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RE+DELFT**



TU Delft OPEN

# Rec — om — men— — da — tion

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





**CA<sup>2</sup>  
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

CA<sup>2</sup>RE+ Delft RECOMMENDATION: Conference for Artistic and Architectural Research & Collective Evaluation of Design-driven Doctoral Training Programme

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As mentioned in Section 05, p. 476

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# The Materialisation of the Joint

## Re-reading the Brion Cemetery Through the Agency of the Drawing

Enrico Miglietta, Politecnico di Milano

Final doctoral stage

Supervisors: Gennaro Postiglione, Politecnico di Milano; Annalisa de Curtis, Politecnico di Milano; Jo Van Den Berghe, KU Leuven; Thierry Lagrange, KU Leuven

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# architectural joint, materiality, design attitude

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## Abstract

Starting from the investigation of three works, exemplary of a way of proceeding through the fragment, the research intends to demonstrate how interpretative analysis can extract essential principles for the design of the new. Following a rationale of *passionate criticism*, it sees in the work on the material carried out by Carlo Scarpa, Sigurd Lewerentz and Juliaan Lampens the possibility of 'drawing' insights that are still relevant to the work of architecture. Observing their buildings through full-scale drawings, it is possible to speculate how the projects were conceived (and built) starting from a reflection on the minimal elements of architecture and on the expressive value embedded in the materials.

The joint can thus become, if not only observed as an element of connection of disparate elements but as an agent of the design process, a form of transcendental scheme, through which we can reorganise a reflection on the whole process.

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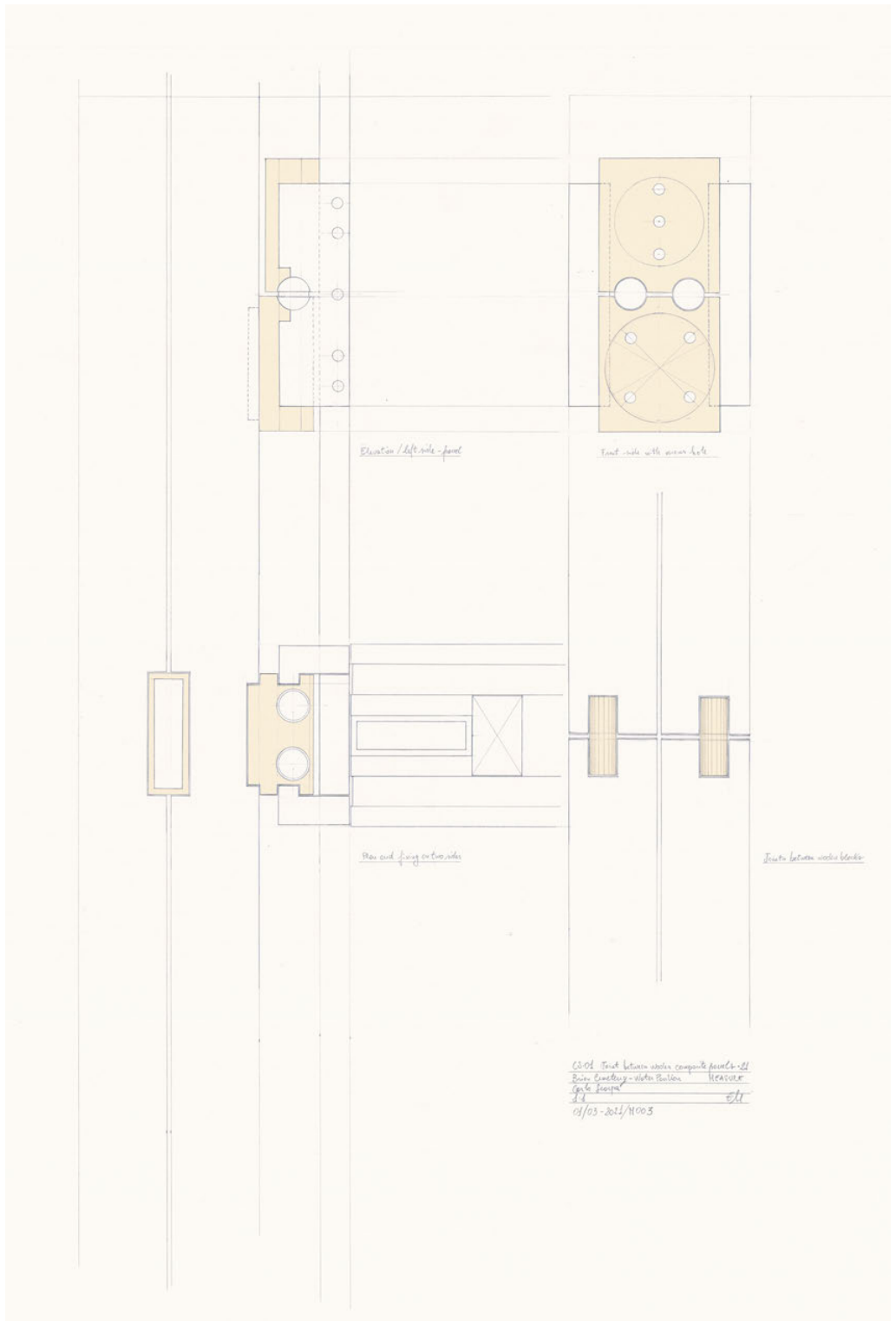
## Artefact

This exploration of drawing artefacts is positioned within an ongoing doctoral research through design. Starting from the investigation of three works – exemplary of a way of proceeding through the fragment – the research aims to demonstrate how interpretative analysis, understood as the analytical disassembly and synthetic reassembly of the constructions, can extract a series of essential principles for the design of the new, according to a principle of *passionate criticism*<sup>1</sup> that sees in the particular work on the material carried out by architects such as Carlo Scarpa, Sigurd Lewerentz and Juliaan Lampens the possibility of 'drawing' insights that are still relevant for the work of architecture.

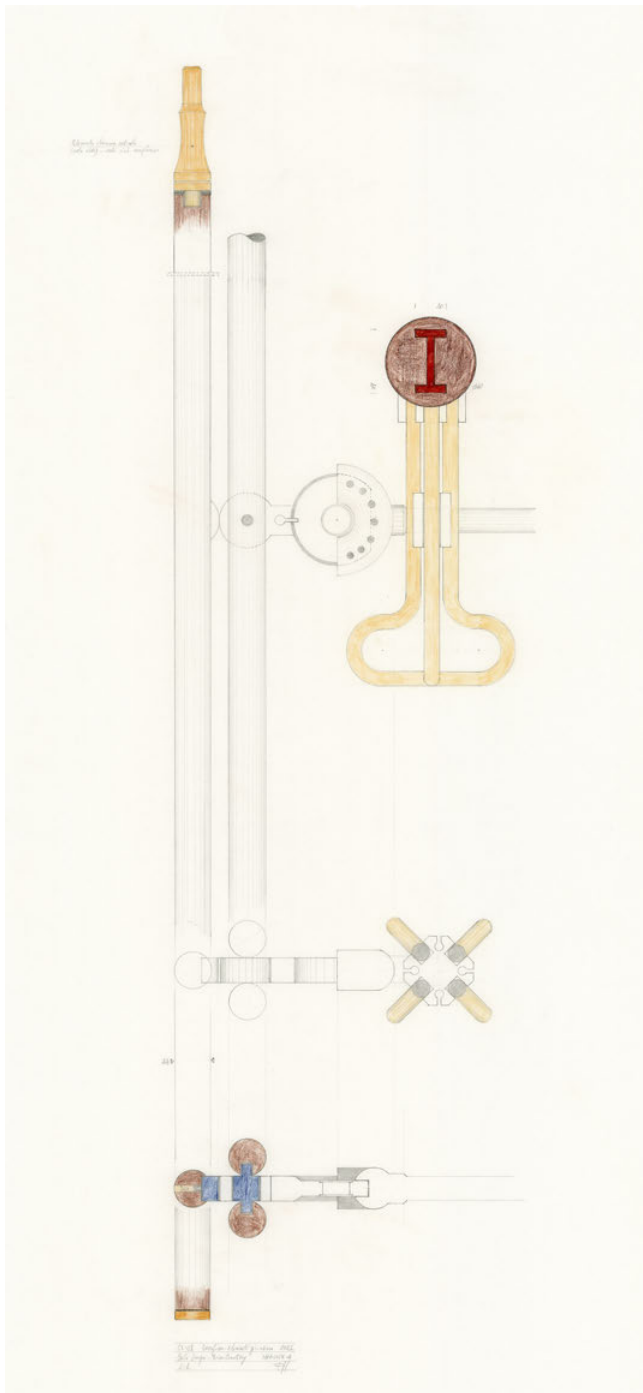
In particular, the observation of Carlo Scarpa's Brion Cemetery is proposed as a paradigmatic example of a *way of seeing* and a *way of doing*. The visit to the architect's work is a bodily and emotional experience, through which we are guided by the medium of detail. By breaking down the work into its fragments, and observing them through a full-scale re-drawing, we can speculate how the project itself was conceived (and built) out of reflection on the minimal elements of architecture and the expressive value somehow embedded in the used materials. From the refined decorative elements in bronze, sacred and non-sacred furnishings, to the exposed concrete walls and foundation elements overflowing into the water, whose formworks can be seen as works of 'cabinetry', the project reveals obsessive care for each element, and the non-existence of elements subordinate to the general composition, but rather a poetic intention originating from them. If we take a close look at a certain number, analysing the relationship between material definition and geometric constitution, we can begin to glimpse how the work's vectorial intentions have their point of onset starting from the joints, from those structures that relate different components, materials or uses of the project. In these, it is possible to find a condensation of principles, from musings on the measure-module to complex symbolic stratifications and meanings, which form the complex stratigraphy of the whole, and therefore its internal coherence precisely from the scale of the tangible.



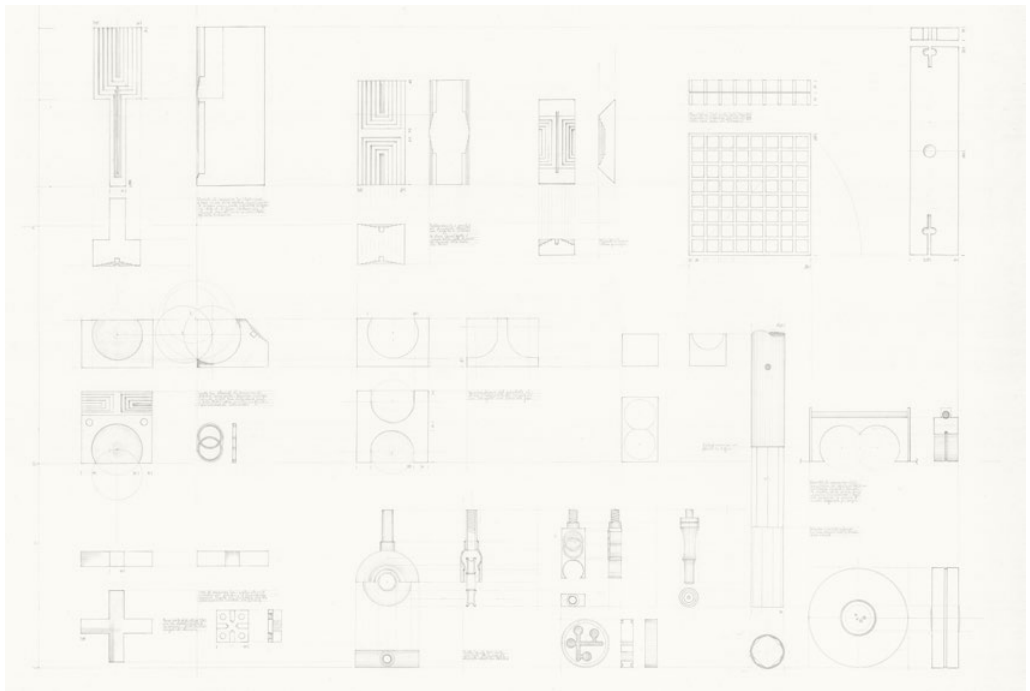




**Figure 2:** Brion Cemetery. Junctions between panels on the same plane (Meditation Pavilion – crowning). Drawing by Enrico Miglietta. Pencil on paper, 700 × 500mm, scale 1:1



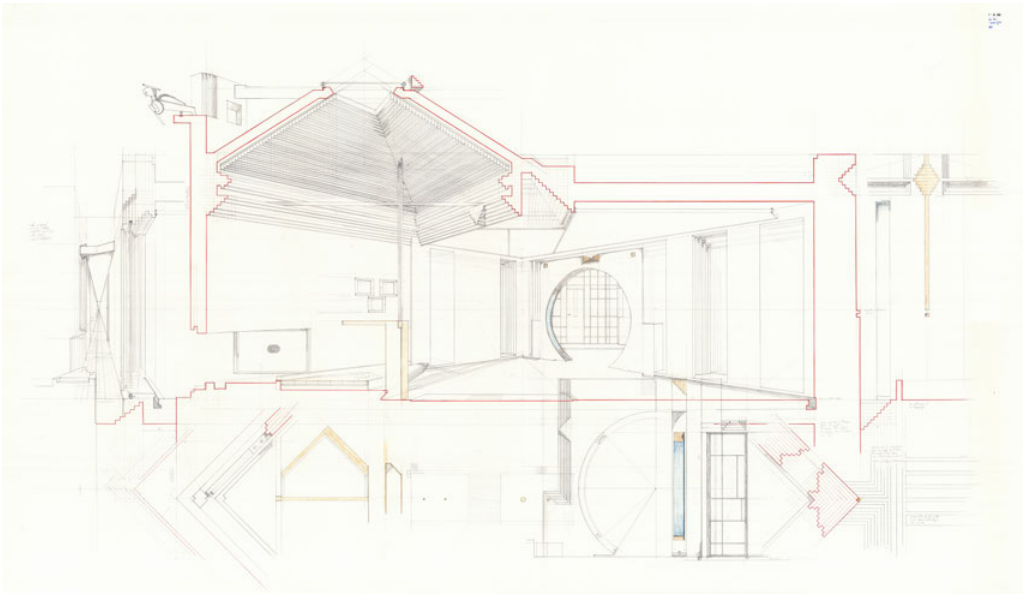
**Figure 3:** Brion Cemetery. Structure of the crucifix and connecting elements between the wooden rods (Tempietto). Drawing by Enrico Miglietta. Pencil and coloured pastels on paper, 930 × 430mm, scale 1:1



**Figure 4:** Brion Cemetery. Abacus of joining elements at full scale, materialised as autonomous entities. Drawing by Enrico Miglietta. Pencil on paper, 1285 × 875mm, scale 1:1

Thus, by shifting the inquiry from single objects to partial systems, we can physically describe that series of operations aimed at defining the vectors according to which architectural space is articulated. Proportional or *analogical* systems are derived as sets of rules for the combination of parts that make structures intelligible, beginning to reveal in most cases a secret harmony made up of tracings, regulating figures of the different stratifications of the project. The nature and points of onset of the latter are thus interrogated through the logic of the drawing, in which the structure is stratified through components that should each time verify the mereological correspondence between the part and the whole. In the Brion Cemetery, the relationship between construction and representation is brilliantly resolved. The redesign of a section is permeated by vectorial intentions always aimed at resolving the joints, the mouldings, showing extraordinary tension in each one. The construction does not work from a general scale to the particular, but reverses the process, presenting itself as a systematic stratification of ‘moments’ in the cyclical time of the project, remeasured through an elaborate use of geometry as an ordering element. It shows a constant search between constructed and perceived form, in which the constant “manipulation of discrepancies” is the method used to achieve expression.<sup>2</sup>

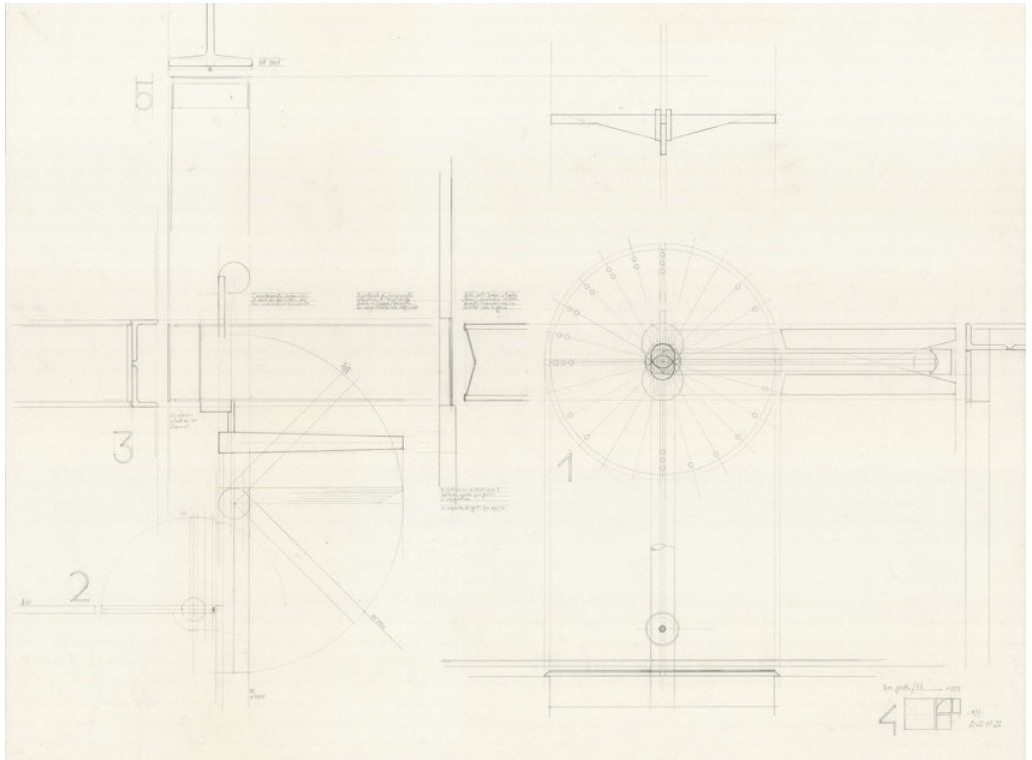
The joint, observed as a singularity within the architectural organism – to say it a la Mandel’shtam – “breaks the reins of time” and, as a supra-historical and supra-cultural element, defines the intelligibility of the whole of which it is part, making explicit the character of the work, its cipher. In the same way, it sets in motion that “playful game” of fragments and figures,<sup>3</sup> a constellation of gestures that embody artisan experiences, historical and aesthetic dimensions.



**Figure 5:** Brion Cemetery. Diagonal perspective section of the Tempietto. Drawing by Enrico Miglietta. Pencil and coloured pastels on paper, 1800 × 1000mm, scale 1:10

If the research process reveals some findings that can be seen as 'embedded' in the work, at the same time it outlines some potentialities inherent to the drawing methodology defined for the investigation, and the one employed by Scarpa (through the reading of the original drawings). In fact, starting from the full-scale drawing obliges a reflection on the physical and constructive qualities of the materials: in the correlation between different elements it is necessary (or at least desirable) that they are linked by more or less complex relationships, as well as for the assembly, that their position is determined by precise correlations. From the outset, this produces an awareness of production and construction processes, which are, together with the definition of a calculation system and beyond arid technological reasoning, design themes that make it possible to give expressive value to the specific potential energy of the employed resources.<sup>4</sup>

The joint can thus become, if not only observed as an element of connection of disparate elements but as an agent of the design process, a form of transcendental scheme, through which the reflection on and stratification of the project can be organised. The implementation and development of the practice of *critical sequential drawings*<sup>5</sup> (cyclical practice of hand-drawing, reflection and critical questioning of what the drawing shows, how it was made, and how it can be improved) and of *chronological drawings* (production of drawings that reflect on the relationships between the phases of the site, its logic, and their relationship with the production of architectural poetics) allow the theoretical reflection to be accompanied by practical tools for the development and control of such a project, and thus the definition of a personal reflective practice.



**Figure 6:** Research by Design. Door joint and pivoting mechanism (own design). Drawing and project by Enrico Miglietta. Pencil on paper, 1000 × 760 mm, scale 1:1

- 1 Cf. De Fusco, Renato (1999): »La storiografia è progettazione«, in: Op.cit. issue 104, pp. 5–13.
- 2 Frascari, Marco (1983): »The Tell-the-Tale Detail«, in: Deely John N./Lenhart Margot D. (Ed.), *Semiotics 1981*, Massachusetts: Springer, pp. 325–336.
- 3 Cfr. Tafuri, Manfredo (1984): »Il frammento, la "figura", il gioco. Carlo Scarpa e l'architettura italiana«, in: Dal Co, Francesco and Mazzariol, Giuseppe (Ed.), *Carlo Scarpa 1906–1978*, Milano: Electa, pp. 72–95.
- 4 Rogers, Ernesto N. (1997): *Esperienza dell'architettura*. Milano: Skira.
- 5 Critical sequential and chronological drawings methodologies are based on the studies carried out by Johan Van Den Berghe (2013) and the KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture Research Group "The Drawing and the Space".

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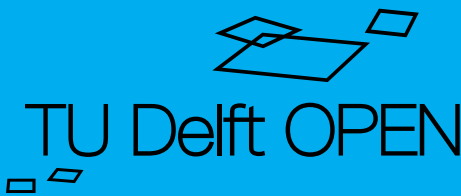
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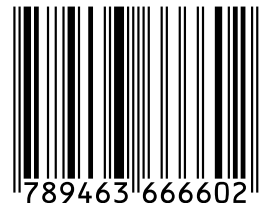


CA<sup>2</sup>RE / CA<sup>2</sup>RE+, the Conference for Artistic and Architectural Research, is dedicated to promoting Design-Driven Doctoral Research (DDDr) through its conference series. This initiative aims to strengthen and expand the community of researchers interested in this subject. The Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at Delft University of Technology has gladly provided the platform for this noteworthy conference.

The central theme of this event revolves around the "RECOMMENDATION" for Design-Driven Doctoral Research. This theme is a natural progression from the main topics explored in the previous CA<sup>2</sup>RE+ conferences, which included OBSERVATION, SHARING, COMPARISON, REFLECTION, and FRAMEWORK. The CA<sup>2</sup>RE+ Delft conference seeks to scrutinize the progress made thus far and endeavors to formulate guidelines and recommendations for the establishment, introduction, development, and evaluation of DDDr.



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