

Rec — om — men— — da — tion

Conference for Artistic and Architectural
Research & Collective Evaluation of Design-driven
Doctoral Training Programme



**CA²
RE+DELFT**

Book of Proceedings

Rec — — — om men— da tion

**Conference for Artistic and Architectural
Research & Collective Evaluation of Design-driven
Doctoral Training Programme**

Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment,
Delft University of Technology

The Netherlands, Delft, March 28 – April 1 2022

Recommendation Book of Proceedings Colophon

CA²RE+ Delft RECOMMENDATION: Conference for Artistic and Architectural Research & Collective Evaluation of Design-driven Doctoral Training Programme

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Keywords

Design-driven doctoral research, design-driven research recommendation, architectural research, artistic research

Published by

TU Delft OPEN Publishing, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands

ISBN 978-94-6366-660-2

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59490/mg.61>

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Design concept, layout, and typesetting

Marko Damiš

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As mentioned in Section 05, p. 476

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Special thanks to

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Mimi Cepic, text editing
Luísa Ferreira Martins, text editing
Szymon Kaniewski, text editing
Lilani Oei, text editing
Nicolette van Dongen, event organization
Nathalie Kooijmans, event organization

Conference hosts



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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



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About Community and Contextualization

When preparing the contribution for the Delft conference, we – Fabrizia Berlingieri, Gennaro Postiglione, Alessandro Rocca, and Jacopo Leveratto as the Politecnico di Milano core team, together with Enrico Miglietta – deliberately wrote some individual reflections on preliminary findings and possible trajectories for the CA²RE project. Even without discussion among us, the summa turned out to be a shared perspective on the values of *community* and *contextualization*. I am now presenting them on behalf of the Polimi group.



CA2RE+ in Delft, 28.03.2022, photo by Fabrizia Berlingieri

The CA2RE+ experience had the extraordinary effect of comparing precisely, with the same tools, research-driven research in different schools. The *plural soul* of the CA²RE consortium resulted, over the three years, as a representative sample of the numerous facets that characterize design-driven research: prototyping, self-reflexive practices, critical observation of contemporary phenomena, media innovation, etc. Different approaches for different schools. However, along the way, the main finding is that similarities and differences intersected the consortium geographies in unpredictable ways: sometimes traditions have been respected and enhanced; in other cases, models and references crossed, creating unexpected relationships far from their original place. This cross-fertilization proved how important it had been the effort to establish a common ground between us as a community. This common ground further

sustained a progressive engagement to develop and promote unconventional research paths where the methodological specificity of design-driven research (DDR) could be more clearly formulated. It relates to the consciousness that we, as architects, designers, and artists, are familiar with non-verbal media deriving from an endogenous aspect of our disciplines, that is, to be constantly trained in vision. It is an essential component of our research, the betrayal of which only weakens our contribution to scientific knowledge development.

Indeed, the core of the whole CA²RE+ project has been, as stated in the delivered application, the transfer of design studio behaviors and tutorials to design-driven doctoral research (DDDR) supervision, moving from a typical text-based dialogue to a visual-based experience with shared exchanges around and with drawings and artifacts as moments of mutual learning.

The CA²RE+ project increased the number of PhD presentations and panelists compared to previous CA2RE activities, from which it stemmed out, widening its community of research practitioners (by design/drawing) and improving its network. By applying the didactic approach of design studios to DDDR supervision, the CA²RE+ consortium has managed to substantially advance the doctoral training model from being a support to an experiential learning-through-evaluation experience. Therefore, further actions do not concern the application of replicable protocols. On the contrary, they must insist on the importance of contextualization in DDR training and supervising processes.

Despite the enormous differences among the individual subjects, positions, and tools, coming from diverse disciplinary practices, the supervising processes in this field should encourage candidates to conceptualize research by considering it as a bearer of meaning that can be transmitted, shared, and replicated. It should address evaluation at the balance between personal interest and the topic relevance within the design community, considering that research objectives ultimately remain the observation, critical reflection, and the transformation of reality.

The supervising process should promote innovation in the selection of the subject and mainly in the definition of a specific and contextual process to investigate it. It should encourage looking for a shareable sense of situated rigor that could better respond to a final principle rather than a modal strategy, thus promoting a research philosophy that is open to the evolution and integration of new theories. To do so, the most important thing for candidates, supervisors, and heads of doctoral programs interested in developing and promoting DDDRs, is to find or build a community of reference or a Community of Critical Practices. It is only by establishing an immersive discursive environment and a climate of trust that candidates and supervisors can identify their position within the scientific community. It should stress not only through a projective form of individuation but also by the intersection among different research practices, which could offer a counterpoint to a self-reflective form of positioning through a comparative perspective. The results from CA²RE+ are something we should take care of and nourish. Since it is from the strengthening of this specific Community of Practice, we can enforce the position and role of architectural design culture within the

schools of architecture and more widely within our contemporary design culture. CA²RE-for could be the next step toward the trajectory initiated with CA²RE and CA²RE+.

The recommendation is to develop this crossing further, thus strengthening the relationship between professors and candidates from different countries and schools. Beyond expanding its network to even more international audiences, indeed, the next CA²RE should increase educational activities to value our community as a faculty. Intensive courses, workshops, and masterclasses could be the next common ground where professors and candidates from various programs participate, strengthening relationships and exchanging knowledge.

Enrico Miglietta

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This reflection on the recommendations for the CA²RE+ Consortium stems from genuine individual experience and seeks to draw some insights from it. I have been privileged to participate in the events by witnessing in some way the two sides of the operation, as a presenter starting with the event held in Gent in 2019 (OBSERVATION), and as part of the organizing committee for the Milano 2020 event (COMPARISON), presenting various aspects and moments of my investigation on a total of four occasions.

As a candidate of the Milanese Doctoral School, I can say with certainty that the impact of participating in a multitude of occasions has been critical, both in terms of enriching my doctoral research and my path as a young researcher. The first shift for personal exploration through design came when encountering the research, methods and disciplinary frameworks even just glimpsed during the session at the Faculty of Architecture of the Sint-Lucas School in Gent, then in the other presentations in the different European Schools. In most of the candidates' explorations, and certainly in the more advanced ones, the quality of the research was often flanked by the contamination of methods and strategies, where subjective viewpoints were analyzed via rigorous, often experimental processes, rather than through rigid paradigms, both regarding the strictly architectural discipline and to artistic practices in general.

This invitation to an open, frank, non-judgmental dialogue has produced, at least for me, in the moment of encounter, the possibility of approaching ways of doing research that completely subverted and enriched my initial premises. It also allowed me to become acquainted with affine research developed in a different School, thus leading to an initial series of meetings, then to a research stay, and finally to a joint PhD programme between Politecnico di Milano and KU Leuven, which imbues my research with diversity on multiple layers that I now consider an indispensable prerogative for its conclusion.

As already mentioned, in the wake of the previous notes, I also believe that the possibilities offered by a program of continuous exchange of

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