianciuc)

Homo Faber Event 2022, Ph. Francesca Occhi

(credits: Fondazione Giorgio Cini)



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The publication presents the results of the project ‘Versus-Heritage for People’, funded by the Creative Europe EU programme. The main aim of the project was to actively involve a broad audience and raise awareness among it concerning the value of vernacular knowledge in shaping more sustainable and resilient models of development. The material and immaterial elements constituting a vernacular heritage (encompassing local materials, construction methods, models for living and social interaction, technical and environmental knowledge for the management of territories, natural resources, settlements, etc.) have enormous potential for generating forward-thinking models that can improve the environmental and social quality of our habitats, foster a sense of identity and belonging, and relate in a balanced way to the capacities of our planet. The book explores strategies and tools for managing and transmitting knowledge and the values associated with vernacular heritage. It includes concrete examples and good practices for engaging people in processes of knowledge and the enhancement of vernacular heritage values for sustainability. The outcome is the result of the collaborative efforts between the five academic institutions involved in the project – Universitat Politècnica de València as coordinator (ES), University of Florence (IT), University of Cagliari (IT), CRAterre-ENSAG (FR) and Escola Superior Gallaecia at Universidade Portucalense (PT). A total of 63 authors, comprising both external scholars and professionals, contributed to the book.

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